

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ד"ר

July 17 - 18, 2020 - 26 Tammuz 5780 - Parshas Matos/Masei/Mevorchim Hachodesh
Light Candles by 8:13 - Havdalah 9:18

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by grateful parents of the Shomrai Preschool and members of the wider Shomrai community who would like to express our greatest appreciation to Suri Kinzbrunner. Your heartfelt dedication, warmth and shining smile over these past two years as the director will leave a lasting impact on our children and community. Also, we would like to say thank you to the caring and hard-working teachers of Shomrai Preschool who ensured our children had a great day every day.

Mazal Tov

- **Esther Edeson** on the marriage of her grandson, Max Edeson, son of Helene & Nathan Edeson of Brooklyn, New York, to Sarah Barth, daughter of Stacy & Dr. Jay Barth of Teaneck, New Jersey. Mazal Tov to the entire Edeson, Barth and Stern Families.

Shabbos Schedule

Limited Minyanim are now taking place at YISE under Montgomery County's Phase 2 guidelines. **All Minyanim require advance registration and confirmation.** If you are interested in attending Minyanim and have not already registered, please go to <https://www.yise.org/minyan> If you are registered for a Minyan and are unable to attend at that time, please do not go to a different Minyan. If you have any questions, please contact minyan@yise.org

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 8:13, and not before Plag, 7:00
- Mincha: 6:50, 8:20

If you Daven Kabbalos Shabbos prior to Shkia (8:31 PM), it is preferable to Daven Mincha prior to Plag (7:00 PM).

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 6:30, 7:00, 9:00, 9:30
One may say the entire text of the blessing of Birkas Hachodesh even when alone. Rosh Chodesh Av is on Wednesday. The Molad will be Monday afternoon, 10 minutes and 15 Chalakim after 1, Jerusalem time.
- Mincha: 2:30, 5:00, 7:00
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 9:18

COVID-19 Updates

- Shul reopening has begun! Go to <https://wp.yise.org/planning-for-shul-reopening/> for more details.
 - Advance registration for Minyanim is **required** and space is limited. Go to <https://www.yise.org/minyan> to register.
 - All other activities at YISE are cancelled, including Youth Groups, Shiurim and special events.
 - The Shul office is still open, but hours may vary.
- 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.



Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to YISE. Go to <https://smile.amazon.com> Log in to your regular Amazon account. Search for "Young Israel Shomrai Emunah". It will appear as "National Council of Young Israel, Location: Silver Spring, MD" Continue shopping as you normally would, but remember to always start at smile.amazon.com

Weekday Shiurim

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

- **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-minute Shiur on the Parsha. Sunday through Friday 8:15 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** Women's Navi Shiur, now studying Sefer Yehoshua, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A.**
 - **Rabbi Silver's** Parsha Shiur for men & women, a mix of Halacha and Aggada. Tuesdays at 7:30 PM. For more details, contact rsilver@yise.org **Zoom B.**
 - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men and Women** - 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 H.**
 - **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 G.**
 - **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM (except as noted). For more info. contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, hshaps@gwckkollel.org 347-869-9361.
 - For Men & Women - **Zoom D** (except as noted):
 - Mondays: (for men only) Rabbi H. Shaps, On the Same Page Gemara, **Zoom C.**
 - Tuesdays: Rabbi Winter - Torah Topics, **Zoom I**
 - Wednesdays: Rabbi Grossman - Reading Responsa
 - Thursdays: Rabbi Grossman - Parshas Hashavua, 7:30 PM
 - 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@gwckkollel.org
 - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiur on Daily Halachos for men & women, Tuesdays 9:15 AM, **Zoom F.**
- 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: 269 840 3648, password online Pearls, phone 621690
Zoom H: ID: 978 8156 7874, password RabbiHyatt
Zoom I: ID: 977 463 8680, password GWCK

YISE Programs and Listings

We welcome new members who were voted in at the last Board meeting: Felicia & Dr. Craig Haas, Leah & Yaacov Monzon, Nechama & Yeshaya Poyurs.

Yizkor Guide - The Yizkor Guide is used in all Minyanim for four Yizkor services during the year (Yom Kippur, Shemini Atzeres, Pesach and Shavuot.) Since Yizkor may be said without a minyan, we are preparing to home deliver copies of the Yizkor Guide to all Shul members who regularly say Yizkor. As before, an unlimited number of name listings are available in the new guide for a Yizkor Guide sponsorship of \$180. Alternatively, individual name listings can be purchased for \$18 each. The deadline for Yizkor Guide sponsorships or individual listings is August 21. To sign up online, go to www.yise.org/yizkor If you have questions, please contact Marc Katz at mkatz@yise.org

Cheryl Stern Community Kelim Mikvah at YISE - The Mikvah is now available for use. Please be aware of the following safety precautions:

- Please make sure to wear a mask when using the Mikvah, as others might be present.
- Please make sure to observe social distancing standards while waiting to use the Mikvah.
- It would be advisable to wear gloves when using the Kelim Mikvah. At the very least, users should make sure to thoroughly wash their hands and the items Toveled with soap soon after Toveled.

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

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/join/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.

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, July 22, 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 vprr@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password 3671.

Can You Be a Hero? BHA Hair Drive for Zichron Menachem - If you have at least 12" of hair to donate, you can now cut it yourself, or schedule an appointment (when available) to have a professional cut your hair for donation. Contact Nancy Mehlman at 301-452-7080 to get complete instructions, to arrange pickup of your hair, or to arrange for a professional stylist to cut your hair for free when available. Please be a hero and be a part of an amazing group of people who have done this very important Mitzvah!

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.

Capital Kosher Pantry - Due to the closure of schools and shuls, the usual steady flow of food donations to the Capital Kosher Pantry has significantly decreased. We're greatly in need of the following very popular food products: Canned white tuna and salmon, sardines, plastic bottles of grape juice, pizza sauce, Near East brand rice mixes, crackers, cereal, whole grain and regular pasta (not spaghetti), Nature's Bakery fig bars. Please purchase these items from any store and then deposit them in one of our donation bin locations: in front of: YISE, KMS, Woodside Shul; in Shalom Kosher, at the front of the store, or in Moti's Market, near the store entrance; in front of the Capital Kosher Pantry - 1910 University Blvd., West, Silver Spring, MD 20902. You can also purchase items online at Target, Amazon, Walmart and elsewhere and arrange shipment directly to Capital Kosher Pantry. Our online wishlist is at <https://www.yadvehuda.org/pantry-wishlist.html> Financial donations to Capital Kosher Pantry are always welcome too. We thank you for your continued generosity and Tizku L'Mitzvot! The Capital Kosher Pantry Team

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 July 19	Monday July 20	Tuesday July 21	Wednesday, July 22 Rosh Chodesh	Thursday July 23	Friday July 24
Limited Minyanim will take place at YISE next week, advance registration and confirmation required. You are encouraged to Daven at home at the same time as a Minyan at YISE. Shacharis: Sunday 6:30 AM/7:30 AM/8:45 AM; Monday - Friday 6:00 AM/7:00 AM/8:45 AM. Mincha and/or Maariv: Sunday - Thursday: 7:00 PM/7:05 PM (Sephardi)/8:20 PM/9:30 PM.						
Halachic Times: Earliest Talis and Tefillin: 5:02 AM, Latest Krias Shma: 9:36 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:51 PM						

Next Shabbos

July 24 - 25, 2020 - 4 Av 5780

Parshas Devarim/Shabbos Chazon

Light Candles: Friday by 8:08

Havdalah: 9:12

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, July 22 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

Yale Ginsburg - President

Rabbi Binyamin Silver - Asst. Rabbi

Simi Franco - Office Manager

Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary!

Looking for a way to celebrate someone's upcoming birthday or anniversary? For an \$18 donation, you can include the name (birthday) or names (anniversary) in this section of the Shabbos Shorts. Please send the following information to office@yise.org - Sponsor name, Birthday or anniversary date, Name (birthday) or names (anniversary). The birthday or anniversary will be listed in the Shabbos Shorts based on the date of the event.

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- The Young Israel Shomrai Emunah Community congratulates and thanks **Esther Edeson** for her 36 years of dedicated service to our shul.

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 limited ability 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 Navi 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/Parsha/Halacha Shiur

- **Steve Kalin** for a Refuah Sheleima for Leah bat Risa.
- **Gila & Rabbi Myron Wakschlag** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Gila's grandfather, Harav Usher Yeshaya Halpern, the Dembniker Rav, Usher Yeshaya ben Matisyahu Chaim, ZT"l, on the 22nd of Tammuz.
- **Gila & Rabbi Myron Wakschlag** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Gila's great uncle, Harav Moshe Steinberg, the Broder Rav, Moshe ben Shemaya Halevi ZT"l, on the 23rd of Tammuz.

Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur

- **Chani & Jay Parness** in honor of Rabbi Hyatt.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Gemara Shiur

- **Naomi & Ori Carmel** in memory of Ettel bat Yiztchak.
- **Naomi & Ori Carmel** in memory of Yehuda Aryeh ben David.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday night Navi Shiur

- **Tenise & Joel Becker** for a Refuah Sheleima for Shalva Yona bas Miriam.
- **Judy & Dr. David Marwick** in memory of Judy's mother, Chaya Leah bas Yisroel Tzvi (Helen G. Spector), whose yahrzeit is the 24th of Tammuz.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Erev Shabbos Parsha Drasha

- **Abby & Chaim Tor** for the 6th Yahrzeit of Abby's father, Jack Fine, Yaakov Peretz ben Chanoah hanolad m'Ester, Z"l, whose Yahrzeit was on Sunday, July 12.



THE YISE MEANINGFUL TEFILAH PROJECT

NEW! Videos of the following classes are now available on YouTube (search Meaningful Tefilah Project) and soon on yise.org.

Practical Steps to More Meaningful Prayer, 3 videos, a workshop with Rabbi Rosenbaum, Rabbi Menachem Goldberger and members of the community

Ashrei/Pesukei D'Zimra, 3 sessions with Rabbi Rosenbaum

Better Kavanah, with Rabbi Hirsh Chinn

Going Deep: The Meaning of the Amidah, 6 sessions with Rabbi Rosenbaum

Going Deep: The Meaning of the Shema, 3 sessions, with Rabbi Rosenbaum

The Meaning of Hallel, 3 sessions with Rabbi Rosenbaum

A Deep Dive into Hallel, 3 sessions with Mrs. Sharon Freundel

Selichos Explained, with Rabbi Rosenbaum and Marty Jacobs

Tefilah: Your Personal Stairway to Heaven, 3 sessions with Mrs. Sharon Freundel

Pre-Selichos Drasha: L'David Ori, with Mrs. Sharon Freundel

Yom Kippur Viduy, with Rabbi Rosenbaum

Be a Better Ba'al Tefilah, 8 sessions with Rabbi Ozzie Burnham covering Shabbat and Yom Tov davening, plus introductory session with Rabbi Rosenbaum

Escape your Personal Prison Through Prayer, with Rabbi Yosef Mendelevich

Audio versions of many of these classes, plus additional classes, are also available at yise.org:

Click on the "LEARN/Shiurim" button, then click "Tefilla"

To support further classes by the Meaningful Tefilah Project, please email stuartrosenthal@yise.org or send contributions to the shul office marked for "Meaningful Tefilah."

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah via the Internet

Mazal Tov to Fran and Michael Paskowitz and Annette and Les Robicsek on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Mordechai Dov Paskowitz, son of Devora and Howard Paskowitz and brother of Shayna, Sarah and Zale

Volume 26, Issue 37

Shabbat Parashat Matot-Masei

5780 - B"H

Covenant and Conversation: R. Jonathan Sacks

Priorities - The Israelites were almost within sight of the Promised Land. They had successfully waged their first battles. They had just won a victory over the Midianites. There is a new tone to the narrative. We no longer hear the querulous complaints that had been the bass note of so much of the wilderness years.

We know why. That undertone was the sound of the generation, born in slavery, that had left Egypt. By now, almost forty years have passed. The second generation, born in freedom and toughened by conditions in the desert, have a more purposeful feel about them. Battle-tried, they no longer doubt their ability, with God's help, to fight and win.

Yet it is at just this point that a problem arises, different in kind from those that had gone before. The people as a whole now have their attention focused on the destination: the land west of the river Jordan, the place that even the spies had confirmed to be "flowing with milk and honey".

The members of the tribes of Reuben and Gad, though, begin to have different thoughts. Seeing that the land through which they were travelling was ideal for raising cattle, they decide that they would prefer to stay there, to the east of the Jordan, and propose this to Moses. Unsurprisingly, he is angry at the suggestion: "Moses said to the Gadites and Reubenites, 'Are your brothers to go to war while you stay here? Why would you discourage the Israelites from going over into the land the Lord has given them?'" He reminds them of the disastrous consequences of the earlier discouragement on the part of the spies. The whole nation will suffer. This decision would show not only that they are ambivalent about God's gift of the land but also that they have learned nothing from history.

The tribes do not argue with his claim. They accept its validity, but they point out that his concern is not incompatible with their objectives. They suggest a compromise: Then they came up to him and said, "We would like to build sheepfolds for our flocks and towns for our children. But we will then arm ourselves and go as an advance guard before the Israelites until we have established them in their home. Meanwhile our children will live in fortified cities, for protection from the inhabitants of the land. We will not return to our homes until every Israelite has received his inheritance. We will not receive any inheritance with them on the other side of the Jordan, because our inheritance has come to us on the east side of the Jordan."

We are willing, in other words, to join the rest of the Israelites in the battles that lie ahead. Not only this, but we are prepared to be the nation's advance guard, in the forefront of the battle. We are not afraid of combat, nor are we trying to evade our responsibilities to our people as a whole. It is simply that we wish to raise cattle, and for this, the land to the east of the Jordan is ideal. Warning them of the seriousness of their undertaking, Moses agrees. If they keep their word, they will be allowed to settle east of the Jordan. And so, indeed, it happened.

That is the story on the surface. But as so often in the Torah, there are subtexts as well as texts. One in

particular was noticed by the Sages, with their sensitivity to nuance and detail. Listen carefully to what the Reubenites and Gadites said: "Then they came up to him and said, 'We would like to build sheepfolds for our flocks and towns for our children.'" Moses replied: "Build towns for your children, and sheepfolds for your flocks, but do what you have promised".

The ordering of the nouns is crucial. The men of Reuben and Gad put property before people: they spoke of their flocks first, their children second. Moses reversed the order, putting special emphasis on the children. As Rashi notes: They paid more regard to their property than to their sons and daughters, because they mentioned their cattle before the children. Moses said to them: "Not so. Make the main thing primary and the subordinate thing secondary. First build cities for your children, and only then, folds for your flocks."

A Midrash makes the same point by way of an ingenious interpretation of a verse in Ecclesiastes: "The heart of the wise inclines to the right, but the heart of the fool to the left". The Midrash identifies "right" with Torah and life: "He brought the fire of a religion to them from his right hand". "Left," by contrast, refers to worldly goods: Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honour.

Hence, infers the Midrash, the men of Reuben and Gad put "riches and honour" before faith and posterity. Moses hints to them that their priorities are wrong. The Midrash continues: "The Holy One, Blessed Be He, said to them: 'Seeing that you have shown greater love for your cattle than for human souls, by your life, there will be no blessing in it.'"

This turned out to be not a minor incident in the wilderness long ago, but rather, a consistent pattern throughout much of Jewish history. The fate of Jewish communities, for the most part, was determined by a single factor: their decision, or lack of decision, to put children and their education first. Already in the first century, Josephus was able to write: "The result of our thorough education in our laws, from the very dawn of intelligence, is that they are, as it were, engraved on our souls." The Rabbis ruled that "any town that lacks children at school is to be excommunicated". Already in the first century, the Jewish community in Israel had established a network of schools at which attendance was compulsory – the first such system in history.

The pattern persisted throughout the Middle Ages. In twelfth-century France a Christian scholar noted: "A Jew, however poor, if he has ten sons, will put them all to letters, not for gain as the Christians do, but for the understanding of God's law – and not only his sons, but his daughters too."

In 1432, at the height of Christian persecution of Jews in Spain, a synod was convened at Valladolid to institute a system of taxation to fund Jewish education for all. In 1648, at the end of the Thirty Years' War, the first thing Jewish communities in Europe did to re-establish Jewish life was to re-organise the educational system. In their classic study of the shtetl, the small townships of Eastern Europe, Zborowski and Herzog write this about the typical Jewish family: The most important item in the family budget is the tuition fee that must be paid each term to the teacher of the younger boys' school. Parents will bend in the sky to educate their son. The mother, who has charge of household accounts, will

cut the family food costs to the limit if necessary, in order to pay for her son's schooling. If the worst comes to the worst, she will pawn her cherished pearls in order to pay for the school term. The boy must study, the boy must become a good Jew – for her the two are synonymous.

In 1849, when Samson Raphael Hirsch became Rabbi in Frankfurt, he insisted that the community create a school before building a synagogue. After the Holocaust, the few surviving yeshiva heads and chassidic leaders concentrated on encouraging their followers to have children and build schools.

It is hard to think of any other religion or civilisation that has so predicated its very existence on putting children and their education first. There have been Jewish communities in the past that were affluent and built magnificent synagogues – Alexandria in the first centuries of the Common Era is an example. Yet because they did not put children first, they contributed little to the Jewish story. They flourished briefly, then disappeared.

Moses' implied rebuke to the tribes of Reuben and Gad is not a minor historical detail but a fundamental statement of Jewish priorities. Property is secondary, children primary. Civilisations that value the young stay young. Those that invest in the future have a future. It is not what we own that gives us a share in eternity, but those to whom we give birth and the effort we make to ensure that they carry our faith and way of life into the next generation.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

What unites Jews throughout the world as one nation and one people? What is the most critical factor responsible for our amazing persistence as a unique historical entity, despite our having been scattered throughout the globe and subject to persecution and pogrom, despite our having been chased from pillar to post? What idea and ideal have prevented us from falling prey to assimilation, from disappearing into the sands of time as just another grain of sand, indistinguishable from the other grains, simply being "a part of" rather being "set apart from"? Why have we insisted upon Jewish exclusivity, Jewish separatism, Jewish apartness?

Our biblical portion of Matot makes a distinction between two technical terms which it doesn't quite define: "If a man makes a vow [nedar] to dedicate an object to the Lord, or takes an oath [shevua] to prohibit himself from partaking of a certain food or from participating in a certain activity, he must not desecrate his word". My revered teacher and mentor Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik defines a vow as pertaining to an object (a person is on a diet, and he vows that henceforth bread will become for him as prohibited as bacon), and an oath as pertaining to a subject (the person himself will no longer eat bread). In the first instance of a vow, the emphasis is on the object, the bread, the "heftza" in the second instance of oath, the emphasis is on the subject, the person, the "gavra".

In the Talmudic school of Brisker methodology, much of the world may be divided between gavra and heftza, subject and object; indeed, in most instances a human being, especially if he is born to be free ought to be seen as a "subject." However, if a

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By Lily & Saadia Greenberg on the occasion
of the yahrzeit of Lily's father,
Salomon Nadel, a"h,
(Shlomo Zalman ben Pinchas HaKohen)

person is enslaved, he ipso facto has been turned into an “object,” having been denied his fundamental freedom of choice.

This distinction can serve us well in attempting to answer our opening philosophical query about what sets Jews apart and makes us unique. But, first, a personal experience of significance: At the end of the Yom Kippur War, while on an El Al airplane on the way to Israel, I was shocked to discover news about an acquaintance of mine, who had lost his first family in Auschwitz, remarried and had two sons on the West Side of Manhattan, had moved to Israel and lost his eldest boy in the Six Day War—I discovered that he had now lost his only remaining son in the Yom Kippur War.

I made a condolence call as soon as I got off the plane. My disconsolate friend was sitting on the floor with his wife, surrounded by would-be comforters; no one, however, said a word, so that the atmosphere was tense with a heavy silence which shouted upwards to heaven in tear-filled protest. As I quietly intoned the condolence formula: “May the Place [Makom, a synonym for God] comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem”, my friend looked up. “Why does the blessing use the word Makom and not Elokim or Hashem?” He didn’t wait for a reply, but himself offered the answer. “When I lost my first family in the Holocaust, an atrocity which I suffered as a passive victim of monstrous Nazi fascist-racists, I could not even mourn properly and I could not be comforted; it all seemed so absurd and meaningless.

“Now, however, although I am devastated and unable to speak to my comforters, I nevertheless do feel comforted.

“The place comforts me; the fact that my second set of children were killed because they chose to live in Israel which, is indeed a dangerous war zone, because they chose to realize our destiny which is Jerusalem, because they chose to guarantee Jewish future by risking their own present lives. Both sets of children were sacred sacrifices, but the first set were passive objects whereas the second were dynamic subjects who actively fought for our Jewish future! Yes, the place comforts me...”

Allow me to interpret this distraught but wise father’s words on the basis of yet another insight from Rav Soloveichik. In Kol Dodi Dofek, my rebbe distinguishes between the Holocaust experience in which the Jews were united by a common fate (goral) foisted upon them from without, from a largely sinister gentile world cooperating enthusiastically with the “final solution” of Nazi Germans—and the Sinai experience, in which the Jews were united by a common destiny (yi’ud) which they accepted upon themselves, pledging to be a holy nation and a kingdom of priest-teachers to convey God’s message of compassionate righteousness and moral justice to the world. It is this sense of destiny which brought us to Israel and compels us to fight against tyranny and terrorism.

At this time, we remember the three pure and holy sacrificial Jewish victims of six years ago—Gil-Ad Shaer, Eyal Yifrah and Naftali Fraenkel who were captured and mercilessly murdered outside Alon Shvut in Gush Etzion. Tragically an innocent Palestinian boy, Muhammad Abu Kheir, was cruelly murdered at the hands of misguided and evil Jewish teenagers. The Gush lies geographically between Hebron—where God initially chose Abraham and made him the father of a multitude of nations including Ishmael because he was teaching his descendants God’s path of compassionate righteousness and moral justice—and Jerusalem, where Jewish and world history will culminate in the rebuilding of a Holy Temple from whence Zion’s message of a Torah of peace and redemption will be accepted by all the nations of the globe. Now too, the

“place” (makom) comforts us in our period of national rebirth—among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

Honesty and Integrity: very so often, I come across a sentence of another person’s writing which expresses one of my own thoughts in a language far superior to my own. Over the years, I have contemplated and written about the concepts of “honesty” and “integrity” and the difference between the two.

But never was I able to articulate their precise definitions and the difference between them as cogently and as concisely as in the following passage from Stephen Covey’s *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*: “Integrity includes but goes beyond honesty. Honesty is...conforming our words to reality. Integrity is conforming reality to our words—in other words, keeping promises and fulfilling expectations. This requires an integrated character, a oneness, primarily with self but also with life.”

Honesty for Covey, and I for one heartily agree, is the virtue describing reality exactly as it is, of telling the truth. In this day and age, when there is so much confusion as to whether or not there even is such a thing as truth, it is refreshing to see the place of honesty restored to the list of important human virtues.

For Judaism, truth, emet, is more than just a virtue. It is one of the three fundamental principles, along with justice and peace, upon which the world stands. In the words of the Talmud, “The signature of the Holy One, Blessed be He, is truth.”

So rare is the man of truth that legend has the aged Diogenes searching for him with lanterns. But as rare as the trait of honesty is, the trait of integrity is even more difficult to find.

Integrity is the ability not only to say what you mean, but to mean what you say. Following Covey, it is the quality of conforming one’s actions to one’s words, of reliably following through on one’s commitment. It is more than the ability to make things happen. It is making your own promises happen!

Parshat Matot opens with a lengthy and intricate discussion of the concepts of “the vow.” Biblical teachings insist that the words we express must be taken very seriously; indeed, we are taught that our words are sacred. Once a person, man or woman, young or old, simpleton or scholar, utters a commitment, he or she is duty-bound to honor that commitment. “Motza sefatecha tishmor ve’asita, that which your lips express must be honored and performed.”

As helpful as is Covey’s succinct definition of “integrity,” it is also deceptively simple. There is so much more that we need to know about integrity. And about “honesty,” for that matter.

For one thing, honesty and integrity are not just descriptors of individual persons’ characters. Rather, they are social values, which ideally should define the essence of human communities and entire societies. From a Jewish perspective, “honesty” and “integrity” cannot be restricted to individual paragons of virtue, saints and holy men, but must become universal cultural norms.

This is why the laws of vows, unlike all the other laws of the Torah, are explicitly given to rashei hamatot, the chieftains of the tribes. It is to emphasize that the sanctity of speech is not just a goal for a few spiritually-gifted individuals. It must be enunciated as one of the essential mores of the entire tribe.

The Talmud relates the story of an immortal community, a legendary village that knew not death. This was because no one there ever lied. This idyllic existence came to an abrupt end, however, when a young person, eager to protect the privacy of his

Likutei Divrei Torah

parent, told an inquiring visitor that his parent was not home. A harmless and well-intentioned remark, common to us all. A white lie, perhaps, but a lie nevertheless, and one which ruined forever the eternal life of that fabled village.

Yet another lesson about keeping our word is taught in the opening verses of this week’s Torah portion. Sometimes, we overextend ourselves and make promises that we cannot possibly keep. In moments of extreme urgency, or sublime inspiration, we are wont to express commitments that are beyond our capacity to fulfill.

Can a vow thus expressed be annulled? The Torah, ever practical, answers “yes,” and describes some of the procedures designed to release a person from his or her vows. The Talmud, in an entire tractate devoted to this topic, specifies the circumstances and conditions under which such a release can be obtained.

Most well-known among the “ceremonies” releasing us from our personal vows and promises is the Kol Nidrei prayer which ushers in our most hallowed day, Yom Kippur. Not really a prayer in the ordinary sense, Kol Nidrei is a statement in which we declare our past vows null and void. This custom is experienced by many as strange and as an offense to the value of integrity. But I personally have always found that it reinforces the role of integrity in my life and in the lives of all of us who live in the “real world.”

During the entire year, you and I make many commitments and resolutions. With the noblest of motives, we promise things to our loved ones, verbally establish objectives to improve the world around us, or simply vow to lose weight, stop smoking, or start exercising.

As the year wears on, situations change, priorities shift, and we ourselves become different. At least one time each year, on Yom Kippur, we realize how unrealistic we were and that we erred in our assessment of what we could accomplish. And so, we ask that the Almighty release us from these impossible and often no longer relevant commitments, and begin with Divine help a new slate, hoping that the next time we make a promise, it will be one that we will be able to keep.

Judaism teaches us the primary importance of keeping our word. But it does not lose sight of our human frailties and limitations and recognizes that often it is not moral failure that explains our lack of integrity, but simple human weakness, hopefully rare and surely forgiven by God.

Integrity is a cherished value for the society at large. The acknowledgement of human limitations in maintaining integrity must be accepted. These are two important and timely lessons from this week’s Torah portion.

Aish.Com: Commit to Commitment

by Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig /Excerpt/

We are obligated to be truthful to ourselves. We have to fulfill our word because we said it and we have an obligation to ourselves to make it a reality. The discussion Matot regarding vows is about making a promise that you will do something. This is why vows are so central to the Yom Kippur service. We begin a day dedicated to prayer by acknowledging that our words are a powerful way of committing ourselves. Furthermore, we understand that even within the commitments we make to ourselves we have an obligation to Hashem. Only when we internalize the severity of this obligation can we commit to fulfilling our word. This is the very essence of Yom Kippur, a day that we spend committing ourselves to being better people.

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מטות - מסעי

מטות - מסעי

This week's double *Parashah* begins with the laws of vows, whereby a person designates something--for example, a particular food--that is otherwise permitted as prohibited to him by a vow. Effectively, that food or other object takes on the status of *Hekdesh* / something sanctified to the Temple vis-à-vis the vow-taker and becomes prohibited to him.

Why are such vows effective? R' Avraham Zvi Kluger *shlita* (*Chassidic Mashpia* in Bet Shemesh, Israel) explains, based on the writings of R' Shneur Zalman of Liadi z"l (1745-1813; first *Chabad Rebbe*; known as the *Ba'al Ha'Tanya*): From the fact that products of the inanimate, plant, and animal kingdoms can sustain a human being, we can conclude that their "root" in Heaven is loftier than man's own. Only because we live in an upside-down world did those lofty "lights" fall to the lower levels of creation.

Why would someone take a vow not to eat a particular food? Typically, because he feels that his desire for that food is pulling him downward, making him feel materialistic and not spiritual. On the other hand, when he prohibits that food through a vow, making it "like *Hekdesh*" (and, likewise, when a person sanctifies something as a *Korban* / sacrificial offering), he is, in effect, uncovering that thing's hidden sanctity. That is why one of the verbs that the Torah uses in connection with vows is "*Yafli*"--related to "*Peleh*" / "a wonder," i.e., something whose essence is hidden. (*Pela'ot Edotecha*)

Introductions

The earliest (known) work offering a systematic presentation of Jewish beliefs is "*Ha'nivchar Ba'emunot V'de'ot*" / "*The Choicest of the Beliefs and Understandings*," better known simply as "*Ha'emunot V'de'ot*," by R' Saadiah Gaon z"l (882-942; Egypt, Eretz Yisrael and present-day Iraq). In this excerpt from R' Saadiah's introduction to that work, he explains the word "*De'ah*" (singular of "*De'ot*") found in the book's title:

It is appropriate that we explain what "*De'ah*" is. It is something that is pictured in the soul, each thing as it is, in whatever conditions it is found. When the examination of that "thing" is completed, and the conclusions from that examination are absorbed into the soul and become part of it, then a person possesses "*De'ah*" regarding that thing for as long as he retains that understanding...

De'ah can be of two types: true or false. *De'ah* which is true means knowing the thing as it is--if it is big, small, black, white, present, absent [etc.]... *De'ah* which is false means knowing it as it is not--believing that large is small, small is large, white is black, black is white, present is absent, absent is present [etc.] A praiseworthy wise person is one who makes the truth of things his foundation. Through his wisdom, he holds on to that which one should hold on, and avoids that which one should avoid. On the other hand, a mind that should be condemned is one that makes its own understanding of things its foundation and imagines that the truth will be according to one's own understanding. Through his foolishness, he holds on to that which one should avoid, and avoids that to which one should hold on.

[R' Saadiah provides a concrete example:] In this connection, I will mention my wonder at people, who are slaves [to G-d], yet they think they have no Master. They think that what they deny will cease to exist, and what they acknowledge will exist. They are drowning in the depths of foolishness and have reached the point of no return! Let a pauper imagine he has a chest full of treasure and see what he gains. . . It is absolute foolishness for people to think that, if they imagine that there is no Master, then they will gain exemption from His *Mitzvot*, His warnings, His promises, His threats, and the like.

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"For our inheritance has come to us on the east bank of the Jordan." (32:19)

R' Shlomo Zalman Ehrenreich z"l (1863-1944; Simlau, Hungary) comments: Originally, the holiness of *Eretz Yisrael* was limited to the west bank of the Jordan. But, after *Bnei Yisrael* conquered the lands of Sichon and Og, the holiness of *Eretz Yisrael* "crossed" the Jordan to the east bank also. Thus, the inheritance of the tribes of Reuven and Gad "came to them" on the east bank.

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

"Then Aharon the *Kohen* went up to Mount Hor at the word of Hashem and died there, in the fortieth year after *Bnei Yisrael* went out of the land of Egypt, in the fifth month on the first of the month." (33:38)

R' Avraham Dov Auerbach *shlita* (Chief Rabbi of Teveryah, Israel) notes that this is the only occasion on which the Torah mentions the date of someone's death. Why is this date significant?

He explains: *Midrash Eichah Rabbah* states on every *Tisha B'Av* while *Bnei Yisrael* were in the desert, 15,000 of *Bnei Yisrael* would pass away (so that over the 40 years, all 600,000 adult males who had left Egypt would die, as *Hashem* had vowed). But, in the final year, *Hashem* granted clemency to the last 15,000, and none died.

Why was this so? Later in our *Parashah*, we read that one who was sent to exile in an *Ir Miklat* / City of Refuge is paroled when the *Kohen Gadol* dies. Here, too, explains R' Auerbach, the last 15,000 of the generation that left Egypt were given a reprieve from their exile and allowed to enter *Eretz Yisrael* because Aharon, the *Kohen Gadol*, had died nine days before *Tisha B'Av*, when they should have died. Thus, the date of Aharon's passing is particularly significant.

(*Pitchei Avraham*)

"The cities that you shall give to the *Levi'im*--the six Cities of Refuge that you shall provide for a murderer to flee there, and also you shall give them forty-two cities." (35:6)

R' Nachman of Breslov z"l (1772-1810) taught: There are 48 words in the first section of *Kri'at Shema*, which contains the foundation of our belief--six in the first sentence and 42 in the paragraph beginning "*Ve'ahavta*." Paralleling this, there are 48 cities of *Levi'im*--six Cities of Refuge and 42 other cities. Our Sages teach that all 48 cities can provide refuge to a person who kills accidentally. Similarly, says R' Nachman, *Kri'at Shema* provides refuge to one whose *Eminah*--the essence of life--is at risk.

He continues the analogy: From the fact that the Torah sends the accidental killer to the cities of the *Levi'im* to be rehabilitated we can learn that one whose *Eminah* needs rehabilitating should travel as well--in his case, to a *tzaddik*.

(*Likkutei Halachot: Hilchot Techumin* 5:37)

"Take vengeance for *Bnei Yisrael* against the Midianites; afterward you will be gathered unto your people." (31:2)

R' Yitzchak Arieli z"l (1896-1974; *Mashgiach Ruchani* of Yeshivat Merkaz Harav and author of the Talmud commentary *Enayim La'mishpat*) writes: Knowing that he would die after this war, Moshe easily could have delayed, rationalizing that *Bnei Yisrael* grow so much every day that he is their leader. However, to Moshe, no rationalization could supersede *Hashem's* command. Thus, as we read in verse 3, Moshe actually encouraged *Bnei Yisrael* to hurry out to war.

(*Midrash Ariel*)

"The children of Reuven and the children of Gad had abundant livestock..." (32:1)

R' Noach Rabinowitz z"l (1839-1901; rabbi of several towns in Belarus) writes: Throughout this chapter, we read that the tribes of Reuven and Gad, and only those two tribes, asked, and negotiated with Moshe, to receive their inheritance in the Transjordan region, *i.e.*, east of the Jordan River. Why, suddenly (in verse 33), do we read that half of the tribe of Menashe also received its share in the Transjordan region?

R' Rabinowitz explains: Reuven was Yaakov's firstborn and, as such, should have received a double portion in *Eretz Yisrael*. However, Yaakov took the privileges of the firstborn away from Reuven and gave them to Yosef, the firstborn of Rachel. As the "firstborn," Yosef received two shares in the Land: one to be taken by Ephraim and the other by Menashe. Note that Ephraim was Yosef's younger son, but Yaakov declared that he would receive the privileges of Yosef's firstborn. Thus, it was Menashe who was receiving the "second" share that now belonged to Yosef.

However, when Reuven took his share in the Transjordan region, a question arose: Where was Reuven's second share (which now belonged to Yosef)? Was Reuven taking his "regular" share on the east bank, but not his second share, or were both shares in the Transjordan? Because of this doubt, the tribe of Menashe, which was inheriting Reuven's "second" share (through Yosef) was split in two--one half on the east bank and the other on the west bank.

(*Toldot Noach* p.210)

"The children of Gad and the children of Reuven came and said to Moshe, to Elazar the *Kohen*, and to the leaders of the assembly, saying, 'Atarot and Divon and Ya'azer and Nimrah and Cheshbon and El'aleh and Sevam and Nevo and Ve'on--the land that *Hashem* defeated before the assembly of *Yisrael*--it is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock.'" (32:2-4)

Why did they catalog the cities in the territory they were requesting? R' Shaul Lowenstam z"l (1717-1790; rabbi of Amsterdam) explains:

The *Gemara* (*Sotah* 34b) states that the land of Moav is inferior for planting. Therefore, when we saw these cities, said the tribes of Gad and Reuven, we wondered why *Hashem* had given them to the Jewish People. Then we realized: "It is a land for livestock." And, we, "your servants[,] have livestock!"

(*Binyan Ariel*)

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EDELSTEIN: BARRING A MIRACLE, ISRAEL HEADING TO A SECOND LOCKDOWN (YNet 7/15/20)

Health Minister Yuli Edelstein said on Wednesday, that barring a miracle, Israel would be heading back into full lockdown.

The minister said he hoped the measures taken to mitigate the spread including limiting congregations in events and restaurants and imposing closures on hard-hit areas, would result in lower infections, "if that happens, we would be able to postpone a decision. We will have to wait three or four days to see, but that would be a miracle."

Edelstein rejected criticism that the government had not taken steps to prepare for the second wave of coronavirus spread or that a lockdown would be an admission of failure on the part of authorities, claiming a lockdown is a measure to be taken in order to bring the number of daily infections down.

"As other countries have learned, we must understand that lockdowns reduce the number of new infections and when it is removed, another wave of the virus can appear."

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL: CLOSE THE SYNAGOGUES (Arutz-7 7/14/20)

The National Security Council (NSC) recommended in a discussion with Prime Minister Netanyahu that all synagogues and yeshivot be closed in response to the rapid spread of the coronavirus.

The NSC also recommended that the opening of restaurants be limited to take-out and deliveries.

Several of the participants in the discussion recommended the imposition of a full lockdown. However, Defense Minister Benny Gantz stated that two weeks had not passed since the last restrictions were imposed, so it was too soon to impose new restrictions.

Prime Minister Netanyahu issued instructions to strengthen the healthcare system through improved standards, budgets and manpower. Netanyahu added that additional financial assistance should be provided to families.

Another meeting will be held in the coming days to discuss additional steps.

The Health Ministry announced Tuesday that 1,681 people have been diagnosed with the coronavirus over the last day, setting a record for new infections in a 24-hour period since the pandemic began. The total number of coronavirus infections rose to 41,235, 21,393 of which are active cases.

524 coronavirus patients are hospitalized, 177 of whom are in serious condition and 55 of whom are on ventilators.

The death toll since the start of the pandemic in Israel stands at 368.

ISRAEL SECURES MORE REMDESIVIR TO TREAT COVID-19 PATIENTS (JPost 7/16/20)

The Health Ministry has secured more of the potentially life-saving drug Remdesivir, which is used to treat coronavirus patients, a source in the know revealed to The Jerusalem Post.

Earlier in the week, health officials said that the country was running low and some hospitals, including Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer and Rambam Medical Center in Haifa reported that they had none.

"We are trying to get a hold of it," Sheba's Galia Rahav told the Post on Sunday, accusing US President Donald Trump of buying all the drug for America and leaving none for the rest of the world, including America's allies. Remdesivir has proved effective in the treatment of some patients with severe COVID19, the disease that results from the novel coronavirus.

It is unclear how Israel obtained the drug, but earlier this week sources told

the Post that the country would not refrain from using "intelligence" or "diplomatic" means to secure it.

ISRAEL'S SCHOOLS TO START YEAR ON SEPT. 1, WITH STRICT VIRUS REGULATIONS (YNet 7/15/20)

Education Minister Yoav Galant said Wednesday that Israel's academic year will begin on September 1 and will be guided by the need to prevent further outbreaks of the coronavirus.

The minister's plan for the return to school may be executed differently in certain communities, depending on the local coronavirus contagion rate.

Galant said his plan includes groups of up to 18 children for kindergartens and elementary school classes up to fourth grade, to be held in existing facilities and additional public buildings.

Children from fifth grade and up will study remotely, though each child will be in school one day a week to maintain and bolster connection to the school and teachers.

"We are guided by the principle that functioning schools are crucial for the economy," the minister said.

"The cost of suspending the education system could reach NIS 300 million per day, so we must keep schools working for the good of the economy as well as for children's education."

With mitigation measures implemented by the ministry, Galant expressed the hope that there would be little need to introduce major changes to his plan.

The plan was devised in cooperation with local municipalities, parents and teachers and will be executed by the Education Ministry with the support of the Health and Finance ministries.

The Education Ministry is preparing to recruit additional manpower to bolster existing staff and enable children to learn safely.

The new staff will be drawn from retired teachers, students and job seekers to bolster faculty members, a move that Galant also hopes will help lower soaring unemployment numbers.

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LIKUD LOSES SUPPORT AS FAR-RIGHT YAMINA GAINS STRENGTH NEW POLLING SHOWS (YNet 7/15/20)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party has lost public support as far-right Yamina, led by Naftali Bennett gained strength according to a public opinion poll published Wednesday by the Tel Aviv radio station 103FM.

If elections were to be held now, Likud would win 34 Knesset seats, according to the poll, down from their current number of 36.

Naftali Bennetts Yamina received 14 seats, a considerable jump from the five seats they had won in the March 2020 elections.

Polling conducted in April for Israel's Channel 12, after the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party was given 40 seats.

The Blue and White party that had split from its partners to join the Netanyahu coalition is shown to have a 9-seat support only. In earlier polling this year. Benny Gantz's party polled at 19 seats.

Opposition parties have gained strength in this latest poll with the Yesh Atid-Telem alliance receiving 16 seats and Avigdor Liberman's Yisrael Beytenu party with 9 seats.

The Joint List would remain with 15 seats and Meretz would increase its strength from three seats currently to seven if a vote were to be held today.

The ultra-Orthodox block according to the poll would have 16 seats, one less than they currently occupy.

Despite Likud's apparent drop in polling, Netanyahu's right-wing and religious bloc has gained strength and would allow him a 64-seat majority while the fragmented opposition would be able to muster 57 seats only.

YOUNG IMMIGRANT EYES EL AL PURCHASE (Israel Hayom 7/13/20)

Eli Rozenberg, a 30-year-old immigrant to Israel from the United States, is the person interested in purchasing El Al Israel Airlines, Globes reported on Sunday.

According to the report, the prospective buyer is the son of businessman Ken Rozenberg, owner of one of the largest chains of nursing homes in the United States, and founder and CEO of Centers Health Care.

His son, who immigrated to Israel a few years ago, is in talks with the controlling stakeholder in the airline. Sources told Globes that he is not so concerned about El Al's economic current crisis, due most recently to the coronavirus pandemic, and is looking towards the future. The global pandemic forced the shutdown of regular services.

However, according to the report, it is not clear whether the airline's parent company, Knafaim, which owns the controlling shares, will be willing to sell. So far, it has rejected the bid.

El Al reached a \$400 million bailout agreement earlier this month, which is likely to result in its being nationalized.

According to the terms of the deal, the airline will receive a \$250 million government-backed loan, and raise another \$150 million by selling shares on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, with the state purchasing any unsold stock.

HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SET TO VISIT ISRAEL, MEET COUNTERPART (Ha'aretz 7/14/20)

Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó is set to visit Israel next week and meet with his counterpart Gabi Ashkenazi, amid growing voices in the European Union condemning Israel's annexation plans.

Hungary, led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, is considered Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's biggest supporter in the EU, and the only member state that has yet to condemn Israel's annexation plans, choosing to remain vague on the issue.

Ashkenazi spoke to Szijjártó in May and discussed the two countries' "common standpoint" on the issue of "retaining identity and the importance of sovereignty and security," as well as "action against illegal migration," the Hungarian Foreign Ministry said in a statement. But Ashkenazi's office denied the content of the conversation as described by his Hungarian counterpart.

According to the Hungarian statement, Szijjártó assured Ashkenazi that they will "continue to refrain from supporting statements that condemn Israel in both the EU and the United Nations, and also regards the procedure against Israel by the International Criminal Court as unfounded." However, the statement did not mention the issue of Israeli annexation of parts of the West Bank.

On Tuesday, 11 European foreign ministers demanded that the European Union quickly formulate a list of possible responses to an Israeli annexation. In a letter sent to EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell on Friday, they wrote that doing so is essential, because "the window to deter annexation is fast closing."

The letter, a copy of which was obtained by Haaretz, was signed by the foreign ministers of France, Italy, Holland, Ireland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Portugal and Malta.

As part of Europe's efforts to prevent annexation, several European leaders have phoned Netanyahu in recent weeks to urge him to halt steps toward annexation. They include German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson. The phone calls were on top of the opposition they voiced in official letters sent when the government was sworn in this spring.

SUPERSONIC BOOM CAUSES PANIC IN NORTHERN ISRAEL - AND A PILOT IS GROUNDED (Arutz-7 7/15/20)

Residents of Haifa and other areas in northern Israel heard loud explosions on Tuesday night, and assumed they were caused by an attack carried out by the IDF.

However, it later became clear that the source of the unusual noise was supersonic booms by an Israel Air Force F-35 pilot.

The pilot had exceeded the maximum flight speed limits in a training operation, and as a result, the IDF decided to ground him.

An IDF spokesperson said, "After an investigation, it was discovered that the noise heard last night in the Haifa area and the area of the Jezreel Valley Regional Council was caused by a pilot exceeding the flight speed limits during a training exercise with a fighter plane in the area. The pilot has been grounded."

WHAT IS THE MAJOR BATTLE HAPPENING OVER THE FUTURE OF KAFR KASSEM? (JPost 7/15/20)

The organization Regavim has sued a range of local and national agencies and ministries in the Central District Court for allegedly failing to enforce land use laws in an area near Kafr Kassem, 20 kilometers east of Tel Aviv. Around 100 businesses are being sued for their presence in the allegedly illegal commercial park.

Usually, land use is a small-time issue.

But this case delves deep into national debates about illegal building in various parts of the Arab sector and counter-accusations by Israeli-Arabs that the state fails to support them and drags its feet on building projects.

Regavim is known for highlighting illegal building by various Bedouin groups in the South and, in this case, Kafr Kassem in the Center. So its allegations could be viewed as having a clear agenda.

But no one denies most of the allegations.

Officials from Kafr Kassem and the state's land use enforcement authorities have acknowledged that there is significant illegal building in the area.

Regavim divides the harm of illegal building into three main categories.

First, the group says, the illegal building undermines the rule of law and harms the environment and the balance of regional electricity and water.

Next, it says, the zone drives up rents and taxes for other nearby competitors since no one is collecting taxes from the businesses in Kafr Kassem.

Finally, Regavim says, large trucks coming out of improperly paved and signed makeshift roads create traffic nightmares and have increased the number of traffic accidents in the area.

Kafr Kassem issued a statement saying that it has been cooperating and waiting for a long time with the local planning authorities to receive approvals for a combination of additional areas for residential growth and commercial business.

A representative for Kafr Kassem said it has been meeting approximately every two weeks with the planning authorities for two-and-a-half years, but is still inexplicably being made to wait for permits.

The official statement said that to provide for four additional residential neighborhoods, Kafr Kassem needs the taxes and business that it will reap from the planning authorities authorizing the existing industrial area.

A Kafr Kassem official did not want to specify which commercial businesses might be able to be grandfathered into the new plans as is, and which might have to move or make changes to their current structures to come into compliance with land use laws.

However, the official said that as community leaders, the municipality has a better chance at dialoguing with the businesses in the area in dispute.

He said that 400 parties have signed commitments that they will even move to a different spot or give up around 40% of the land they are using, once the authorities finish the land approval processes.

Kafr Kassem's official statement also noted that it has submitted requests to divide up certain funds and resources more equitably with the nearby town of Rosh Ha'ayin. An official said Rosh Ha'ayin has reaped more than its share of benefits from a hi-tech zone that physically should have been considered part of Kafr Kassem.

A Regavim spokeswoman countered that many illegal structures in the industrial zone went up long before any planning process was initiated.

Also, the spokeswoman said it would be a blow to the rule of law if a large number of illegal businesses were simply grandfathered into new plans – though she did not oppose Kafr Kassem receiving approval for land use through the proper channels.

In addition, the Regavim official said that Rosh Ha'ayin was given the hi-tech zone because it enforced land use laws and collected taxes, whereas Kafr Kassem until now has been unreliable in both areas.

Moreover, Regavim said that the residential areas could be built without huge industrial areas which could irreparably harm the environment and potential agricultural land use.

Regavim also framed the battle as relating to a fight over the 2017 Kaminitz Law which increased enforcement against illegal land use, and which it said Israeli-Arab MKs have been trying to repeal.

A Kafr Kassem official implied that the key to the issue is dialogue.

The land use enforcement authority has said that the area in question is among the largest and hardest to police in the country. Still, it has said that it has taken a number of law enforcement actions, including demolishing dozens of illegal structures in 2018-2019 and issuing dozens of fines.

The local planning council has responded only that it is considering Kafr Kassem's planning request, but without giving a deadline.

Regavim's case is scheduled for a first hearing on August 2.

SAUDI ACADEMIC PUBLISHES ARTICLE IN ISRAELI JOURNAL, IN HEBREW (Israel Hayom 7/15/20)

In what Tel Aviv University is calling an "unprecedented" development, the latest issue of one of its academic journals includes an article in Hebrew by a senior Saudi academic.

The paper, titled "Contribution to Prophet Muhammad's Image Improvement in the Eyes of the Israeli Public: Muhammad's Alliances and Mail Exchanges with Jews from the Arabian Peninsula," was written by Professor Mohammed Ibrahim Alghbban and appears in the latest issue of Keshet.

In the paper, Alghbban, head of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization and Hebrew Studies at King Saud University in Riyadh, seeks to improve the image of the Prophet Muhammad in the eyes of the Israeli public.

"Erroneous assumptions about the origins of Islam, proposed by Oriental

Studies researchers in the previous century – some of which were written in Hebrew – led to a distorted understanding of manuscripts, wrong methodology, and negative influences on Hebrew speaking Middle Eastern Studies researchers," he writes in the introduction to the paper.

"Accusing Islam and the Prophet Muhammad of hate speech and racism against Jewish tribes in Hejaz is erroneous. Muhammad treated equally all social groups in Al Madinah and in other places under his control, regardless of race and religion. The misrepresentations in the research are due to the fact that his letters were never translated into Hebrew," he continues, adding that to right this wrong he has provided translations in his article.

However, according to Professor Raanan Rein, head of TAU's Shalom Rosenfeld Institute for Research of Jewish Media and Communication, which publishes Keshet, the article's primary importance isn't its content, but rather the fact that a senior Saudi researcher choosing to publish an article in an Israeli academic journal as a means to bring the two nations closer.

"I hope that this academic cooperation is another step towards economic and political cooperation," said Rein.

BIBLICAL SITE OF ZIKLAG FINALLY IDENTIFIED? (JPost 7/15/20)

The location of Ziklag, a settlement mentioned several times in Jewish scriptures, has long been debated. To date, up to 15 sites have been suggested by archaeologists attempting to find the biblical town, such as Tel Halif near Kibbutz Lahav, Tel Shera in the western Negev, and Tel Sheva.

Ziklag is mentioned several times in the Bible, most famously in the Book of Samuel, when a young David was granted refuge from King Saul by the Philistine King Achish of Gat. David was awarded Ziklag as a vassal state, under the protection of Achish, and he used it as a base.

According to the Book of Samuel, the city was destroyed by the Amalekites and the population was enslaved. After Saul was killed in battle with the Philistines, David left Ziklag to be anointed king of Israel.

Tel a-Sharia in the Negev has long been identified as one of the possible locations of Ziklag, and has one of the strongest claims to being the ancient settlement. Now, another theory has been put forward that supports Tel a-Sharia's claims.

Prof. Moshe Garsiel, professor emeritus of Bible at Bar-Ilan University, and his wife, Dr. Bat Sheva Garsiel, who is a Koranic expert, have used Arabic toponymy (the study of place names) and local Islamic traditions to come to the conclusion that the real location of Ziklag is Tel a-Sharia, based on a law instituted by David regarding the sharing of spoils of war. Garsiel explains that Arabic names of sites do not preserve the old biblical names, but perpetuate something of historical significance that occurred there and that local Arabs attributed to the place – and that is the basis of his theory regarding Ziklag.

"King David saved the hostages from the Amalekites and returned with lots of booty," Garsiel explained to The Jerusalem Post. "He returned with everyone to Ziklag, but on the way to battle, a third of the battalion – around 200 soldiers – stayed behind, and two-thirds went out to war.

"All those who went to war with David asked why they should have to share their booty with the others who had remained behind, so David made the ruling that for those who stayed behind, it's as if they went to war."

The Book of Samuel reads: "David replied, 'The Lord kept us safe. He gave us success in the battle. No one will agree with what you say. Each person will receive an equal share. Some men stayed with the baggage. Some men fought in the battle. But each person will receive the same amount.' David made this ruling as an order. The Israelites have followed this ruling ever since that day" (Samuel I, 30:23-26).

"It's a law," Garsiel explains. "And this was the connection I made to Sharia, which means 'law' in Arabic."

"The valley [below Tel-a Sharia] is called Wadi a-Sharia – The valley of 'the law'. That became shortened to Tel Shera.... From there I got to understanding that the Arabs named it after 'the law of David.'"

Garsiel also points out the Islamic connections between the Prophet Muhammad and King David, who is held in high esteem in Islamic tradition and was honored with the title 'halif.' The archaeological site Tel Halif is only a few kilometers from Tel a-Sharia and Garsiel says it is also named in honor of King David.

During one of Muhammad's first victories in his conquest of the Arabian Peninsula, he issued a law that the spoils of war should be divided fairly between those who went to battle and those who stayed in the camp, as David had done.

"When Muhammad fought and won, he introduced a Sharia law that everyone who went out to war and those who remained behind share the spoils. That's one of the connections between Muhammad and David," Garsiel explained.

GROUNDING FLAG CARRIER IS THE PERFECT PARABLE OF ISRAEL'S CORONAVIRUS PREDICAMENT (Anshel Pfeffer, Ha'aretz 7/15/20)

Ben-Gurion International Airport is slowly, very slowly, reopening Israel's connection with the world.

At this point, it's still only a few hundred people flying every day but a number of major airlines have already resumed limited service, alongside the European low-cost carriers Ryanair, Easyjet and Wizzair.

One concourse at Terminal 3 is operational and there's even one café and a small duty-free shop open there.

Since many countries have yet to allow Israelis to enter, and even for those who do (with or without isolation requirements), upon return to Israel, you'll need to spend two weeks of isolation, demand isn't very high.

Most planes are still taking off or landing three-quarters empty and the passengers are mainly Israelis with dual-citizenships flying to join their families abroad or foreign citizens who work in Israel. But those who can, and need to do so, can now fly from Israel, direct, to over twenty countries, at least once a week.

But as it begins its long long-haul journey to recovery, one constant feature of air-travel to and from Israel is still absent. El Al, the national flag-carrier, is grounded indefinitely.

All 45 aircraft in the El Al fleet are parked on the tarmac at Ben-Gurion. They haven't moved for two weeks now, except for a few routine maintenance procedures on the ground, carried out by a skeleton staff of a hundred technicians, the only El Al employees not to have been furloughed.

With the exception of a four-month strike back in 1982, this is the only time El Al has grounded its fleet for a lengthy period. Indeed, the idea of severing Israel's air-link to the world is anathema to a company whose ethos is that it always keeps flying, even during times of war, when all other airlines cancel their services.

Indeed, if the latest crisis had been caused by missiles landing on Israel's cities, you can be sure that El Al would be up in the skies, despite it all. It did so time and again in the company's history. Until COVID came along.

El Al is the perfect parable for Israel's current chaotic situation in confronting coronavirus. A country and a company with extensive experience of continuing operations in the face of war and terror, which is totally unequipped to do so in time of a global pandemic.

Ostensibly, El Al is currently grounded due to an industrial action by its pilots union. Until two weeks ago, the company was operating a small number of flights to a few destinations including New York, London and Paris, and also fulfilling a short-term cargo contract, using its unused passenger planes to fly urgently needed medical and protective equipment from factories in China to destinations around the world.

But those pilots who were actually flying, were instructed by the union not to make themselves available for their next flight. The move was planned in response to the plans being prepared by management, which would have seen hundreds of pilots laid-off and the salaries of those remaining slashed. In response, El Al's shareholders decided to ground them all.

The company's future is unclear. No one wants to contemplate El Al going out of business and the government has made at least two proposals, to guarantee long-term loans or buy out the shareholders and nationalize the company until the crisis is over.

There's also a mystery buyer, Kenny Rozenberg, a care-center tycoon from the U.S., who in order to overcome the requirement that El Al's owners reside in Israel, is proposing to purchase control of the company through his son, a yeshiva student in Jerusalem.

But the uncertainty over El Al's future ownership isn't the only reason the planes are not taking off. The entire airline industry is facing its worst-ever crisis without a clear end in sight. So why are foreign airlines landing and taking off at Ben-Gurion, even with just a dozen or so passengers, while El Al remains on the tarmac?

While El Al has only one Israeli hub, most of the other airlines flying to Ben-Gurion have multiple hubs, or are based in countries where air-travel, both domestic and international, is beginning to pick up.

Operating even a much downsized fleet than usual, means these companies have the capacity to offer a range of flights, some profitable. They can face the losses incurred by flying to less profitable destinations, in the hope that business will soon pick up there as well.

But El Al currently faces losses on all its destinations (and with the return of the other airlines, has much less cargo business).

As long as COVID-19 infection rates are high in Israel, other countries will not be opening their borders to Israeli tourists or business travelers. And since upon return, Israelis will need to spend another fourteen days in isolation, flying off to countries without restrictions, such as Turkey, Britain and the U.S., is not an attractive prospect either.

There is no way any of El Al's flights can be profitable for the foreseeable future and this crisis has come at a period when El Al is over-extended, having just bought its largest and newest fleet ever, with over half the aircraft, including fifteen new Boeing 787 Dreamliners, arriving in the last four years.

The government aid packages are insufficient to cover the losses and the nationalization proposal comes with the demand for significant lay-offs and pay-cuts. The government can justify spending hundreds of millions of taxpayers' shekels to keep El Al in business, but not to keep on paying the pilots' salaries, some of the more veteran long-haul ones, in the six-figures, when most of them won't be flying for the coming months anyway. So the pilot's are striking and the company is grounded.

Of course, if there was an actual war on, none of them would dream of striking. They would all be in the air, some flying for El Al, and the rest as reserve combat-pilots with their squadrons in the air-force.

So while the entire global airline industry is hurting, El Al's predicament is worse than most as it is reliant on one, very narrow and isolated market.

Israel is an "island economy," with very little economic relations with its geographical neighbors, even those with which it has diplomatic relations, and over ninety-five percent of entries and departures from Israel by air, and nearly all of those through Ben-Gurion.

Of course, when the pandemic began, it seemed that Israel's unique geopolitical situation could help it overcome the crisis relatively unscathed and quickly.

The government could easily close the borders and keep track of virus-carriers who had entered while the country quickly went into lockdown, keeping infection rates down and opening the way to a speedy recovery.

That's what happened with another, real island economy, New Zealand. But the mismanagement of the second stage of COVID-19 and lack of an exit strategy meant that early advantage was squandered.

Israel is now facing a second lockdown and the number of passengers going through Ben-Gurion won't grow. El Al probably won't be allowed to go out of the business in this time, but the static rows of blue and white planes, shining immobile in the sun, will symbolize the thousands of small Israelis businesses which will.



SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

More Powerful Than Sticks and Stones

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz

"And Moshe spoke to the heads of the tribes of the Jewish people saying, 'This is the matter that Hashem has commanded. When a man will make a vow...he shall not desecrate his word, he shall do all that has left his mouth.'" (30:2-3)

In the beginning of *Parshas Matos*, the *Torah* teaches us the *Mitzvah* of adhering to one's vows and oaths. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein notes that the *Torah* typically introduces a new *Mitzvah* by speaking about *Hashem's* instructions to *Moshe*; here, however, the *Torah* conspicuously begins with *Moshe's* instructions to the Jewish people instead. Rabbi Feinstein explains that the *Torah* is teaching us that the *Mitzvah* of keeping one's word is so intuitive and obvious that such a law should have been enacted even had *Hashem* not taught *Moshe* this *Mitzvah*. The power of speech, says Rabbi Feinstein, is so fundamental to our humanity that it almost goes without saying that one must treat it with the utmost respect and not corrupt it in any way.

This lesson, although expressed in the context of oaths and vows, is much broader than that limited application. We must be careful with *all* aspects of our speech. Whether it is keeping our word or the language we use, the power of speech has the ability to build or destroy— it's completely up to us. Let us take advantage of this lesson to inspire us to do our very best to use our incredible power of speech to build and nurture our relationship with *Hashem*, as well as with our family, neighbors, friends, and everyone around us.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

You shall give the land as an inheritance by lot to your families... (33, 54)

This that we write in a contract 'I grant him four amos(cubits) from my property' even though a person does not own property, is because every Jew has the right to property in the Land of Israel, since property cannot be stolen from a person. (Tosafos Bava Basra 44b)

A gentile acquires land through conquering the territory through battle. (Gittin 38a)

Since the original division of the Land of Israel, gentiles have conquered the land through war, taking over the ownership each Jew has in the Land. How can we still write 'I grant him four amos from my property' if someone doesn't own any land?

Parsha Riddle

Where in Tanach did a vow cause a woman to have a child?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How old was Pinchas when he died?

Answer:

1) 400 2) Pinchas is Eliyahu Hanavi who was taken from the world while still alive.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In parashas Matos (31:22-23), Hashem commands: "Only the gold and the silver, the copper, the iron, the tin, and the lead – everything that comes into the fire – you shall pass through the fire and it will be purified; but it must be purified with the water of sprinkling; and everything that would not come in the fire, you shall pass through the water." The Talmud (see Avodah Zarah 75b) understands this as comprising two distinct commands: insofar as the vessels had been used by the Midianites for non-Kosher food, they must be rendered kosher via fire or water, depending on their typical mode of use, and independent of any such use, they must be immersed in a mikvah.

According to most authorities, this latter obligation of tevilas keilim is Biblical, although some consider it merely rabbinic. (see Sdei Chemed klalim ma'areches Tes klal 2.) The Talmud explains that as per the Biblical language, the obligation applies primarily to metal vessels, but also to glass vessels, since they are similar to metal ones in that when they are broken, they can be remade by melting them down and refashioning them. According to most authorities, the extension of the obligation to glass is rabbinic. (Pri Chadash YD siman 120 os 4)

Regarding utensils made of metals not enumerated in our verse, such as aluminum, R. Yaakov Kamensky held that the obligation to immerse them is uncertain, so they should be immersed without a blessing; R. Moshe Feinstein held that they have the same status as glass, and are subject to a rabbinic obligation of immersion (Shut. Igros Moshe YD 3:22); and R. Dov Lior maintains that they are subject to a Biblical obligation of immersion. (<https://www.yeshiva.org.il/ask/76438>) (This debate concerns durable aluminum utensils; disposable ones present additional questions.)

Some authorities require the immersion of plastic utensils (without a blessing), on the grounds that since they can be melted down and refashioned, it is at least plausible that they have the same status as glass utensils. (Shut. Minchas Yitzchak 3:76) Others disagree, arguing that the rabbinic edict was limited to glass. Within the latter camp, some maintain that it is nevertheless meritorious to immerse plastic vessels (Shut. Yabia Omer 4:YD:8), while others disagree. (Shut. Chelkas Yaakov YD 45)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not "wow!"
2. I bind you even if you're not a book.
3. Removeable.
4. I am for objects.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was for Yaakov.
2. I was for Yaakov's livestock.
3. I was for the journeys.
4. I am a Yom-tov.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Shalosh Regalim (Good day, Workless, Karbanos, Triple.)

#2 Pinchas (My father was a Kohen, I was not, I was given peace, I was zealous.)

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.*

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

The Kollel's summer intermission will begin on Sunday, July 26.
For this week...

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