

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ד"ר

May 15 - 16, 2020 - 22 Iyar 5780 - Parshas Behar/Bechukosai

Light Candles by 7:56 - Havdalah 9:02

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week anonymously in appreciation of Kosher Pastry Oven, Shalom, Holy Chow and Ben Yehuda Pizza for helping to make Kemp Mill a most wonderful and inviting community. Thank you and your employees for your help, positive attitude, and delicious food. WE NEED YOU. If you are able, please help and support them during this trying time.

Mazal Tov

- **Aliza & Russell Kwiat** on the engagement of Tova (Givat Shmuel) to Benny Ioschikhes (Jerusalem), son of Eliyahu & Shifra Ioschikhes of Ottawa. Mazal Tov also to grandparents **Nancy & Avi Weisberger** and the whole Kwiat/Weisberger family.
- **Stella Levy** and Mona & Larry Kirsch and Carol & Teddy Trachtenberg of Far Rockaway, NY, on the birth of a granddaughter, Shalva, born to Ariel & Pinny Trachtenberg.
- **Jay Marcus** on his graduation from University of Maryland Global Campus with a B.S. in Political Science.
- **Karen & Howie Schulman** on the engagement of their granddaughter, Kayla Kramer, daughter of Miri & Rabbi Danny Kramer, to Binyamin Edelstein, son of Ivy & Rabbi Yosef Edelstein. Mazal Tov also to great-grandmother **Florence Binstock Avigan**, grandmothers Marcia Meth, Ida Farkash & Barbara Edelstein & all the siblings, aunts, uncles & cousins.
- Keira Zatman on her Bat Mitzvah and to her parents **Aliza & Michael**, siblings Ben and Amalya, and family and friends near and far.

Condolences

- **David Danesh** on the passing of his father, Rachamim Danesh. The funeral took place on Wednesday.

COVID-19 Updates

- Planning for Shul reopening has begun. Go to <https://wp.yise.org/planning-for-shul-reopening/> for more details.
- All public activities at YISE are cancelled, including Minyanim, Youth Groups, Shiurim and special events.
- The Shul office is still open, but hours may vary.
- Please continue to be vigilant regarding matters of personal hygiene as previously advised. If you are unwell, please do not enter the Shul or other public places. We urge you to adhere to all medical advice you may receive regarding self-quarantine.

Let us Daven to Hashem to keep all of us in good health and to return our lives to normal as soon as possible. In protecting each other as we navigate this unfolding situation, may we grow stronger as individuals and as a community.

Shabbos Schedule

Note that Davening times are listed for reference so that people may Daven at the same time as others. There are no Minyanim at YISE at this time.

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 7:56, and not before Plag, 6:45
- Mincha:
Ashkenazi: 6:30, 7:00, 8:00 Sephardi: 7:00 Nusach Sefard: 7:00
If you Daven Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv prior to Shkia (8:14 PM), it is preferable to Daven Mincha prior to Plag (6:45 PM).

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: Ashkenazi: 7:00, 8:00, 8:45, 9:15 Youth: 9:15
Sephardi: 7:45 Nusach Sefard: 7:00
- Mincha:
Ashkenazi: 2:30, 5:00, 7:55 Sephardi: 7:45 Nusach Sefard: 7:55
- Shabbos ends: 9:02

Weekday Shiurim

Options for remote learning are listed below. For the latest list, go to <https://wp.yise.org/remote-learning-schedule/>

- **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-minute Shiur on the Parsha. Sunday 9:00 AM/Monday through Friday 8:30 AM - **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday, 7:30 PM - **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Gemara Shiur for Men, Tuesdays and Fridays, 6:00 AM, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Chumash Shiur for Women, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, *will resume May 27*.
 - **Rabbi Silver's** Parsha Shiur for men & women, a mix of Halacha and Aggadah. Tuesdays at 7:30 PM. For more details, contact rsilver@yise.org **Zoom B**.
 - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM
 - Unraveling the Navi with Rabbi Hillel Shaps, **Zoom C**.
 - **Rabbi Tuvia Grauman** - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sundays at 10:00 AM, **Zoom I**.
 - **Rabbi Yonatan Zakem's** Shiur for men & women, Pearls of Prayer, exploring the depth and meaning of our daily prayers. Sunday evenings, 7:30 PM, **Zoom H**.
 - **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM. For more info, contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, hshaps@gwckollel.org 347-869-9361.
 - For Men & Women - **Zoom D** (except as noted):
 - Mondays: Rabbi E. Gayer - A to Z of Jewish Living
 - Mondays: Rabbi H. Shaps, On the Same Page Gemara, **Zoom C**.
 - Tuesdays: Rabbi Winter - Torah Topics
 - Wednesdays: Rabbi Grossman - Reading Responsa
 - Thursdays: Rabbi Grossman - Parshas Hashavua
 - For Women - **Zoom E**:
 - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Tehillim: An in-depth analysis
 - Tuesdays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Bereishis in-Depth
 - **Semichat Chaver Program**, Tuesdays at 9:00 PM with Rabbi Silver. For more information, please contact Rabbi Binyamin Silver: rsilver@yise.org or Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org - **Zoom A**.
 - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiur on Daily Halachos for men & women, Tuesdays 9:15 AM, **Zoom F**.
 - **Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's** Shiur for Men and Women, Tuesdays, 1:30 PM - 2:15 PM, "A Second Look- Stories in the Torah from a Deeper Perspective", **Zoom G**.
- Connection Details:** Go to <https://zoom.us/join/> and enter the meeting ID, or call 301-715-8592 and enter the meeting ID & password:
- Zoom A: ID: 416 963 9000, password 492019
 - Zoom B: ID: 784 431 8176
 - Zoom C: ID: 349 754 2180, password GWCK
 - Zoom D: ID: 746 455 2195, password GWCK
 - Zoom E: ID: 601 853 4021, password Winter
 - Zoom F: ID: 970 1398 4837, password 613
 - Zoom G: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079
 - Zoom H: ID: 269 840 3648, password 8tCqF6
 - Zoom I: ID: 834 8407 1267, password RabbiHyatt

YISE Programs and Listings

Annual YISE Election Meeting - Tuesday, May 19, 8:00 PM on Zoom A.

Ruth, Boaz, Yibum and the Mashiach - The YISE Women's Learning Initiative presents Pre-Shavuot learning for women with Mrs. Sharon Freundel. Sunday, May 24, 4:00 PM on Zoom A.

Shomrai Preschool 2020-2021 - Online registration is now open for children ages 2 to 5 years old with customizable extended care options from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM. Visit preschool.yise.org or email preschool@yise.org for more information or to schedule a tour. Ask about our special, deeply reduced tuition for incoming 2-year-olds!

Helping Hands Across Kemp Mill is a part of YISE's Chesed Committee. The program helps members undergoing serious medical crises. We are always looking for volunteers to help. To be a part of this program by helping with meals, visitation, shopping, childcare, etc., contact: Melanie Karlin, 301-681-4740, mskarlin@gmail.com or Miriam Friedman, 301-754-1517, mfriedman2@yahoo.com

The Rachel Bassan Horwitz Fund is used for medical needs in our area, elsewhere in the US, and in Israel. In order to continue this much-needed medical fund, your financial help is needed! Tax deductible contributions may be made payable to: YISE Charity SPECIAL Fund, c/o Norma Burdett, 11720 Lovejoy St., Silver Spring, MD 20902. Earmark: Bassan Fund. For more info: Norma Burdett, 301-593-5964 or Pearl Bassan, 301-649-3137.

Shiurim from Rabbi Gedaliah Anemer, ZT"L, are available at <http://audio.yise.org>

Community Programs & Listings

A Time for Unity - Special Sunday Evening Lecture Series - As we look forward to Shavuot - the Season of the Giving of our Torah - let us come together and find inspiration in the words of the Torah. Chabad of Silver Spring will be hosting distinguished rabbis again this year during the weeks between Pesach and Shavuot. This week's speaker: Rabbi Berel Wolfovsky of Chabad, Sunday, May 17, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM. Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/99088655463?pwd=RGEzNDdWURVMGJEYmxVUW13d0p5dz09> Meeting ID: 990-8865-5463 Password: 171659

Remote Night Shiurim from YGW - Sunday 8:30 PM - 9:15 PM, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate; Monday/Wednesday 9:00 PM - 9:30 PM, Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky; Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 PM - 9:30 PM, Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold. Register at https://zoom.us/webinar/register/1715843153121/WN_n6jNGqUpTpCN6ikCabUutA

Daf Yomi Shiur currently meets online via a WebEx video conference. There is still room for a few more participants. Anyone interested may email Judd Lifschitz at lifschitz@slslaw.com to be added to the invite list. Sunday 7:00 AM, Monday - Thursday 9:00 PM, Friday 5:45 PM.

The Census Bureau is still hiring for the 2020 Census and expects to resume field operations in June. The hourly pay in Montgomery County, MD, is \$29.50. Full-time and part-time positions are available. For more information, call 1-888-480-1639 or visit www.2020Census.gov/jobs

A High Risk: Stories of Pregnancy, Birth, and the Unexpected - Join us on Tuesday, May 19, at 8:00 PM on Zoom as Dr. Chavi Eve Karkowsky, formerly of Kemp Mill, shares why she felt compelled to write her book, why she believes women's health is human health, and what it's like to be a high-risk OB/GYN health care provider during the COVID-19 crisis in NY, and some behind-the-scenes secrets. If you have any questions, please text or email Nancy Karkowsky at 301-452-9322 or nkarkowsky@gmail.com Meeting ID: 886 2209 9437

MES Rebbetzins Panel II - The Mikvah Emunah Society of Greater Washington presents: ALL TOGETHER: A Virtual Community Gathering of Women, Wednesday, May 20, at 8:00 PM. Join us for an evening of questions and answers featuring a panel discussion with 8 community Rebbetzins. Have a question for the Rebbetzins? Send it to mikvahgw@gmail.com by May 17. For all women! Zoom information will be available by May 18 - contact mikvahgw@gmail.com for details.

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, May 20, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator. Contact Manasseh Katz at vpm@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password 3671.

Free Webinar on Federal Job Search - "10 Steps to a Federal Job," by Kathryn Troutman. Friday, May 29, 12 Noon. Although nominally aimed at veterans and their spouses, this webinar should largely be relevant to others. This webinar is likely to fill up quickly, so don't wait to register. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/104640350104>

Understanding the 2nd Day of Yom-Tov of the Diaspora: A Pre-Shavuos Learning Program with GWCK - Sunday, May 24, on Zoom. 10:45 AM: Small group learning led by GWCK Staff with special men's and women's tracks. 11:45 AM: Guest Speaker, Rabbi Yerachmiel Fried, Rosh Kollel, DATA and noted author of Sefer Yom Tov Shen K'Hilchaso. Registration required at gwckollel.org/shavuos

Partners in Tefillah matches people with others in need of similar assistance from Hashem. The feedback we have received so far has been amazing. You, too, can Daven for someone else in the community and have them Daven for you. May Hashem answer all your prayers. Please visit www.yadvehuda.org/partners-in-tefillah to learn more and to sign up.

Community Website for COVID-19 www.covidgw.com In an effort to simplify access to the plethora of available resources for COVID-19 assistance and information, Yad Yehuda of Greater Washington has created a stand-alone website that includes a wide range of resources for the Greater Washington Jewish community. Please visit covidgw.com Information on the site is culled from many volunteers and sources from within our community. New information is being added regularly; please visit often to view updated information and resources. May we all merit Hashem's mercy during this challenging time. Please note: If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out by visiting covidgw.com If you are not currently experiencing financial challenges, please consider a donation to assist others who are struggling during this crisis.

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

Kemp Mill Village is providing friendly phone calls and limited deliveries during the pandemic. Call 1-833-KMV-20902 to request service or to volunteer. See kempmillvillage.org for more information.

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

The Week Ahead	Sunday May 17	Monday May 18	Tuesday May 19	Wednesday May 20	Thursday May 21	Friday, May 22 Yom Yerushalayim
No Minyanim will take place at YISE next week. You are encouraged to Daven at home at your regular Minyan time. Mincha was scheduled for May 17 - May 21 at 8:05 PM (Ashkenazi)/8:00 PM (Sephardi).						
Halachic Times: Earliest Talis and Tefillin: 4:52 AM, Latest Krias Shma: 9:26 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:42 PM						

Next Shabbos

May 22 - 23, 2020 - 29 Iyar 5780
Parshas Bamidbar/Mevorchim
Hachodesh
Light Candles: Friday by 8:02
Havdalah: 9:09

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday May 20 at 12:00 Noon

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

Office Phone: 301-593-4465 Office Fax: 301-593-2330 Eruv line: 301-593-5561

E-Mail: office@yise.org Website: www.yise.org

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM. Friday - 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Sammy Franco - President

Rabbi Binyamin Silver - Asst. Rabbi Simi Franco - Office Manager

Dvar Torah Dedications/Sponsor a Shiur

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

Our current inability to Daven with a Minyan and to say Kaddish is difficult and a challenge. However, sponsoring a Shiur or other Torah learning is a meaningful way to commemorate a Yahrzeit or honor a loved one. Sponsorships are also a great way to celebrate a Simcha or any other milestone, while helping YISE at a time when many of the Shul's other sources of revenue are not available.

1. The following individual Shiurim are available for sponsorship at \$18 (per day):

- Daily Morning (Sunday through Friday) Tehillim and Parsha Shiur
- Daily Evening (Sunday through Thursday) Tehillim and Halacha Shiur
- Rabbi Rosenbaum's Sunday Morning Mussar Study Group for Women
- Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tuesday or Friday Morning Gemara Shiur for Men
- Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday Morning Nach Shiur
- Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday Night Chumash Shiur for Women
- Rabbi Silver's Tuesday Evening Parsha Shiur
- Rabbi Silver's Daily Chizuk Dose on WhatsApp
- Rabbi Grauman - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sunday Morning

2. Sponsorship of the Morning and Evening Tehillim and Parsha/Halacha Shiurim together is available for \$25.

3. The Pre-Shabbos Drasha video is available for sponsorship at \$54.

Please email office@yise.org to sponsor.

Thank you for your support.

Thank You to this past week's Shiurim Sponsors:

Rabbi Rosenbaum's morning and evening Tehillim/Shiur

- **Chayie & Rabbi Hirsh Chinn** L'iluy nishmas Chayie's mother - Eidel Vitte bas Yoel, whose 5th Yahrzeit is on Yud Tes Iyar, and in honor of all the tremendous work that the Shul's Rabbonim are doing
- **Simi & Sammy Franco** in honor of their mothers, Dottie Franco and Janet Rottenberg, and their daughter Luna Perez, and daughters-in-law Jessi Franco, Hadassah Franco and Elisheva Franco for mothering their grandkids.
- **Shirley Sperling** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of her sister-in-law, Frieda Sperling, Frieda bas Tzvi Dov
- **Abby & Chaim Tor** to commemorate Chaim's father's 25th Yahrzeit, Yosef ben Daniel V'Rivka, Z"l

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Sunday morning Mussar Shiur

- **Atara & Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum** in honor of Mrs. Judy Rosenbaum (Happy Mother's Day!)

Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur

- **Margie and Michael Hourwitz** in honor of Rabbi Tuvia Grauman for continuing Rabbi Hyatt's tradition of exceptional teaching and Jay Parness and Scott Schlesinger for their incredible dedication and support

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday morning Nach Shiur

- **Lois and Sidney Meyers**
- **The Price Family** to commemorate the 8th Yahrzeit, Yud Tet Iyar, of Dr. Clifton Price, Akiva ben Avraham.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Men's Gemara Shiur

- **Bev Morris & Art Boyars** in honor of Rabbi Rosenbaum
- **Rochelle & Lew Wertenteil**

Rabbi Silver's Daily Chizuk Shiur

- **The Price Family** to commemorate the 8th Yahrzeit, Yud Tet Iyar, of Dr. Clifton Price, Akiva ben Avraham.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Erev Shabbos Parsha Drasha

- **Bev Morris and Art Boyars** in memory of Raphael Ostrovsky, brother of Mrs. Judy Morris
- **Bev Morris and Art Boyars** to mark the 8th Yahrzeit of Dr. Clifton Price, husband of Mrs. Barbara Price
- **Debbie and Jeff Weinstein and Family** in honor of Lily's 12th birthday

YISE Women's Learning Initiative Presents...

Pre-Shavuot learning for women

MRS. SHARON FREUNDEL

Ruth, Boaz, Yibum, and the Mashiach



Sunday, May 24 at 4 pm

Zoom ID: 416 963 9000 | Dial-in:

(301) 715-8592 | Password: 492019

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Shabbat Shalom

Volume 26, Issue 29

Shabbat Parashat Behar-Bechukotai

5780 - B"H

Covenant and Conversation: R. Jonathan Sacks

The Power of a Curse - The book of Vayikra draws to a close by outlining the blessings that will follow if the people are faithful to their covenant with God. Then it describes the curses that will befall them if they are not. The general principle is clear. In biblical times, the fate of the nation mirrored the conduct of the nation. If people behaved well, the nation would prosper. If they behaved badly, eventually bad things would happen. That is what the Prophets knew. As Martin Luther King paraphrased it, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." Not always immediately but ultimately, good is rewarded with good, bad with bad.

Our parsha starkly sets out the terms of that equation: if you obey God, there will be rain in its season, the ground will yield its crops and the trees their fruit; there will be peace. The curses, though, are almost three times as long and much more dramatic in the language they use:

"But if you will not listen to Me and carry out all these commands ... then I will do this to you: I will bring on you sudden terror, wasting diseases and fever that will destroy your sight and sap your strength...

I will break your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze... I will send wild animals against you, and they will rob you of your children, destroy your cattle and make you so few in number that your roads will be deserted... Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins...

As for those of you who are left, I will make their hearts so fearful in the lands of their enemies that the sound of a windblown leaf will put them to flight. They will run as though fleeing from the sword, and they will fall, even though no one is pursuing them."

There is a savage eloquence here. The images are vivid. There is a pulsing rhythm to the verses, as if the harsh fate that would overtake the nation is inexorable, cumulative and accelerating. The effect is intensified by the repeated hammer blows: "If after all this ... if you remain hostile ... if in spite of these things ... if in spite of this." The word *keri*, key to the whole passage, is repeated seven times. It appears nowhere else in the whole of Tanach. Its meaning is uncertain. It may mean rebelliousness, obstinacy, indifference, hard-heartedness, reluctance or being-left-to-chance. But the basic principle is clear. If you act toward Me with *keri*, says God, I will turn that same attribute against you, and you will be devastated.

It has long been a custom to read the *tochachah*, the curses, both here and in the parallel passage in Devarim 28, in a low voice in the synagogue, which has the effect of robbing them of their terrifying power if said out loud. But they are fearful enough however they are read. And both here and in Devarim, the section on curses is longer and far more graphic than the section on blessings.

This seems to contradict a basic principle of Judaism, that God's generosity to those who are faithful to Him vastly exceeds His punishment of those who are not. "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands ... He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation". Rashi does the arithmetic: "It

follows, therefore, that the measure of reward is greater than the measure of punishment by five hundred to one, for in respect of the measure of good it says: "maintaining love to thousands" (meaning at least two thousand generations), while punishment lasts for at most four generations.

The whole idea contained in the 13 Attributes of Compassion is that God's love and forgiveness are stronger than His justice and punishment. Why, therefore, are the curses in this week's parsha so much longer and stronger than the blessings?

The answer is that God loves and forgives, but with the proviso that, when we do wrong, we acknowledge the fact, express remorse, make restitution to those we have harmed, and repent. In the middle of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy is the statement, "Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished". God does not forgive the unrepentant sinner, because were He to do so, it would make the world a worse place, not a better one. More people would sin if there were no downside to doing so.

The reason the curses are so dramatic is not because God seeks to punish, but the precise opposite. The Talmud tells us that God weeps when He allows disaster to strike His people: "Woe to Me, that due to their sins I destroyed My house, burned My Temple and exiled them [My children] among the nations of the world." The curses were meant as a warning. They were intended to deter, scare, discourage. They are like a parent warning a young child not to play with electricity. The parent may deliberately intend to scare the child, but he or she does so out of love, not severity.

The classic instance is the book of Jonah. God tells Jonah the Prophet to go to Nineveh and warn the people, "In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed." He does so. The people take him seriously. They repent. God then relents from His threat to destroy the city. Jonah complains to God that He has made him look ridiculous. His prophecy has not come true. Jonah has failed to understand the difference between a prophecy and a prediction. If a prediction comes true, it has succeeded. If a prophecy comes true, it has failed. The Prophet tells the people what will happen if they fail to change. A prophecy is not a prediction but a warning. It describes a fearful future in order to persuade the people to avert it. That is what the *tochachah* is.

In their new book, *The Power of Bad*, John Tierney and Roy Baumeister argue on the basis of substantial scientific evidence, that bad has far more impact on us than good. We pay more attention to bad news than good news. Bad health makes more difference to us than good health. Criticism affects us more than praise. A bad reputation is easier to acquire and harder to lose than a good one.

Humans are designed – "hardwired" – to take notice of and rapidly react to threat. Failing to notice a lion is more dangerous than failing to notice a ripened fruit on a tree. Recognising the kindness of a friend is good and virtuous, but not as significant as ignoring the animosity of an enemy. One traitor can betray an entire nation.

It follows that the stick is a more powerful motivator than the carrot. Fear of the curse is more likely to affect behaviour than desire for the blessing. Threat of punishment is more effective than promise of reward. Tierney and Baumeister document this over a wide range of cases from education to crime rates. Where there is a clear threat

of punishment for bad behaviour, people behave better.

Judaism is a religion of love and forgiveness. But it is also a religion of justice. The punishments in the Torah are there not because God loves to punish, but because He wants us to act well. Imagine a country that had laws but no punishments. Would people keep the law? No. Everyone would choose to be a free-rider, taking advantage of the efforts of others without contributing oneself. Without punishment, there is no effective law, and without law there is no society. The more powerfully one can present the bad, the more likely people are to choose the good. That is why the *tochachah* is so powerful, dramatic and fear-inducing. The fear of bad is the most powerful motivator of good.

I believe that being warned of the bad helps us to choose the good. Too often we make the wrong choices because we don't think of the consequences. That's how global warming happened. That's how financial crashes happen. That's how societies lose their solidarity. Too often, people think of today, not the day after tomorrow. The Torah, painting in the most graphic detail what can happen to a nation when it loses its moral and spiritual bearings, is speaking to us in every generation, saying: Beware. Take note. Don't function on autopilot. Once a society begins to fall apart, it is already too late. Avoid the bad. Choose the good. Think long and choose the road that leads to blessings.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"And you shall count for yourselves seven cycles of Sabbatical years, seven years, seven times... forty-nine years... you shall sanctify the fiftieth year and proclaim freedom throughout the land for all its inhabitants; it shall be the Jubilee year for you."

This commandment to count seven cycles of Sabbatical years leading up to the 50th Jubilee year of proclaiming freedom throughout the land, is clearly reminiscent of the biblical commands we read last week (Parshat Emor): "Count for yourselves [from the day of your bringing the barley 'omer wave offering] seven complete weeks... you shall count fifty days..." from the day after our exodus from Egypt until the Festival of the first fruits (*bikkurim*), the festival commemorating the Revelation of God's Torah at Sinai.

What is the significance of this striking parallelism between the counting of the seven weeks between Passover and Shavuot and the counting of the seven sabbatical years leading up to the Jubilee year? What is the true message behind the daily count of *sefirat ha'omer*, the period which we are currently marking?

There are three words which express the concept of freedom: *hofesh*, *dror* and *herut*. *Hofesh* appears in the Book of Exodus in the context of the Hebrew slave leaving the homestead of his owner; at the end of his sixth year of employ he becomes (*hofshi hinam*), "completely free," without any obligation whatsoever to his former master.

The second word, *dror*, has just been cited in our present reading of Behar, in which "freedom" (*dror*) is to be proclaimed throughout the land on the advent of the Jubilee year.

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or email: sgreenberg@jhu.edu
<http://torah.saadia.info>

But the Festival of Passover, which celebrates our exodus from Egyptian servitude, is referred to by our Sages as zman herutenu, the time of our herut – a non-biblical word with Aramaic roots that connotes freedom. Why do our Sages pass over the two biblical Hebrew words hofesh and dror in describing our Festival of Freedom in favor of herut?

In his illuminating study *Escape from Freedom*, the philosopher and political theorist Erich Fromm (1900-1980) distinguishes between freedom from something and freedom for something. The former—the mere ridding oneself of duties and obligations—will, at best, produce a monotonous existence of boredom, aimlessness, and sometimes even depression; at worst, it will lead to alcohol and drug addiction, wild licentiousness and even criminal acts of depravity. Many societies would rather succumb to a totalitarian regime of enslavement rather than risk the challenges of the responsibility of freedom.

It is from this vantage point that Viktor Frankl (1905-1997), author of *From Death-Camp to Existentialism* and founder of the branch of psychoanalysis which he calls “logotherapy,” insists that the most essential human drive is not a search for pleasure, as Freud would maintain, or a search for power, as Adler and Jung suggest. Rather, it is the search for meaning, the human need to carve out a life of significance and worthwhile purpose. Freedom from enslavement must be linked indelibly with the belief of the individual that he/she is empowered to forge for him/herself a life dedicated to an important goal and purpose.

Hence, our Bible begins with the creation of the world, positing that every human being is created “in the image of God,” with a portion of the Lord on High within the very essence of his/her being,” so that he/she becomes commanded (and thereby empowered) to “develop the earth and preserve it,” to “perfect our imperfect world in the Kingship of the Divine.”

By reliving God’s primordial week of creation during our human weekly cycle of “working the world” for six days and resting in God’s presence on the seventh, we hopefully rekindle our task to perfect the world as God’s partners every single week! And hofesh in this context is our freedom of choice not to do whatever we wish but rather to choose good over evil, God over Satan, creation over destruction, eternal life in the generations we fostered, dedicated to Go-liness over instant death after an existence spent in futile pursuit of vanity and emptiness.

The word dror is used to express the period of human perfection, redemption (ge’ula), described in our Jubilee year, when all slaves will be freed, when everyone’s land will provide sufficient produce for all, when all debts will be rescinded, when everyone will be returned to their ancestral homestead, when all the needy of the world will be sustained by their communities. Dror is the purpose for which Israel and humanity was created; the society and world which Israel and humanity must recreate in God’s loving partners.

And do our Sages refer to the time of our liberation from Egyptian enslavement as herut, which derives from the Hebrew ah-rayut, responsibility: the pathway toward the final accomplishment of universal dror, the responsibility of freedom for, the responsibility of accepting the formidable task of partnership with the Divine, the responsibility of protecting our siblings (ahim) unfrit Hof, the responsibility of protecting every stranger (aher) who is also our sibling under God, the responsibility of going first and saying “aharai” (after me), and the responsibility of bringing the world to its aharit hayamim, the final stage of redemption, the Messianic Age.

And so, as soon as we became free, we started to count; only for a free person does every day count, only for a free person is every day fraught with infinite possibilities of productivity and meaning. We count until we receive our Torah, which is our blueprint for the creation of a perfected world. And you will note that although the Bible commands that we count 50 days – we stop at 49. That is also why the Festival is called Shavuot – because we are still a work-in-progress, we have not yet reached the goal of the Messianic Age, we still await the Messiah, we are still in the Process, not yet in the Attainment, the era of Redemption. And perhaps that is what it means to be human, to be constantly striving – and growing, and improving. A great Sage once said, “Pity the man who has achieved his ideal; he has no reason to continue living!” And so in the teachings of the Sacred Zohar, the fiftieth rung of the ladder is where the loving Lord is to be found, Alone in Glorious Splendor.

Torah.Org: Rabbi Yissocher Frand

A Tale of Two Ta’amei Temurah – Rambam and Sefer HaChinuch

The end of Parshas Bechukosai contains the concept of temurah. There is an entire tractate in the Talmud devoted to these laws. Temurah is a situation where a person sanctifies an animal, designating it to be a Korban, and then he wants to change his mind. He decides that rather than offering this animal as his sacrifice, he wants to offer another animal in its stead. Even if in fact the second animal is superior to the one he initially designated (meaning the Beis HaMikdash will wind up getting a nicer animal for the mizbayach) nevertheless it is forbidden to swap animals once the first animal has been designated as holy. If in fact one attempts to make such a swap, declaring “zeh temuras zeh” (this one will be in place of this one), the result is that both animals are now holy.

The Rambam and Sefer HaChinuch take different approaches in explaining the laws of temurah.

The Rambam writes at the end of hilchos temurah: “Even though everything in the Torah is a chok [a law for which we do not grasp its ultimate reason], it is appropriate to analyze them (chukim) and wherever a rationale can be given, we should offer that rationale. It appears to me that both the halacha of temurah (where both the animals become holy) and the halacha that when one tries to redeem an animal that he has previously donated to the Bais Hamikdash, he must add a twenty-five percent surcharge, are cases of the Torah descending into the thoughts of man, which are motivated by his evil inclination. It is the nature of people to want to amass wealth, and to hold onto their possessions.”

This is indeed one of the great truths of life. People love money. Someone does not need to be the Rambam to advance such an idea. People are worried about their financial holdings.

The Rambam continues: “And even though he went ahead and made a donation to the Bais Hamikdash, it is possible that he has second thoughts and regrets his generosity. In retracting his previous donation, he is tempted to redeem or replace it with something of lesser value.”

Basically, we need to be afraid that the fellow — as a result of his “second thoughts” — is trying to cheat hekdesch. In a “moment of weakness,” he transferred ownership of a beautiful animal to the treasurer of the Bais Hamikdash. Then when “his senses get the better of him” he asks himself, “What in the world did I do? Does Hashem really care if it is a beautiful cow or an ugly cow? A sacrifice is a sacrifice. It is just going to be slaughtered anyhow!” The Torah is trying to pre-empt this tendency to renege on his pledge to hekdesch, so the Torah insures that any person who tries to undo his moment of generosity

Likutei Divrei Torah

will pay dearly for that attempt. Even if in fact the second animal is superior to the first animal, there are no exceptions to this rule. If the Torah would allow us a “free switch” under any circumstances, there is no end to the abuse this privilege would cause. Therefore, the Torah insists, “and it will be that the original animal and its substitute will both be holy.” This is the opinion of the Rambam.

The Sefer HaChinuch takes a different approach, offering the following very interesting idea: Someone should not fool around with sacred items. He writes: “Therefore, in order to implant in our hearts fear and reverence of matters that are holy, the Torah wants us to respect holy items. Kedusha is something which we must relate to with reverence. When someone enters the Bais Hamikdash, he must fear it. Scripture therefore commands us not to tamper with the holiness of donated items.

Once an item has become sanctified, that status should remain permanently. Once an animal is holy, it should not enter our mind to switch that sanctity onto a different animal. If a person tries to make such a switch, the Torah nullifies his intent, and both animals will become sanctified. The end result of trying to remove holiness will be just the opposite – it will multiply holiness!”

Rav Pam extrapolates this idea of the Sefer HaChinuch, and suggests that this idea (i.e. — that anyone trying to tamper with or destroy kedusha will find that kedusha spreads) has been the story of Jewish history. In Egypt, they wanted to destroy the Jewish people. What happened? Kedusha spread. “The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread.” Pharaoh wanted to make the Jewish people subhuman in the eyes of the masses. What happened? At the time of the Exodus, “Also a mixed multitude (of Egyptian people) went up with them”. Trying to destroy the holiness of the Jewish people is doomed to failure. The Ribono shel Olam says that this is the nature of kedusha. Try to squelch it, try to destroy it, try to get rid of it — and it spreads.

The wicked Haman attempted to destroy, eradicate, and murder all the Jews from young lad until old man. He desired to uproot kedusha. However, the nature of kedusha is that the more one tries to destroy it, the more it spreads. “And many of the masses of the people (of Persia) converted”. They started converting in droves. How do we explain this phenomenon? Perhaps you can argue that “Everybody wants to be with a winner; they want to get on the band wagon.” No! It was more than that. It is the nature of kedusha to expand. This is what the parsha of temurah teaches us.

Rav Pam added that many of the people who founded the State of Israel came from Socialist, Communist, and Bundist backgrounds. They made it part of their agenda to uproot the sanctity of Israel. “We will be like all the nations, O House of Israel”. What happens when one tries to do that to kedusha? It spreads. That is why the grandchildren of some of those people are the baalei teshuvah today who are learning Torah in Ponnevez and Mir and Brisk, and all the Yeshivos that are sprouting up throughout the length and breadth of Eretz Yisrael, as never before. Why? This is just the nature of kedusha. They try to wipe it out and decimate it, but the Ribono shel Olam says that is not going to happen. “You start up with kedusha — it is going to spread.”

This is the lesson of temurah. Not only did you not accomplish what you set out to do, but instead of one animal being holy, now two animals are holy. Such is the nature of kedusha.

Parashat Behar opens: "Hashem spoke to Moshe on *Har Sinai*, saying, '... When you come into the land that I give to you, the land shall observe a Sabbath rest for *Hashem*. For six years you shall sow your field ...'" Our Sages (quoted by *Rashi z"l*) ask: Why does the Torah mention that the laws of *Shemittah* were given at Sinai? To teach that just as every detail of *Shemittah's* laws was given at Sinai, so every detail of the Torah was given at Sinai. [Until here from *Rashi*]

R' Pinchas Menachem Alter z"l (1926-1996; *Gerrer Rebbe*) observes that "Sinai" is mentioned in connection with other *Mitzvot* too. Why, then, is the above lesson taught here of all places?

The *Gemara* (*Sanhedrin* 39a) asks: What is the reason for *Shemittah*? It answers: "The Torah says, 'Plant for six years and rest in the seventh year, so that you will know that the land is Mine'." It appears from here, says the *Gerrer Rebbe*, that planting during the six years also is a *Mitzvah*, provided that it is done with the same faith in *Hashem* with which one rests in the seventh year. (This is why, says the *Rebbe's* grandfather, the *Sefat Emet*, the consequence of not keeping the *Shemittah* is exile. If we lack the faith in G-d necessary to keep the *Shemittah*, then we also will not plant with faith. In that case, we have no business being on the Land.)

The whole world was created so that we can keep the Torah; when we observe the Torah, we testify that *Hashem* created the world. We bear the same testimony when we live a life imbued with the message of the *Shemittah*. This is why it is appropriate to compare the entire Torah to *Shemittah*, as in the *Rashi* quoted above. (*Pnei Menachem*)

Pirkei Avot

"The world was created with ten utterances. What does this come to teach? Indeed, it could have been created with one utterance! However, [it was done] in order to exact punishment from the wicked, who destroy the world that was created with ten utterances, and to bestow good reward upon the righteous, who sustain the world that was created with ten utterances. (Chapter 5)

The "ten utterances" are the nine times in the first chapter of *Bereishit* that the Torah says, "He said," plus the word "*Bereishit*" itself, for with that word *Hashem* began Creation. Because *Hashem* "troubled" Himself, so-to-speak, to create the world in ten steps, instead of in one step, the wicked are deserving of greater punishment and the righteous are deserving of greater reward. (*Rashi z"l*)

R' Yosef Ze'ev Lipovitz z"l (1886-1962; a leading student of the *Alter* of Slabodka z"l; *Rosh Yeshiva* in Tel Aviv) writes: Had the world been created with one utterance, we would never know who was more important than whom. All creations -- inanimate things, animals, and humans -- would have been equal. But, now that the world was created in ten steps, we know that mankind is the pinnacle of Creation.

Of course, notes R' Lipovitz, this knowledge imposes a burden on man. Specifically because man is so great, he is responsible for preserving *Hashem's* creation by obeying G-d's Will.

R' Lipovitz adds: Before the Torah was given and mankind learned the above lesson, man was a prisoner of nature. Every tree, waterfall, storm, bird, animal, etc. was a force to be worshiped, and man bowed his head to it. The Torah, however, frees man from such beliefs and teaches that mankind is loftier than any other creation. Though man was created last, he was first in the Creator's plan, say our Sages.

(*Nachalat Yosef Al Ha'Torah* p.138)

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"I am Hashem, your Elokim, Who took you out of the land of Egypt from being their slaves; I broke the staves of your yoke and I led you standing straight." (26:13)

R' Yitzchak Arieli z"l (1896-1974; co-founder and *Mashgiach* of Yeshivat Merkaz Harav; author of *Enayim La'mishpat*) explains: Not only will Hashem remove the yoke of exile from our necks, He will break the yoke entirely. Moreover, we will not be left bent and crippled by the yoke of the exile. Rather, Hashem will lead us standing straight to our Land, as if we had never borne a yoke. Our ultimate return to *Eretz Yisrael* will not be a flight from exile; it will be a proud return to our Land -- standing tall!
(*Haggadah Shel Pesach Shirat Ha'geulah* p.82)

"If, despite this, you do not heed Me, then I shall persecute you further, seven ways for your sins." (26:18)

How is it just if we are persecuted seven ways for our sins?

R' Levi ben Gershon z"l ("*Ralbag*"; 1288-1344) explains: We read (*Shmot* 34:7), "[Hashem] recalls the iniquity of parents upon children and grandchildren." The *Gemara* (*Berachot* 7a) asks why children should be punished for their parents' sins, and it answers that the verse refers to children who follow in their parents' evil ways.

Why is that just? *Ralbag* explains: G-d doesn't bring suffering as a punishment. Rather, as a kindness, He brings suffering upon us to motivate us to change our ways. The more ingrained a bad behavior is, the greater the push that is needed to change that behavior. If a bad behavior has been present in a family for several generations, the suffering needed to help a person unlearn that behavior is greater than what is needed if the behavior is new. That is what the *Gemara* cited above is teaching.

Likewise, *Ralbag* explains, our verse is speaking of repeated bad behavior. Therefore, Hashem says that we will be persecuted seven ways for our sins--not as a punishment, but as a kindness He will do for us.

(*Commentary to Yehoshua* 7:1-12)

"Then they will confess their sin and the sin of their forefathers, . . . I, too, will behave toward them with casualness, and I will bring them into the land of their enemies." (26:40-41)

Why, if *Bnei Yisrael* confess their sins, will Hashem behave toward them with casualness and bring them to the land of their enemies? R' Moshe Freidiger z"l (communal leader in Pest, Hungary) explains:

Teshuvah means confessing one's sins and not making excuses. Here, *Bnei Yisrael* will confess, but they will justify their actions by saying that their forefathers acted the same way. Such "*teshuvah*" will be rejected.

(Quoted in *Otzrot Tzaddikei U'geonei Ha'dorot*)

"You shall sanctify the year of the fiftieth year . . . and each of you shall return to his ancestral heritage . . ." (Vayikra 25:10)

Why is the word "year" mentioned twice? R' Yechezkel Shraga Lifschutz-Halberstam z"l (1908-1995; *Stropkover Rebbe*) explains:

During the 49 days of the *Omer*, we are supposed to be preparing ourselves to receive the Torah on *Shavuot*, the 50th day. But what if *Shavuot* comes and we realize that we have not prepared at all? It is taught that one should not become depressed, for, on *Shavuot* itself, one can make-up all of the spiritual gains that he should have accomplished during the *Omer*.

The same, says the *Stropkover Rebbe*, is true of the *Yovel* / Jubilee year, which has additional holiness compared to other years. The repetition of the word "year" in our verse teaches that one can attain in one year everything that he should have achieved in the preceding 49 years. This is similar to that which *Rambam* writes: "Even the repentance of one who does not repent until he is on his death bed is accepted."

Why is it that one can repent in his old age after a lifetime of sinning? Why is it that one can accomplish in a short time (in the 50th year or on *Shavuot*) what one should have spent a long time accomplishing? Our verse tells us the answer: Such a person is merely returning to his ancestral heritage. In reality, no Jew ever lets go of that heritage completely, whether he realizes it or not.

(*Divrei Yechezkel Shraga* Vol. III)

"If you will follow My decrees and observe My commandments and perform them; then I will provide your rains in their time, and the land will give its produce and the tree of the field will give its fruit." (26:3)

R' Chaim of Valozhyn z"l (Belarus; 1749-1821) asks: The Torah promises many material rewards to those who study Torah and observe the *Mitzvot*. Why, then, do we observe that so many *Tzaddikim* are poor and hungry?

He explains: The performance of *Mitzvot* awakens a great flow of bounty from the Heavens to the earth. However, when the number of people performing *Mitzvot* is relatively small, the number of channels through which that bounty can flow is likewise small. By rights, the bounty should flow only to those who are performing *Mitzvot*. However, Hashem is merciful, so He takes from the bounty and shares it, even with those who are not deserving.

Indeed, continues R' Chaim, the *Tzaddik* himself may end up with nothing. Thus, the *Gemara* (*Berachot* 17b) quotes Hashem as saying about the sage Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa: "The entire world is sustained 'Be'shvil' My son Chanina, while My son Chanina is satisfied with a *Kav* / two quarts of carobs each week." "*Be'shvil*" can mean "because of," but it also, "in the path of" -- i.e., the entire world is sustained through the "channel" created by Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa.

Of course, R' Chaim writes, the *Tzaddik* is not really left with nothing! Rather, teaches the *Gemara* (*Chagigah* 15a), a *Tzaddik* receives a *Rasha's* portion in the World-to-Come in addition to his own portion. Since the undeserving receive the portion of the righteous in this world, it is only fair that the righteous receive recompense in the World-to-Come.
(*Ruach Chaim* 1:3)

ISRAEL REPORT

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FORMED GOVERNMENT (Arutz-7 5/13/20)

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu sent a letter to Knesset Speaker MK Benny Gantz and President Reuven Rivlin on Wednesday evening announcing that he had succeeded in forming a government.

Netanyahu intends, if the contacts with Yamina succeed, to keep the Education Ministry open for one of the party's MKs. However, the distance between the positions of the Likud and Yamina parties remain large.

Earlier, Yamina chairman Defense Minister Naftali Bennett spoke with Prime Minister Netanyahu in an attempt to reach a compromise that would allow the party to join the unity government.

During the conversation, the prime minister said that the Likud's proposal will not change and that the proposal on the table is the Jerusalem Portfolio, a deputy minister with responsibility for national service and settlement, part-chairmanship of the absorption committee and another ministry.

The conversation ended without an agreement.

NETANYAHU APPOINTS LIKUD MINISTER GILAD ERDAN AS ISRAEL'S AMBASSADOR TO BOTH U.S., UN (Ha'aretz 5/11/20)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced on Monday that Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan will take on the post of Israel's Ambassador to both the United States and the United Nations, as Netanyahu draws up his next government, to be sworn in on Thursday.

Erdan, who was fourth on the Likud list in the last election and has been in the Knesset since 2003, will be replacing both Ron Dermer, the current U.S.-born ambassador to the United States, and Danny Danon, permanent representative to the UN since 2015.

Dermer, who has had a prominent role in the relationship between the Trump White House and the Israeli administration, made several demands in the recent past to be relieved of his duties for family reasons, but remained at his job due to the unprecedented period of political instability in Israel.

Erdan will continue to serve as a minister in the government until his official appointment as ambassador. He will take up his post at the UN as soon as the new Israeli government, to be sworn in on Thursday, approves his nomination. He will likely take over from Dermer only after the U.S. presidential election in November.

The simultaneous appointment to both Washington and New York is rare. However, according to the coalition deal, Benny Gantz will be able to appoint a new ambassador to Washington when he takes over from Netanyahu as prime minister. When that happens, Erdan will stay on as ambassador to UN. Erdan previously served as the Minister of Environmental Protection, Minister of Interior Affairs, Home Front Affairs Minister and was Minister of Communications during Netanyahu's Walla-Bezeq affair for which he is indicted in corruption case 4000.

As strategic affairs minister, he worked with the Mossad in its wide-ranging campaign against the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. Among other things, he promoted the law that prevents boycott supporters from entering Israel.

BENNETT HEADS TO THE OPPOSITION WITH QUALMS AS ALLY SPLITS FROM RIGHT-WING SLATE (Ha'aretz 5/14/20)

Right-wing party Yamina will not join Israel's new government, which is expected to be sworn in Thursday night, outgoing defense minister and party chairman Nafatli Bennett confirmed in a harsh Facebook post.

"We are heading to the opposition wholeheartedly, Netanyahu chose to get

rid of Yamina," Bennett said on Thursday. "Our eight years in the Netanyahu government are ending today. He chose a path that is not right [wing]."

Education Minister Rafi Peretz, leader of Habayit Hayehudi, one the parties that make up Yamina, agreed on Thursday to enter the government without his right-wing faction. Peretz split from Yamina, with which he ran in the March 2 election and will join the government as Jerusalem affairs minister.

Bennett accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of "communicating with [Yamina] only through videos and tweets in which he said things that are not true." Netanyahu "needs a strong national moral compass at his side but he doesn't really like it when he has one, so he always tries to weaken us, to clip our wings and disrespect us," he added.

Likud said in response to Bennett's post: "If Bennett had gotten the Health Ministry, he would have said it's the right's dream government. But because he didn't, he decided to drag Yamina to the opposition." The harsh Likud statement ends by proclaiming "the end of the Bennett era."

The two supplied contradictory versions of what was said during the phone call: Netanyahu said he offered Bennett and the party the education portfolio or a senior economic portfolio of his choice – along with the Jerusalem Affairs Ministry.

Bennett said he was offered the Jerusalem affairs portfolio, a deputy minister with responsibility for national service and settlements, half the chairman of the Knesset Absorption Committee and another ministry for the party.

EDUCATION SYSTEM TO FULLY OPEN SUNDAY (Arutz-7 5/14/20)

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has approved the opening of the education system, according to which schools and kindergartens will open this Sunday except for areas that have seen high levels of morbidity recently. It has been determined that as of June 1, another situation assessment will

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Young Israel Bet Tefilah of Aberdeen, NJ
Young Israel of Brookline, MA
Young Israel of East Brunswick, NJ
Young Israel of Fort Lee, NJ
Young Israel of Hancock Park, CA
Young Israel of Holliswood, NY
Young Israel of Houston, TX
Young Israel of New Hyde Park, NY
Young Israel of North Woodmere, NY
Young Israel of New Rochelle, NY
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be conducted to examine the list of cities with high morbidity.

The rules of hygiene will be strictly adhered to in accordance with the Ministry of Health's instructions, which will include, among other things, the washing of hands.

Each student will present a health statement at the school entrance. Students will wear a mask in the open spaces during breaks. Students in fourth grade and above will also wear masks in the class.

During breaks, there will be a physical distance of two meters between people.

It was also decided that schools and kindergartens would work to move most activities to places that allow two meters between people. Places in which morbidity has been detected will be closed in accordance with the order of operations to be determined by the Ministry of Health. At the same time, a limited staff will be set up to assess the educational system for another wave of morbidity.

DIASPORA MINISTRY HOLDS EVENT FOR COVID-19-HIT JEWISH COMMUNITIES (JPost 5/13/20)

The Diaspora Affairs Ministry conducted an event on Tuesday night outside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem to express solidarity with Jewish communities around the world which have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the event, Diaspora Affairs Minister Tzipi Hotovely expressed her concern for Jews in the US, France and the UK where the number of deaths from the disease in each country is in the hundreds, as well as in the Italian Jewish community where the number of victims is smaller.

The flags of those countries were projected onto the walls of Jerusalem's Old City outside the Jaffa Gate as a message of support.

"To those who have suffered loss of life, we want to send a message of prayer and healing from Jerusalem to the Jewish communities in Paris, London, Rome and New York," said Hotovely.

"Jewish communities have stood beside Israel during war and terror, and celebrated with us during times of triumph. "Today we stand with you."

BEN-GURION AIRPORT TO UNVEIL NEW CORONAVIRUS TRAVEL SAFETY PLAN (JPost 5/13/20)

Ben-Gurion Airport will roll out new coronavirus safety measures on Thursday, aspiring to create a so-called "corona-free" transportation hub as it prepares for the hopeful return of passengers to its terminals.

The safety measures, part of a pilot program for departing passengers, will include permitting only ticket-carrying travelers into the Terminal 3 building, a mandatory temperature check, a mask-wearing requirement and regular disinfecting of facilities.

"We attach great importance to preventing infection, enabling employees and passengers to maintain a high level of health safety when arriving at the airport and on their departure and return from abroad," Ben-Gurion Airport managing-director Shmuel Zakai said.

People accompanying the travelers will not be permitted to enter the terminal building. Tickets will be checked at the terminal entrance following online check-in.

Protective measures for airport staff will include screens at check-in booths, personal protective equipment and temperature checks. Additional floor-cleaning robots will be deployed in the terminal building.

The pilot program will be tested on two departing flights, airport officials said, adding that they are working on adapting the entire airport with the same measures.

Duty-free stores are expected to be opened gradually, with a dedicated smartphone application permitting advance orders. The McDonald's branch in the Departure Hall is scheduled to open next week.

Work is currently under way to develop a medical platform that enables healthy passengers to present a "medical passport or visa," allowing swift

movement through the terminal buildings, the IAA said. The ban on foreign nationals entering the country is set to expire on May 30, but it may be extended.

DEFENDING ISRAEL'S SKIES IN AN ERA OF GLOBAL PANDEMICS (Israel Hayom 5/13/20)

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, the Israeli Air Force's Air Defense Command has continued to stand guard, monitoring and protecting Israel's skies against a range of enemy threats, but with some adjustments.

"The recent period has been interesting and challenging. The air force has defined this situation as an emergency," Capt. Moshe Admoni, an Arrow Battery Commander, said. "We made a number of adjustments to deal with the situation. In the end, we are doing the same thing that we did beforehand."

The 26-year-old commander began his military service as a soldier in the Iron Dome air defense system. He later transferred to the Arrow system after becoming an officer and has been a part of this advanced system since 2014. In the Air Defense Command, the same unit operates both the Arrow 2 air defense system, which intercepts ballistic missiles in the upper atmosphere, and the Arrow 3 system, designed to conduct interceptions of long-range missiles in space.

"We operate one of the weapons system that forms a part of the multi-layer defense over Israel," said Admoni. "We work with other systems: Iron Dome, David's Sling, and the Patriot. Each operates at its own altitude."

During the past two months, although the Air Defense Array has been at full readiness and capacity, carrying out all of its maintenance and training, it also used a different way to divide up personnel and to decrease the chances of infections disrupting the operations.

"We assume that this virus is circulating, that it's around, and that there is a chance that one of our people will be infected. Even if that happens, the personnel system that we have put into place allows us to do all of the activities at the same level," he explained.

In line with the new system, the Arrow battery personnel have been divided into teams, and each team can operate the entire battery. The teams do not encounter one another.

"If someone becomes sick, and I have to isolate the team because they all met the infected person, I can continue working with the other teams, and after two weeks, the isolated team can come back," added the commander.

This separation system is being implemented in all IAF units, although each unit is doing it in its own way to adjust to its unique conditions.

Despite the changes, said Admoni, the high morale of the personnel guarding Israel's skies is continuing to drive the unit forward. Some of the soldiers had to remain on base for many weeks and could not see their families to decrease the chances of spreading the infection.

"To see their motivation and their acceptance, their desire to stay, their understanding that the mission must continue as usual – this was extraordinary," said the officer. "The spirit of the personnel is incredible. I think this is a strong characteristic of our military."

Admoni also called attention to the fact that his unit contains a female deputy commander and three female soldiers. "This combination of male and female soldiers means our unit is a trailblazer. It has proven itself. This is important for the unit and for the air defense array as a whole."

Like all air defense systems, the Arrow system is made up of a detection component, a command and control center, and interceptor missiles. "We understand that Iran and other countries have strategic weapons, and that this system provides a solution," he said.

IDF PREPARES FOR APPLICATION OF SOVEREIGNTY (Arutz-7 5/13/20)

The defense establishment is preparing to apply sovereignty in the Jordan Valley and Judea and Samaria, a dramatic political step that is expected to begin this July.

Talks with security officials indicate three possible scenarios in Judea and Samaria: According to the most extreme scenario being prepared for, there will be large-scale protests and terrorist acts such as shootings and stabbings, as well as the throwing of stones and Molotov Cocktails.

According to the second scenario, terrorist attacks and riots in Judea and Samaria will occur and terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip who will find it difficult to keep quiet and not protest the Israeli moves.

According to the third and least extreme scenario, riots and disturbances are expected throughout Judea and Samaria, similar to those that occur weekly.

The day before the US Secretary of State's visit to Israel, the Fatah organization warned against the application of sovereignty. The IDF is preparing for the three scenarios and is ready to step up its forces if necessary.

HEBREW PRAYER BECOMES GLOBAL SENSATION (YNet 5/10/20)

A Hebrew prayer put to music by an Israeli wishing for his grandmother's recovery from illness has become a global sensation with more than one hundred covers, thousands of shares and hundreds of thousands of views.

Composer Yair Levi took the words of "El na refa na la" (please God heal her) - Moses' prayer for God to heal his sister after she contracted leprosy - and put them to music. And as the coronavirus swept across the globe, the song struck a chord around the world.

"My grandmother had an illness unrelated to coronavirus, but the pandemic obviously affected everyone, myself included," says 30-year-old Levi. "Due to the epidemic, I received the names of people in need of prayer and a list of about 20 names accumulated on my fridge. Every day, I would say a prayer for the sick, and I searched for words and a tune related to medicine."

Then Levi remembered the "El na refa la" prayer.

"I took my guitar and composed the music for it on the spot, and since I have a recording studio in my home, I recorded the song within a week."

Levi then approached Shai Sol - a vocalist internationally renowned for singing the Psalms.

"In quarantine and with no way to actually meet, she recorded herself," Levi says. And then he posted the song on social media.

"It was amazing, we received many responses and translations," he says.

The song has been translated into and sung in Spanish, Chinese, French, Arabic, Hindu, Swahili, Russian and German.

"Immediately after we released the song, it was shared online by evangelist Christians, Jewish communities, and even the Friends of the IDF organization," Levi says.

But not only the obvious audiences were enthusiastic.

"We have received cover versions from all over the world, including from a Lebanese singer, and on Saturday evening, I received three new covers from Namibia, Africa, India, and a Brazilian singer, Fortnee Joyce Safdie, who performed the song live on her Instagram page," Levi says.

"Getting so many messages from people all around the world is incredible. If I have the privilege to spread prayer around the world, to me it's just crazy. When people from all over the world translate and sing a prayer for health, it feels like it is literally the end of times."

During his military service, Levi became closer to Judaism, eventually marrying a woman from a religious home at the age of 24.

"People see me as a religious person but I don't like labels," he said.

Levi, who served in an elite IDF commando unit during the 2010 clashes onboard a flotilla attempting to reach Gaza, describes the incident as a turning point. Ten soldiers from Levi's unit were wounded.

After the incident, he decided to join an IDF officer course, but eventually opted to abandon a military career at the age of 26 in favor of a musical one.

"I spoke with my commander who told me people often regret what they had not done," Levi says. "It opened my eyes and I realized that the flotilla incident pushed me in the direction of the course, but my real dream was to make music and become a singer."

And in fact, two days after leaving the service, Levi was on his way to climb Everest, which inspired his first album.

RARE BAR KOCHBA-ERA COIN DISCOVERED AT FOOT OF TEMPLE MOUNT (Israel Hayom 5/11/20)

In honor of the Lag B'Omer holiday, which commemorates the life of anti-Roman Torah sage Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) on Monday revealed the discovery of a rare bronze coin from the period of the Bar Kochba revolt (circa 132 CE).

The coin was uncovered during excavations in the William Davidson Archaeological Park, between the Temple Mount and the City of David in Jerusalem. The excavations are conducted by the IAA and funded by the Ir David Foundation (Elad), which operates the site.

The IAA says that it is the only coin from the period found in the ancient part of the Holy City that bears the name "Jerusalem."

According to IAA archaeologists, "It is possible that a Roman soldier from the Tenth Legion found the coin during one of the battles across the country and brought it to their camp in Jerusalem as a souvenir."

The obverse of the coin is decorated with a cluster of grapes and the inscription, "Year Two of the Freedom of Israel." Its reverse side features a palm tree and the inscription, "Jerusalem."

IAA Coin Department head Donald Tzvi Ariel, who has examined more than 22,000 coins discovered in excavations in the Old City in Jerusalem, said that only four of these date to the period of the Bar Kochba revolt.

The Bar Kochba Revolt lasted three and a half years. During that time, more than 1,000 Jewish towns and 50 fortresses were destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed.

Rabbi Akiva - the mentor of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai - was one of many rabbinical leaders who supported Bar Kochba, and believed that he would be a messiah for the Jewish people.

After news of his criticism of the Roman occupation reached Roman leadership, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai was forced to flee with his son, Rabbi Eleazar, and live in a cave for 13 years. He died on the 33rd day (the acronym of the Hebrew letters, lamed and gimel) of the 49-day counting of the Omer, between the second night of Passover and the day before Shavuot.

99-YEAR-OLD ISRAELI HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR RECOVERS FROM CORONAVIRUS (YNet 5/13/20)

A 99-year-old Israeli Holocaust survivor has made an amazing recovery from coronavirus and was discharged from hospital, a month after being diagnosed.

Sha'are Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem, where the woman was hospitalized, confirmed the news on Monday. "Thank you to everyone, I just want to get home," she told the medical staff after being cleared of the virus.

The woman, Sara Itzinger, and her husband Hershel, both were diagnosed with COVID-19 nearly a month ago during a series of tests at their nursing home in Jerusalem.

The husband's condition rapidly deteriorated and he passed away a few days later at the age of 96.

His wife, however, has recovered despite suffering from a number of underlying health conditions.

Itzinger is a Holocaust survivor who moved to the United States after World War II, where she met her husband. The pair had one daughter and 13 grandchildren, who all moved to Israel.

The pair immigrated to Israel from the U.S. about a year ago. They resided in Maon Horim assisted living facility in the capital.

One of their grandsons, Nitzan Hefetz, is the head of MDA's coronavirus testing team in the Jerusalem area. He personally took the pair to the emergency room and conducted COVID-19 tests.

"Sara is an inspiration to all of us," he said.

OPPOSITION COULD BE THE RIGHT MOVE FOR BENNETT, IF NOT ISRAEL (Editorial, JPost 5/13/20)

In 1962, after losing a close gubernatorial race in California, Richard Nixon held what he proclaimed would be his last press conference and memorably told reporters they would not "have Nixon to kick around anymore."

Outgoing Defense Minister Naftali Bennett, when he takes leave of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on his way out of the government and into the opposition, could be forgiven for paraphrasing the former US president and telling Netanyahu that he won't "have Bennett to kick around anymore."

Indeed, it does seem that Netanyahu has taken a certain pleasure in sticking it to Bennett.

He did this during the last election campaign, telling supporters that the only reason he appointed Bennett defense minister was to neutralize him politically. And he did it again during the current coalition negotiations, toying with Bennett and giving his Yamina Party an offer they couldn't accept: the education and Jerusalem portfolios, and an unnamed deputy ministerial post dealing with issues important to the religious Zionist camp.

These offers may have appealed to the old National Religious Party (NRP), which for years was content in dealing with issues important to their constituents: building synagogues, mikvaot and – later – settlements.

But Bennett burst onto the political scene in 2013, wanting to break out of the cage that former governments had pushed the NRP into. No longer would the national religious camp under his leadership be content with religious issues: They wanted to play in the big leagues and impact matters beyond religion and education. In the process, Bennett hoped to widen the party's appeal beyond a narrow national religious-voter base.

This formula succeeded at first, with Bennett's Bayit Yehudi Party winning 12 seats in the 2013 elections, up from the seven won by the two offshoots of the now defunct NRP four years earlier.

But that was his political peak. In 2015, Bayit Yehudi dropped to eight seats, and in the first round of the 2019 balloting, Bennett – whose ambitions to spread well beyond a religious constituency led to the formation of the New Right Party – failed to pass the electoral threshold and enter the Knesset.

Chastised, he was number four on Yamina's list in September, headed by Ayelet Shaked, which only won seven seats; when he led the list in the March elections, it dropped to six seats.

It is with that dowry of six seats and a downward trajectory that he entered negotiations with Netanyahu. The prime minister, who after the agreement with Blue and White no longer needed those six seats for a coalition, offered little. Bennett, as of Wednesday evening, had said "no," and the pathway to the opposition was paved.

This may not necessarily be the best for the country, but it could turn out to be the right move for Bennett.

Why might this situation potentially be good for him? Because finally he will be able to step out of Netanyahu's shadow and present the nation with his own right-wing vision. As a minister, he had to temper his criticism of the prime minister and the government's actions. He criticized, but could only go so far. If he does end up really going to the opposition, Bennett will have the opportunity to build himself and his party up, presenting themselves as genuine alternatives on the right to Netanyahu and the Likud.

On the other hand, this would be a potential loss for the country. Because like him or not, Bennett – in the various ministries he has served – has proven to be a dedicated, energetic minister; a doer, a bitzuist, someone who thinks creatively and gets things done.

As defense minister, he took aggressive action against Iran in Syria to keep the Islamic Republic from setting up a permanent base there, and he deserves credit for getting the security establishment heavily involved in Israel's fight against COVID-19. He pushed for massive testing, and set up hotels where quarantined patients would be housed. He took initiative and pushed hard for steps that turned out to be wise. Bennett, who had his eyes on the Health Ministry, would have served the country well in that position –

or any other ministry.

By the time the government is sworn in, lots can still happen and decisions can be overturned on an hourly basis. For now, what may ultimately prove a smart move for Bennett personally might be a loss for the country.

THE BATTLE FOR SOVEREIGNTY HAS BEGUN (Dr. Limor Samimian-Darash, Israel Hayom 5/14/20)

Even before the new government has been sworn in, the fight over sovereignty has begun. Firstly: the terminology. The Left insists on the term "annexation," instead of the more accurate legal term: "application of sovereignty." This isn't a coincidence. Although from the perspective of international law there's never been another recognized sovereign entity here, beyond the British Mandate's written acknowledgment of the Jewish people's national right to their historical homeland, the champions of a Palestinian state choose to say "annexation." It stems from the same lexicon as "occupation," and its purpose is to linguistically erase our historical and legal rights to our land.

Secondly, what began as a trickle once the White House declared its peace plan has morphed into a deluge of warnings. On one hand, pundits are more than happy to temper the excitement and pin their hopes on senior American officials saying July 1 isn't a sacred deadline from the perspective of the US. On the other hand, they greet US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo with calls to "stop the annexation" and try to downplay American support for Israel, saying it only stems from electoral considerations.

Also taking part in this campaign is the group "Commanders for Israel's Security," which churns out a steady stream of position papers denouncing the application of sovereignty while doomsday prophesizing the end of the Zionist vision. All this as their alternate plan champions "separation" from the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria. In the same breath, they argue that the damage caused by the disengagement from Gaza can no longer be solved by military means, rather only by the return of the Palestinian Authority to the coastal enclave. In other words, the establishment of a Palestinian state will solve all of our concerns.

Thirdly: the positions of other countries. International support is only considered positive when it runs contrary to Israeli policies. Because the almost total support from the most important superpower on the planet, the United States, not only isn't enough, it leads to something dangerous. US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman says the US is preparing to recognize Israeli sovereignty within a matter of weeks, and Pompeo declared that sovereignty is up to Israel – but the leaders of the campaign to torpedo this initiative don't swell with pride and satisfaction at the echoing of the Jewish people's historic national right.

Just the opposite, they feel strong pangs of nostalgia for Obama's ultimatum; for the pressure that was imposed to stop all construction in the settlements, just for sake of merely starting negotiations with the Palestinians; for America foregoing its veto power at the United Nations toward the tail end of Obama's second term, allowing Resolution 2334 against Israeli settlements to pass. Similarly, we are all aware of the positions held by France and other European Union countries – whose historical commitment to the Jewish people and to the State of Israel has often come with conditions – to the point of even considering possible sanctions.

One important lesson needs to be learned. Sovereignty is one of the most important diplomatic initiatives, from a historical perspective, ever endeavored by the people and state of Israel, and the paradigmatic shift in the White House's approach makes these next few months, until the US presidential election, nothing less than dramatic. The State of Israel and the nationalist camp in its entirety must stand strong against all forms of pressure and start creating a system of fortifications to repel, initially, the campaign of falsehoods, and then replace it with the discourse of truth and employ the public relations tools necessary to salvage the venture. The battle has already begun.

test



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter, Rosh Kollel
From our archives

The Torah lists the great reward destined for the nation when they walk in G-d's ways and perform His commandments, including peace, prosperity, and success. In verse 26:5, after the promise of abundant produce, the Torah continues with the blessing "you will eat to satiation." The great commentator Rashi understands this to mean that a small amount of food will provide satiation.

Why is this additional blessing necessary? Wouldn't the ample crop already promised be sufficient to provide for the people?

Certainly, the bountiful harvest will ensure that the nation's physical needs are met. The Torah's blessing, however, refers to a different dimension altogether. Here, the Torah rewards the worthy and deserving nation with being nourished not merely by the material produce, but with G-d's blessing itself – "You will eat a little, and it will blessedly satiate you." Such an existence exalts one over the mundane and connects him or her to a world of spirituality and G-dliness.

This world affords us the possibility of prosperity, comfort, and security for us and our families. However, let's not forget about the special and unique opportunity we have here on Earth – to suffuse our days and lives with G-dliness and spirituality. It is here that true blessing is found.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

The Shemittah produce of the land shall be yours to eat. (25, 6)

Can a person fulfill the mitzva of drinking four cups of wine on Pesach with wine of shemittah? (Yerushalmi Shabbos 8, 1)

The doubt of the Yerushalmi is as follows. The wine must belong to the one who drinks it, just like matzah must be owned by the one who eats it. However, it must be clarified if produce from a shemittah year belongs to its owner or not. (Korban HaEida)

The verse seems to clearly state that shemittah produce belongs to its owner. Why does the Yerushalmi have a doubt about this?

Parsha Riddle

Why are the laws of lending with interest in Yoreh Deah and not in Choshen Mishpat, which discusses monetary laws?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Until the morrow of the seventh week, you shall count fifty days (23, 16)

How many days of the Omer do we count? Why?

Answer: When we count forty-nine days, automatically the fiftieth day is apparent since it follows forty nine. Therefore, all we need to do is count forty-nine and we have counted fifty days.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Bechukosai, Hashem warns us that if we do not listen to Him and do not perform His commandments, He will punish us. He then proceeds to repeatedly warn us that if despite this we do not heed Him, and particularly if we "behave casually" with Him, He will multiply our punishments terribly (26:14-16, 18, 21, 23-24, 27-28). Rambam explains that interpreting misfortune that befalls us as a consequence of our evil deeds is an element of repentance, and will cause the removal of the misfortune. Conversely, failing to do so, and simply assuming that "this thing happened to us in the way of the world, and this misfortune is just happenstance," is "the way of cruelty" and will result in our cleaving to our sinful deeds and consequently suffering further misfortunes. (Hilchos Taanis 1:1-3).

Indeed, throughout our tradition we find interpretations of various historic tragedies as punishment for specific sins:

- The Talmud blames the destruction of the First Temple on idol worship, forbidden sexual relations and bloodshed, and that of the Second Temple on wanton hatred (Yoma 9b).
- R. Yosef Yaavetz blamed the Spanish Expulsion on the failure to study Torah with the proper sincerity and thoroughgoing commitment (Introduction to Or Hachaim).
- R. Yaakov Emden blamed the Expulsion, along with the rest of the troubles that have befallen us throughout our exile, on our apathy toward the Land of Israel and lack of interest in making aliyah (Siddur Beis Yaakov, Sulam Beis E-L, #6).
- R. Yom-Tov Lipmann Heller is reputed to have said that the massacres of Tach Vetat (the Khmelnytsky Uprising) were a consequence of speaking during prayer. (This tradition is of uncertain historicity – see, e.g., Moshe Nachmani, Chesronah shel Ha'Tefilah L'Shlom Ha'Medinah B'Siddurim Ha'Charediim).
- The Chasam Sofer declared that "the [Safed] earthquake [of 1837] was a consequence of the jealousy of Jerusalem ... Those who make aliyah to Israel look only to Safed and Tiberias, and Jerusalem is completely forgotten. ... people only think of going to Safed to celebrate the yahrtzeit of R' Shimon bar Yochai." (Toras Moshe Vayikra p. 59a)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am your boss.
2. You are my boss.
3. Don't keep me busy.
4. I am for theft.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. Where is your produce?
2. Where is your loan?
3. Where is your work?
4. Go learn.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Omer (I am this Parsha scrambled, I am not royalty, I may be Chol Hamoed, I lead up.)

#2 Kohen (I am first, I run in the family, I eat special food, I catch and sprinkle.)

All children 13 and under who answer a "Who Am I?" correctly will be entered into a raffle to

WIN a Claw Machine Arcade Game



Visit gwckollel.org to submit your answers.

Answer as many as you can. Each correct answer will entitle you to another raffle ticket and increase your chances of winning!

The raffle has been postponed until after the shuls are reopened. We are still accepting entries to the raffle.

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