

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

July 9 - 10, 2021 - 1 Av 5781 - Matos/Masei/Rosh Chodesh

Light Candles by 8:17 - Havdalah 9:23

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by Marla & Marty Teichman in commemoration of their son Jeffrey, Yosef Yonah ben Avraham Menachem Mendel, Z"L's 14th Yahrzeit.

Mazal Tov

- **Florence Binstock Avigan** on the birth of a great-grandson, Shilo Philip. Parents are Rachel & Avi Binstock of Atlanta. Mazal Tov also to Great Aunt and Uncle **Karen & Howie Schulman** and to the entire family.
- **Hedy Bauman** on the engagement of her grandson, Eli Lehmann of Lakewood, NJ, son of Rachel & Moty Lehmann, to Devora Marks of Baltimore, MD, daughter of Rabbi and Mrs. Arthur Marks. Mazal Tov to all the brothers and sisters and extended family.
- **Tzivia Bramson** on the Bar Mitzvah of her great-grandson, Noach Weinstein, son of Henya Chaya & Tzvi Yaakov Weinstein. Mazal Tov also to grandparents Renee & Mayer Weinstein.

Condolences

- **Rivkie Manes** on the passing of her father, Steven Robert Puchovitz, Shlomo Reuven ben Binyamin, Z"L. The funeral took place on Sunday in Eretz Yisrael.

Shabbos Schedule

Minyan locations are listed as B = Belonofsky Sanctuary, S = Social Hall. All Sephardi Minyanim take place in the Beit Medrash.

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 8:17
- Mincha: 7:00 (B), 8:20 (B), 7:15 (Sephardi)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:00 (B), 8:15 (B), 7:45 (Sephardi)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 9:23 (B and Sephardi)

Divrei Torah:

- 8:45 Main Minyan Rabbi Rosenbaum
- 9:15 Rabbi Rosenbaum
- Shiur after Mincha Rabbi Rosenbaum

Kiddush Sponsors:

- 8:45 and 9:15 Kiddush in a Bag is sponsored by the Haimish Kiddush Group.

YISE Youth Announcements

Shabbos Groups will take place this week from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM, indoors. Masks required indoors for age 3+. Age 18-35 months will be located in the toddler room off the Lower Lobby. Ages 3-5 years will meet in the room behind the balcony. Ages 6-9 years will meet at Shomrai and walk over to the Yeshiva. For more information, contact Michal Merkin, YISE Youth groups coordinator, at mmerkin@yise.org See flyer for details.

COVID-19 Updates

- Minyanim currently take place with both social distance and regular seating. Regular seating is for vaccinated people only. Social distance seating is for unvaccinated people and for vaccinated people who prefer social distance seating. Masks are required for everyone in the social distance seating.
 - 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.

Weekday Shiurim

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

- **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-minute Shiur on the Parsha. Sunday through Friday 8:30 AM - **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday 7:00 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, in the room behind the balcony.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, now learning Megillas Eichah, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Women's Navi Shiur, now studying Sefer Yehoshua, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**.
 - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men and Women** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM.
 - Unraveling the Navi with Rabbi Hillel Shaps, **Zoom B**.
 - **Rabbi Tuvia Grauman** - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sundays at 10:00 AM, **Zoom F**.
 - **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM (except as noted). For more info, contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, hshaps@gwckollel.org 347-869-9361.
 - For Men & Women - **Zoom C** (except as noted):
 - Mondays: (for men only) Rabbi H. Shaps, On the Same Page Gemara, **Zoom B**.
 - Tuesdays: Rabbi Winter - Torah Topics
 - Wednesdays: Rabbi Grossman - Reading Responsa
 - Thursdays: Rabbi Grossman - Parshas Hashavua, 9:00 PM.
 - For Women - **Zoom D**
 - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Parsha Journeys, will resume in the fall.
 - Tuesdays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Bereishis in-Depth, will resume in the fall.
 - **Semichat Chaver Program**, Tuesdays at 9:00 PM with Rabbi Hillel Shaps, now taking place in person in the Social Hall. For more information, please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org Registration required at gwckollel.org/scp
 - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiur on Daily Halachos for men & women, Tuesdays 9:15 AM, **Zoom E**.
 - **Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's** Shiur for Men and Women, Tuesdays, 1:30 PM, "A Second Look - Stories in the Torah from a Deeper Perspective", will resume in the fall.
 - **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Kiddushin on Wednesday evenings, 7:00 PM, will resume in August.
- 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: 349 754 2180, password Learn
Zoom C: ID: 746 455 2195, password Learn
Zoom D: ID: 601 853 4021, password Winter
Zoom E: ID: 970 1398 4837, password 613
Zoom F: ID: 978 8156 7874, password RabbiHyatt
Zoom H: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079

YISE Programs and Listings

Ask the Rabbi - Come join our virtual, interactive monthly program featuring Halachos of Shabbos and holidays! This month's topic: Illness on Shabbos and Yom Tov. Tuesday, July 13, 7:15 PM - 8:15 PM on **Zoom A**. The first 45 minutes are for Shailos submitted in advance and the last 15 minutes are for Q & A. Send in your questions about Illness on Shabbos and Yom Tov to: AskTheRabbi@yise.org by Sunday, July 11. For more information or to submit questions anonymously, contact Miriam Friedman, 301-754-1517 or mfriedman2@yahoo.com. To sponsor the Shiur, contact office@yise.org.

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 prepared to home deliver some copies of the Yizkor Guide to our Shul members who regularly say Yizkor and feel more comfortable davening at home. If you would like a home-delivered copy, please contact the Shul office at 301-593-4465 x403 or email office@yise.org. 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 9. To sign up online, go to www.yise.org/yizkor. If you have questions, please contact Marc Katz at mkatz@yise.org.

Kiddush in a Bag! While we are not yet back to regular in-Shul Kiddushes, we are happy to now offer Kiddush in a Bag for the 8:45 and 9:15 Minyanim. To sponsor the Kiddush in a Bag, contact Simi Franco at simi@yise.org.

Shabbos Groups at the Yeshiva: Oversight Professional - The YISE Youth Committee is seeking a caring, responsible adult to provide on-site oversight for weekly Shabbos groups taking place at the Yeshiva from 10:00am - 11:30 am. No programming experience required. Our oversight adult is a key team member who is also doing an important chesed for the youth of our community. This is a paid position. If interested in learning more, please contact Debbie Katz, Youth Chair, at dkatz@yise.org.

Update: Being Social - In the past few months, YISE's Social Committee has organized a range of programs to bring us together virtually, including: Jews (in our community) discussing their service in the US military, Trivia Nights, Painting with Talya, Purim Shpiel, Chagim goody bags ... We have also expressed our thanks to the Holy Cross Hospital health workers, and treated the Wheaton Rescue Squad to a special dinner. As we come together again, we would like your ideas and help in organizing fun, interactive, and safe activities. Please contact social@yise.org.

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.

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 Navi Shiur for Women
- 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 Shabbos Drasha 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 Hyatt's Gemara Shiur

- **David Jaray** in honor of a Refuah Sheleimah to Rabbi Hyatt and in honor of Rabbi Grauman and all those who attend his Shiur.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tehillim/Parsha/Halacha Shiur

- **Jacqueline & Rabbi Haim Arzouan** on the Yahrzeit of Jacqueline's father, Dovid ben HaRav Moshe, on the 27th of Tammuz.
- **Judy & Rabbi Roy Rosenbaum** on the Yahrzeit of Judy's father, Yakov Moshe HaLevi ben Yechiel, on the 27th of Tammuz.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Mussar Shiur

- **Elaine & Robert Leichter**
- **Roz Malin and Rose & Izzy Miller** to thank Rabbi Rosenbaum and the entire YISE Community for all of their support during the Shiva in memory of our sister, Miriam Miller. The learning should be for an Aliyah for Miriam Elka bas Zvi Dov.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Nach Shiur

- **Roz Malin and Rose & Izzy Miller** to thank Rabbi Rosenbaum and the entire YISE Community for all of their support during the Shiva in memory of our sister, Miriam Miller. The learning should be for an Aliyah for Miriam Elka bas Zvi Dov.

YISE Programs and Listings (continued)

Registration for Shomrai Preschool 2021-2022 is now open! We are excited to be offering a Torah-rich, child-centered program for children entering 2 year-old Nursery - 4 year-old Pre-K. School day runs from 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM. Extended care options available from 7:30 AM -8:30 AM and 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM. Register early for maximum savings! Visit our website for tuition rates and online registration at <https://preschool.yise.org/registration> For more information about the program email Sarah Dollman at director@yise.org See flyer for details.

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, mkskarlin@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

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, July 14, 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 secretary@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671

The Yad Yehuda Clothing Exchange has available hours for all members of the community to shop at no cost this Sunday, July 11, from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (note new time). This is an opportunity for people to come and shop for beautiful, Tzanua clothing in our well-equipped showroom. Everyone must be in good health and not have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. If you have any questions please contact ncarmel@yadyehuda.org

NO FEAR: A Rally in Solidarity with the Jewish People - Sunday, July 11, 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM in front of the US Capitol, on the west side. For more information, go to <https://nofear.combatantisemitism.org/>

Help our Senior Neighbors - What if you had to give up your car keys and depend on someone else to get you where you needed to go? This is happening to more and more of our senior neighbors. Consider volunteering with the Senior Connection to drive seniors to medical appointments, shopping, etc. Training and liability coverage are provided, and you can set your own volunteering schedule. COVID-19 precautions are followed for the health of drivers and riders. Contact volunteer@seniorconnectionmc.org, call 301-962-0820 or visit www.seniorconnectionmc.org for more information.

Capital Kosher Pantry Summer Collection - Please donate non-perishable items. Specially needed: canned pineapple, graham cracker crusts, olives, olive oil, Wacky Mac, yeast. Always needed: paper napkins, paper towels, tissues & toilet paper. You can buy items at your local store & place them in a Capital Kosher Pantry donation bin at Shalom, Moti's and area Shuls, or buy online & ship directly to us! Go to: www.yadyehuda.org/kosher-pantry for more information.

Yad Yehuda Donation Policy Update - Many unsolicited items are being dropped off at Yad Yehuda's office. We incur costs to dispose of those items. Please do not drop off: clothing/shoes/coats, household and baby items, electronics, books, Judaica/Sheimos. Donations of non-perishable food for the Capital Kosher Pantry are welcomed and appreciated.

Newly married? Growing family? Just need a budget check-up? Izun is a community resource that provides free and confidential coaching to help you examine your budget and achieve financial stability. Email us at barbara@getizun.org

Fundamentals of Prayer - Wednesdays, 8:00 PM on Zoom. Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps. Join any time! No cost. Zoom info and registration at linksgw.org/classes

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 8:30 AM, Monday - Thursday 9:00 PM.

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 11	Monday July 12	Tuesday July 13	Wednesday July 14	Thursday July 15	Friday July 16
Ashkenazi: Shacharis: Sunday 6:30 AM (B)/7:30 AM (S)/8:45 AM (B); Monday/Thursday 6:15 AM (B)/6:45 AM (S)/8:45 AM (B); Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday 6:15 AM (B)/6:55 AM (S)/8:45 AM (B); Mincha/Maariv: Sunday - Thursday: 8:20 PM (B). Sephardi: Shacharis: Sunday through Friday: 7:30 AM; Mincha/Maariv: Sunday - Thursday: 8:25 PM.						
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 4:17 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 4:54 AM, Latest Netz: 5:57 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:32 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:51 PM, Earliest Shkia: 8:31 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim: 9:23 PM						

Next Shabbos

July 16 - 17, 2021 - 8 Av 5781
Parshas Devarim/Shabbos Chazon
Light Candles: 8:14
Shabbos ends: 9:19

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, July 14 at 12 Noon

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

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

Eruv line: 301-593-5561 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

Simi Franco - Office Manager

A Quick Thought on the Parsha from Rabbi Rosenbaum

Matos/Masei 5781:

The Most Unique Yahrzeit

The following is kindly transcribed by a congregant from the video at

<https://wp.yise.org/shabbos>

We have so many interesting lists of Jewish riddles. So many questions that you can fire to your children or you can ask your friends, who knows this, who knows that. One of the areas that there are so many interesting answers is: what date did such and such in the *Chumash* happen on. Much of the *Chumash* does not give dates. So if you put together different *Midrashim* or you think about how different dates the *Torah* does give come together, you can answer the question sometimes. There's one person that the *Torah* explicitly says the date of their death, and that is in this week's *Parsha*. The *Torah* in this week's *Parsha* mentions the date of the death of *Aharon HaKohen*. And it is *Rosh Chodesh Av*.

It's a very interesting thing to think about. Of all of the people who passed away who are discussed at great detail in the *Chumash*, whose deaths are discussed in the *Chumash*, why would it be that only *Aharon HaKohen*'s date of death is explicitly stated in the *Torah*?

Rav Shimshon Pincus has a very interesting thought. He says *Rosh Chodesh Av*, which by the way is this *Shabbos*, *Rosh Chodesh Av* is not only known as the *Yahrzeit* of *Aharon HaKohen*, primarily *Rosh Chodesh Av* is known as the beginning of the nine days, the beginning of the least auspicious month of the Jewish people, a lot of negative associations. *Rav Pincus* suggests that maybe the *Torah* is teaching us that there is a very powerful connection. *Aharon HaKohen* brought *Shalom* to *Klal Yisroel*. *Aharon* brought peace to *Klal Yisroel*. He was the *אֹהֵב שְׁלוֹם וְרוֹדֵף שְׁלוֹם*. He loved peace, he actively pursued peace, he made peace between spouses, he made peace between friends, he made peace between enemies. The *Tzoros* of *Klal Yisroel* come when we don't have peace. So many of us will think to ourselves, have thought to ourselves, over these past weeks and months, so many *Tzoros*, so many difficulties, what can I do? And that is wonderful. It is a wonderful thing to think that way and we are taught that when there are difficulties that befall the people each of us need to do *Teshuva*, each of us need to repent, and in the merit of our repenting great things can happen. But in light of the *Yahrzeit* of *Aharon HaKohen* which is this *Shabbos* and so much in step with what we are taught is the reason for the destruction of the second *Beis HaMikdash*, the Second Temple, which is *שְׂנֵאת הַנֶּאֱמָר*, baseless hatred, imagine if each and every one of us would make a concerted effort to bring more *Shalom* to the world, more peace to the world. That of course starts with us. It's not let me figure out who I can bring peace to between two parties where I will be the third party. The first step is to try for me to make peace with the people with whom I don't get along, and let me be the first one and let me not wait for the other person to come to me. And if I get going in that regard or if I can't think of anybody who I have friction with, then let me try to bring peace between other individuals. That is the core of the blessings of *Klal Yisroel*, if we can have peace. That is the remarkable lesson of life of *Aharon HaKohen* and it is certainly true today.

Have a good *Shabbos*!



- 4 Groups:**
- 1. Ages 18-36 months**
 - 2. Ages 3-5**
 - 3. Ages 6-9 Boys**
 - 4. Ages 6-9 Girls**

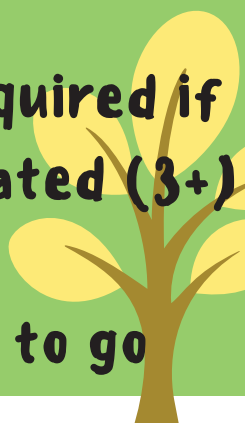


**July
10th!
10:00-
11:00am**

Indoors

**Masks required if
unvaccinated (3+)**

Snacks to go



ASK the RABBI

Come join our virtual, monthly interactive program featuring different Halachos of Shabbos and Holidays!

*Topic: **Illness on Shabbos and Yom Tov***



The first 45 minutes are for Shailos submitted in advance and the last 15 are for Q & A.

- How can I visit someone in the hospital on Shabbos?
- Under what circumstances may I call a doctor on Shabbos?
- What are the guidelines for taking medicine on Shabbos?

*Send in your questions about Illness on Shabbos and Yom Tov to:
AskTheRabbi@yise.org by Sunday, July 11*

When: Tuesday, July 13, 7:15 PM – 8:15 PM

Where: Zoom – Meeting ID: 416-963-9000, Passcode: 492019

For more information and to submit questions by phone or anonymously, contact:

Miriam Friedman at 301-754-1517 or mfriedman2@yahoo.com

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via the Internet

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

Volume 27, Issue 37

Shabbat Parashat Matot-Masei

5781 - B"H

Covenant & Conversation: R Jonathan Sacks, z"l

My Teacher: In Memoriam - There are moments when Divine Providence touches you on the shoulder and makes you see a certain truth with blazing clarity. Let me share with you such a moment that happened to me last year.

For technical reasons, I have to write my essays for the Covenant & Conversation series many weeks in advance. I had come to Matot-Masei, and had decided to write about the cities of refuge, but I wasn't sure which aspect to focus on. Suddenly, overwhelmingly, I felt an instinct to write about one very unusual law.

The cities were set aside for the protection of those found guilty of manslaughter, that is, of killing someone accidentally without malice aforethought. Because of the then universal practice of blood vengeance, that protection was necessary. The purpose of the cities was to make sure that someone judged innocent of murder was safe from being killed. As Shoftim puts it: "And he shall flee to one of these cities and live". This apparently simple concept was given a remarkable interpretation by the Talmud: The Sages taught: If a student was exiled, his teacher was exiled with him, as it is said: "(And he shall flee to one of these cities) and live," meaning do the things for him that will enable him to live.

As Rambam explains: "Life without study is like death for scholars who seek wisdom." In Judaism, study is life itself, and study without a teacher is impossible. Teachers give us more than knowledge; they give us life. Note that this is not an aggadic passage, a moralising text not meant to be taken literally. It is a halachic ruling, codified as such. Teachers are like parents only more so. Parents give us physical life; teachers give us spiritual life. Physical life is mortal, transient. Spiritual life is eternal. Therefore, we owe our teacher our life in its deepest sense.

I had just written the text above when the phone went. It was my brother in Jerusalem to tell me that my teacher, Rabbi Nachum Eliezer Rabinovitch, zt"l, had just died. Only rarely in this "world of concealment" do we feel the touch of Providence, but this was unmistakable. For me, and I suspect everyone who had the privilege of studying with him, he was the greatest teacher of our generation.

He was a master posek, as those who have read his Responsa will know. He knew the entire rabbinic literature, Bavli, Yerushalmi, Midrash Halachah and Aggadah, biblical commentaries, philosophy, codes and responsa. His creativity, halachic and aggadic, knew no bounds. He was a master of almost every secular discipline, especially the sciences. He had been a Professor of Mathematics at the University of Toronto and had written a book about probability and statistical inference. His supreme passion was the Rambam in all his guises, particularly the Mishneh Torah, to which he devoted some fifty years of his life to writing the multi-volume commentary Yad Peshutah.

By the time I came to study with the Rav, I had already studied at Cambridge and Oxford with some of the greatest intellects of the time, among them Sir Roger Scruton and Sir Bernard Williams. Rabbi Rabinovitch was more demanding than either of them. Only when I became his student did I learn the true meaning of intellectual rigour, shetihyu amelim ba-Torah, "labouring" in the Torah. To survive his

scrutiny, you had to do three things: first to read everything ever written on the subject; second to analyse it with complete lucidity, searching for omek ha-peshat, the deep plain sense; and third, to think independently and critically. I remember writing an essay for him in which I quoted one of the most famous of nineteenth century Talmudic scholars. He read what I had written, then turned to me and said, "But you didn't criticise what he wrote!" He thought that in this case the scholar had not given the correct interpretation, and I should have seen and said this. For him, intellectual honesty and independence of mind were inseparable from the quest for truth which is what Talmud Torah must always be.

Some of the most important lessons I learned from him were almost accidental. I remember on one occasion his car was being serviced, so I had the privilege of driving him home. It was a hot day, and at a busy junction in Hampstead, my car broke down and would not start up again. Unfazed, Rabbi Rabinovitch said to me, "Let's use the time to learn Torah." He then proceeded to give me a shiur on Rambam's Hilchot Shemittah ve-Yovel. Around us, cars were hooting their horns. We were holding up traffic and a considerable queue had developed. The Rav remained completely calm, came to the end of his exposition, turned to me and said, "Now turn the key." I turned the key, the car started, and we went on our way.

On another occasion, I told him about my problem getting to sleep. I had become an insomniac. He said to me, enthusiastically, "Could you teach me how to do that?" He quoted the Rambam who ruled that one acquires most of one's wisdom at night, based on the Talmudic statement that the night was created for study. He and the late Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein zt"l were the Gedolei ha-Dor, the leaders and role models of their generation. They were very different, one scientific, the other artistic, one direct, the other oblique, one bold, the other cautious, but they were giants, intellectually, morally and spiritually. Happy the generation that is blessed by people like these.

It is hard to convey what having a teacher like Rabbi Rabinovitch meant. He knew, for example, that I had to learn fast because I was coming to the rabbinate late, after a career in academic philosophy. What he did was very bold. He explained to me that the fastest and best way of learning anything is to teach it. So the day I entered Jews' College as a student, I also entered it as a lecturer. How many people would have had that idea and taken that risk?

He also understood how lonely it could be if you lived by the principles of intellectual integrity and independence. Early on, he said to me, "Don't be surprised if only six people in the world understand what you are trying to do." When I asked him whether I should accept the position of Chief Rabbi, he said, in his laconic way: "Why not? After all, maybe you can teach some Torah."

He himself, in his early thirties, had been offered the job of Chief Rabbi of Johannesburg, but turned it down on the grounds that he refused to live in an apartheid state. He told me how he was visited in Toronto by Rabbi Louis Rabinowitz who had held the Johannesburg position until then. Looking at the Rav's modest home and thinking of his more palatial accommodation in South Africa, he said, "You turned down that for this?" But the Rav would never compromise his integrity and never cared for material things.

In the end, he found great happiness in the 37 years he served as head of Yeshivat Birkat Moshe in Maale Adumim. The yeshiva had been founded six years earlier by Rabbi Haim Sabato and Yitzhak Sheilat. It is said that when Rabbi Sabato heard the Rav give a shiur, he immediately asked him to become the Rosh Yeshiva. It is hard to describe the pride with which he spoke to me about his students, all of whom served in the Israel Defence Force. Likewise it is hard to describe the awe in which his students held him. Not everyone in the Jewish world knew his greatness, but everyone who studied with him did.

I believe that Judaism made an extraordinarily wise decision when it made teachers its heroes and lifelong education its passion. We don't worship power or wealth. These things have their place, but not at the top of the hierarchy of values. Power forces us. Wealth induces us. But teachers develop us. They open us to the wisdom of the ages, helping us to see the world more clearly, think more deeply, argue more cogently and decide more wisely.

"Let the reverence for your teacher be like the reverence for Heaven," said the Sages. In other words: if you want to come close to Heaven, don't search for kings, priests, saints or even prophets. They may be great, but a fine teacher helps you to become great, and that is a different thing altogether. I was blessed by having one of the greatest teachers of our generation. The best advice I can give anyone is: find a teacher, then make yourself a disciple.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"And Moses recorded the places of origin toward the places of destination... and these are the places of destination toward the places of origin". Undoubtedly, the Exodus stands as the central event of our nation's collective consciousness, an event that we invoke daily in the Shema, on the Sabbath, on festivals, and after every meal. Still, when we consider the detail that our portion of Masei devotes to recording all 42 stops of the 40 year desert sojourn, we're a little taken aback. One chapter devotes 45 verses to listing all 42 locations, and since each location was not only a place where the Israelites camped, but also a place from which they journeyed, each place name is mentioned twice. Why such detail? Different commentators take different approaches.

The Sforno maintains that the plethora of locations is a way of highlighting the merit of the Jewish people, who, "in the loving kindness of their youth, followed God into the desert, a land not sown". And the Sefat Emes suggests that the names of the encampments are included to demonstrate that wherever the Jewish people travelled through our long history, we have been able to create Tikkun Olam – making a profound impact on our environment.

This week, I would like to concentrate on the commentary of Nahmanides. Apparently, he is troubled not only by the delineation of each stage of the journey, but also by the additional declaration that "...Moses wrote their goings forth, according to their stations, by the commandment of God...". These words suggest that the actual recording of these journeys has importance. In approaching the

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issue, Nahmanides first quotes Rashi who says that Moses “set his mind to write down the travels. By doing this, he intended to inform future generations of the loving kindness of God... who protected His nation despite their manifold travels”. Nahmanides, then quotes Maimonides who understands the detail as a means of corroborating the historical truth of the narrative. He adds that later generations might think they sojourned in a “desert that was near cultivated land, oases which were comfortable for human habitation, places in which it was possible to till and reap or to feed on plants, areas with many wells...”, hence the enumeration of all these way-stations is to emphasize the extent of the miracle of Israelite subsistence. After quoting these views, Nahmanides concludes with his own most intriguing comment: “The recording of the journeys was a Divine commandment, either for reasons mentioned above, or for a purpose the secret of which has not been revealed to us...”. Nahmanides seems to be prompting us to probe further.

I would submit that the secret he refers to may indeed be the secret of Jewish survival. After all, the concept of “ma’aseh avot siman l’banim” – that the actions of the fathers are a sign of what will happen to the children – was well known to the sages, and one of the guiding principles of Nahmanides’s Biblical commentary. Perhaps, the hidden message of this text is an outline of the future course of Jewish history. From the time of the destruction of the Temple, until our present return to the Land of Israel – the “goings forth” of the Jewish people certainly comprise at least 42 stages: Judea, Babylon, Persia, Rome, Europe, North Africa and the New World. As Tevye the Milkman explains in Fiddler on the Roof when he is banished from Anatevka, “Now you know why Jewish adults wear hats; we must always be ready to set out on a journey!” Moreover, each Diaspora was important in its own right, and made its own unique contribution to the text (Oral Law) and texture (customs) of the sacred kaleidoscope which is the Jewish historical experience. Are not the Holocaust memorial books, where survivors try to preserve what little can be kept of lost worlds, examples of our sense that God commanded us to write things down – to remember? Perhaps the Jews didn’t invent history, but they understood that the places of Jewish wanderings, the content of the Jewish lifestyle, and the miracle of Jewish survival are more important than those hieroglyphics which exalt and praise rulers and their battles. The “secret” Nahmanides refers to may not only be a prophetic vision of our history, but a crucial lesson as to what gave us the strength, the courage and the faith to keep on going, to keep on moving, to withstand the long haul of exile.

If we look at the verse where Moses writes down the journey according to the command of God, we read that Moses recorded “their starting points toward their destinations at God’s command and those were their destinations toward their starting points”. What does this mean? Why does the same verse conclude “destinations toward starting points?” Fundamental to our history as a nation is that we are constantly traveling – on the road to the Promised Land, on the journey towards redemption. That direction was given to us at the dawn of our history: in Hebron, with the Cave of the Couples, beginning with Abraham and Sarah, and their gracious hospitality to everyone, their righteous compassion and just morality; and in Jerusalem, the city of peace. Even as we move down the road of time, we must always recall the place of our origin.

When S.Y. Agnon received the Nobel Prize for Literature, he was asked about his birthplace. To the interviewer’s surprise, he answered that he was born in Jerusalem. The interviewer pointed out that

everyone knew he had been born in Buczac, a town in Galicia. Agnon corrected him: “I was born in Jerusalem more than 3,000 years ago. That was my beginning, my origin. Buczac in Galicia is only one of the stopping-off points”.

Only two princes of tribes who served as scouts reached the Promised Land: Caleb and Joshua; Caleb because he visited the graves of our Patriarchs and Matriarchs in Hebron, and Joshua because the name of God, the author of the revelation was added to his name. Only these two set out for the Promised Land with their place of origin at the forefront of their consciousness. Only those with a proud past can look forward to a glorious future.

As long as we wander with our place of origin firmly in mind, we will assuredly reach our goal. We may leave our place of origin for our destination, but our places of origin in Israel will remain our ultimate destiny.

Dvar Torah: TorahWeb.Org

Rabbi Yaakov Neuburger: Messaging Priorities

Where was Moshe Rabbeinu buried? Har Navo? That is how it is recorded at the end of Devarim. However in this week’s parsha, Rashi explains to us that Navo was named in honor of a pagan deity, and that name just had to go. That is how Chazal explain, “And the [tribe] of Reuven built Cheshbon, and Elaleh and Kiriathaim, and Nevo and Baal Meon - their names being changed and Sibmah and they gave their names to the cities that they built”. Yet it would seem that we could not rebrand Nevo, that the new name simply did not take, and even the Almighty conceded to leave the pagan name in place and forever associated with none less than the greatest of all nevi’im.

Why does the Torah record what seems to be a fruitless and failed attempt at communal change? When viewed in context of the entire parsha, we may begin to appreciate that perhaps this was part of a larger lesson that Moshe was imparting to his generation. If correct, then the teaching begins with Moshe’s negotiations with the tribes of Reuven and Gad, as they request to leave their families and flocks on the eastern side of the Yarden.

Moshe Rabbeinu reviews and confirms the obligations of the two tribes. Their commitment to fight alongside their brethren to capture the mainland would retroactively earn them the right to settle their families and flocks earlier than anyone else. Moshe records this benefit, “Build your cities for your children and spaces for your flocks, and [keep your promises]” Rashi notes that Moshe was delivering a “shtoch” as he was firming up the deal. He was, in a not-so-veiled critique, correcting their prior presentation, “And they approached [Moshe] and they said, “We will build spaces for our sheep and cities for our children”. Moshe let them know that he was profoundly disappointed with their priorities. Whereas my untrained ear would never pick this up, Moshe understood that they had planned to build the spaces for the sheep first. This concerned Moshe enough to deliver a stinging rebuke, one that will be heard by all Jews at all times.

In years gone by I had felt that the criticism was unduly harsh and undeserved. Did Moshe really believe that these Jews would protect their sheep before making their children safe? Are we to believe that this was a Freudian slip, that it truly represented their priorities, and that they cared for the sheep more than their children. Did they deserve to be forever censured? Yet this year my mind for some reason took me to a different place and I came to an appreciation of Chazal’s insight. I have no doubt these tribes treasured every accomplishment and milestone of their children far more than the fleece and meat of their sheep with all the wealth that it brought. But consider this: every yom tov when they

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would travel to Yerushalayim and the children would ask for hours, “Are we there yet? Why do we live so far from Yerushalayim?” and undoubtedly we would hear on the very same trip, “why can’t we stay home this time?”, “why can’t we visit Yerushalayim more often and stay longer?”

Whereas their response to Moshe may have been some unthinking and unfortunate gaffe, the honest and perhaps frequent parental answer would be quite different. Every aliya laregel would indeed communicate that our wealth, our family business, our financial security, and our large premises all keep us far from Yerushalayim and make our trips there difficult and less frequent. Truth be told, over the course of the fourteen years the fathers were absent even if only for periods at a time. Undoubtedly their children would need “help learning a daf” or had to “sit alone in shul” or wonder before retiring “where did abba call from?”, and they would find out that it is all because of the sheep.

That is the meaning of the “shtoch”, of the censure. It was a message that Moshe Rabbeinu wanted to bring home to his children before they signed the dotted line.

So what happened with Har Nevo? That completes this teaching for all times. Sometimes names, and certainly ideas, are so well embedded that even the attempt of the conquering tribes could not change them. That is what Moshe Rabbeinu was attempting to teach us in so many ways.

Dvar Torah: Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

Which legendary person’s Yartzeit will be commemorated on Wednesday next week? In Parshat Chukat, details are provided of the sad passing of Aharon HaCohen – Aharon the High Priest. But unusually, there is no date given for his death. In the second of this week’s parshiot -Ma’asei – reference is again made to his passing and this time we are told that Aharon died “ביום החדש באחד” – on the first day of the fifth month”. Now, since Nissan is the first month of the year, the first day of the fifth month, is Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, which will be next week Shabbat.

We know from here therefore, that every year we read about the Yartzeit of Aharon on the Shabbat which is closest to that date – and I cannot think of a better time in the year to contemplate on the life of Aharon and his teachings. He died on Rosh Chodesh Av, the commencement of the saddest month of the year. As Chazal teach us in Mesechet Ta’anit “שמשנכנס אב ממעטין בשמחה” – with the commencement of the month of Av, our joy decreases”. This is on account of the fact that so many tragedies befell our people at the time including the destruction of both of our temples.

Our second temple fell in the year 70 because of the sin of Sinat Chinam- causeless hatred. And when you think about it, the example that Aharon set provided the antidote to Sinat Chinam. Hillel, in Pirkei Avot, teaches us מְלִמְדֵי שָׁלֹם אֶהְיֶה – we should strive to be like the disciples of Aharon, אֹהֶב, אֹהֶב שְׁלֹם – like him we should ‘love peace and pursue it’, – אֹהֶב אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת וּמִקְרָבָן לְתוֹרָה, – and like him, we should ‘love all other people and bring them close to Torah’

Aharon taught through his personal example that we should love peace but that actually is not good enough. We need to ensure that there will be a peaceful environment wherever we are. We should love all other people and through our love for them, share with them the beauty of a life of Torah.

One thousand nine hundred and fifty years after the destruction of our temple, tragically, שנאת חנם – causeless hatred is still very much in our midst. As we commemorate the Yartzeit of Aharon we must transform שנאת חנם into אהבת חנם – causeless love.

מטות

Parashat Matot begins with the laws of *Nedarim* / vows to prohibit items or actions that otherwise are permitted by the Torah--for example, a vow not to eat a specific permitted food or not to interact with a specific person. R' Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook z"l (1865-1935; first *Ashkenazic* Chief Rabbi of *Eretz Yisrael*) writes: The *Mitzvot* in general, especially those which are obligations toward *Hashem* alone (as opposed to interpersonal obligations) are intended to achieve specific results: to draw a person closer to *Hashem*, and to sanctify one's deeds, thoughts, and beliefs. The Torah's goal is to accomplish these aims within the framework of everyday life; therefore, the Torah is not too heavy-handed in its demands.

R' Kook continues: The Torah aims to address the spiritual needs of every individual, but, when all is said and done, it is directed toward the nation as a whole, and it therefore speaks generally. Even so, G-d forbid that any person take upon himself to breach the Torah's boundaries, even if he thinks that his personal spirituality will benefit thereby. The Torah's demands do not change because of the feelings of an individual or even a group. In areas where the Torah's demands are well-established, no individual or group may say that his or her spiritual needs require a different law.

Having said that, R' Kook writes, the Torah does provide a mechanism for addressing a person's personal spiritual needs, and that is through *Nedarim*. If a person feels that he will benefit spiritually from behaving in a more holy way or distancing himself from pleasures more than the Torah requires, the Torah gives him a process for doing so--i.e., by taking a vow to refrain from some object, act, or behavior. (*Ain Ayah: Shabbat* 1:37)

Tefilah

This year, we will iy"H devote this space to discussing various aspects of our prayers. This week, we continue discussing the thirteen types of prayer identified by the Midrash Rabbah and Midrash Yalkut Shimon.

R' Shimshon Dovid Pincus z"l (rabbi of Ofakim, Israel; died 2001) writes: "**Rinah**" is prayer in the form of praise and thanksgiving. *Midrash Rabbah* teaches that one should incorporate *Rinah* into his requests from *Hashem*. The *Gemara* (*Berachot* 32a) teaches, more specifically, that one must praise *Hashem* before making requests. This praise is the function of the first three *Berachot* of *Shemoneh Esrei*, while the next thirteen blessings constitute our requests.

R' Moshe ben Maimon z"l (*Rambam*; 1135-1204) writes that praising *Hashem* is an integral part of the *Mitzvah* of prayer--a *Mitzvah* derived from the verse (*Shmot* 23:25), "You shall serve *Hashem*, your *Elokim*." Via the Oral Law we know that this "*Avodah*" / "service" is prayer. Likewise, it says (*Devarim* 10:12), "To serve Him with all your heart," to which our Sages comment: "What service is in the heart? This is prayer." [Until here from *Rambam*]

R' Pincus explains: As *Rambam* indicates, the Torah calls prayer "*Avodah*" / "service." In order for one's requests to be "*Avodah*," one must recognize *Hashem*'s Divinity and Loftiness and must negate himself before Him. If one does not know before Whom he is praying, or if he does not take to heart the fact that he is praying to G-d, his prayer cannot be called "*Avodah*." Therefore, only after one has praised *Hashem* and has reflected on His Divinity--only if one grasps that *Hashem* is not just another force in the universe--does his request become "*Avodah*." Without first praising *Hashem*, a person's words might still constitute "prayer," but he has not fulfilled the requirement of *Avodah*, which is an integral part of the *Mitzvah*.

R' Pincus continues: We are commanded to serve *Hashem* with joy. If you see someone finding a bag that you know is full of gold coins, but you see that the finder doesn't smile, you know that he is unaware of the sack's contents. Likewise, if one does not feel joy when he prays, then it is clear that he does not understand that he is praying to the Incomparable, All-Powerful G-d. By praising *Hashem*, one educates himself so that he can pray joyously.

(*She'arim B'tefilah* p.47)

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on the *yahrzeit* of his father, Alexander Isaac ben Zev Wolf a"h

"These are the journeys of *Bnei Yisrael* . . ." (33:1)

On the verse (*Vayikra* 6:6), "An eternal flame shall burn on the altar, it shall not be extinguished," the *Talmud Yerushalmi* comments: "Even during the travels." What does this teach us?

R' Aharon Lewin z"l Hy"d (the "*Reisha Rav*"; killed in the Holocaust in 1941) writes: There is an awesome ethical lesson here. When a person is at home, he is less likely to sin. Even if the *Yetzer Ha'ra* tempts him, he will overcome the *Yetzer Ha'ra* because he knows that whatever he does will come to the attention of his friends and neighbors. Not so when a person is traveling. When he is away, he can act with impunity and it will not become known at home. This fact is alluded to in the verse (*Bereishit* 4:7), "Sin lurks at the door." When one leaves the door of his house, he is more likely to sin.

However, "Fortunate is one who fears *Hashem*, who goes in his ways" (*Tehilim* 128:1). Even when he goes on his way, he fears *Hashem*. [Note that most commentaries translate: "His ways," referring to G-d.]

This, writes R' Lewin, is the *Yerushalmi*'s message: The eternal flame of love of G-d should burn on the altar in a person's heart even when he travels. As *Tehilim* (119:1) says, "Fortunate are those who are perfect on the road, who go with G-d's Torah." (*Ha'drash V'Ha'iyun* II p.91)



"Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys at the bidding of *Hashem* . . ." (33:2)

R' Avraham Dov Ber z"l (1760-1840; *Chassidic Rebbe* and rabbi of Ovruch, Ukraine; later in Tzefat) writes: The Torah intends that we learn a practical lesson from the description of *Bnei Yisrael*'s travels. He explains:

The primary purpose of being in *Eretz Yisrael* is to attain *Yir'at Ha'romemut* / awe of the Creator, the King of Kings, the Holy One blessed is He. Since that is where the primary revelation of His *Shechinah* takes place, that is where a person can easily accept the yoke of His dominion, on the one hand, and attain humility, on the other hand.

The purpose of *Bnei Yisrael*'s travels through the desolate wilderness, a place of snakes, serpents and scorpions (*Devarim* 8:15), was so that they could appreciate that there is another type of *Yir'ah*, i.e., fear of physical things. They needed to know--as do we, hence we read of their travels--that such *Yir'ah* exists, even though it is not the ideal form of *Yir'ah*. *Yir'at Ha'romemut* / awe of G-d is the ideal, while *Yir'ah* / simple fear can be a stepping-stone to that higher level. Ultimately, though, one should fear nothing but *Hashem*. (*Bat Ayin*)

"*Hashem* spoke to Moshe, saying, 'Take vengeance for *Bnei Yisrael* against the Midianites; afterward you will be gathered unto your people.' Moshe spoke to the people, saying, 'Arm men from among yourselves for the legion that they may act against Midian to inflict *Hashem*'s vengeance against Midian.'" (31:2-3)

Rashi z"l writes: The expression Moshe used, "*Hashem*'s vengeance," is equivalent to the expression *Hashem* employed, "Vengeance for *Bnei Yisrael*," because, if one attacks *Yisrael*, it is as though he has attacked the Holy One, blessed is He. [Until here from *Rashi*]

It emerges, observes R' Yosef Tendler z"l (1932-2012; *Menahel* of Mechinas Ner Israel in Baltimore, Maryland), that vengeance for *Hashem* and vengeance for *Bnei Yisrael* are one and the same.

R' Tendler continues in the name of R' Avraham Yaakov Pam z"l (1913-2001; *Rosh Yeshiva* of Mesivta Torah Voda'ath in Brooklyn, N.Y.): We recite in the *Al Ha'nissim* prayer on *Chanukah*, "You, in Your great mercy, fought their fight." Why was the war against the Greeks the Jewish People's fight? After all, the Greeks did not seek to destroy the Jewish People, only the Jewish religion! It should have been *Hashem*'s fight! R' Pam explains: The Jewish People of that time understood that a life without Torah is not worth living; therefore, the Greeks' attack on the Torah was an attack on the Jewish People. It was our fight.

R' Tendler adds: We read in *Tehilim* (1:2), "But his desire is in the Torah of *Hashem*, and in His Torah he meditates day and night." The *Gemara* (*Kiddushin* 32b) notes that the phrase, "His Torah"--referring to *Hashem*'s Torah--also can be read, "his Torah"--man's Torah. Says the *Gemara*: "First it is 'the Torah of *Hashem*,' then it becomes 'his Torah'--the Torah of the person who studies it. When we study Torah properly, we will come to feel that an attack on the Torah is an attack on our Torah and, therefore, an attack on us. (*Od Yosef Chai*)

This week, the month of *Tammuz* ends, and the month of *Av* begins. R' Chaim Kanievski *shlita* (Bnei Brak, Israel) writes: "*Tammuz*" is the name of an idol (see *Yechezkel* 8:14). Our Sages gave the month this name because, on the seventeenth of the month, an idol was placed in the *Heichal* / sanctuary of the *Bet Hamikdash*. [This is one of the five reasons we fast on the 17th of *Tammuz* (see *Ta'anit* 26b).]

The word "*Av*"--literally, "father"--connotes "consolation," as in *Eichah* (5:3), "We have become orphans, with no '*Av*,'" alluding to the fact that it is parents who console their children, as we read (*Yeshayah* 66:13), "Like a man whose mother consoles him."

(*Si'ach Ha'nechamah*)

ISRAEL REPORT

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

Issue 1266 • July 9, 2021 • 28 Tammuz 5781

ISRAEL SWEARS IN ISAAC HERZOG AS ITS 11TH PRESIDENT (YNet 7/7/21)

Israel on Wednesday swore in Isaac Herzog as its 11th president, in a ceremony of grand pomp including honor guards in dress uniforms, mounted police escorts and the blowing of the shofar by IDF rabbis.

The inauguration ceremony at the Knesset in Jerusalem brought to end Reuven Rivlin's seven year term in office, and saw the largely ceremonial position passed from the 81-year-old former Likud lawmaker to the 60-year-old ex-head of the Labor party. Rivlin's own predecessor, Shimon Peres, also led the left-wing party.

Around 100 immigrant children participated in the ceremony, who were taken to the Knesset from absorption centers in Carmiel and Kiryat Yam. Also in attendance were senior Israeli officials including IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi and chief rabbis David Lau and Yitzhak Yosef.

Herzog, the recent Jewish Agency chair, was elected last month, beating his right-wing rival Miriam Peretz by 87 votes to 26 in a secret ballot of Knesset members. Herzog personally invited Peretz to the ceremony.

The scion of a prominent Zionist family, Herzog will hold office for a single seven-year term. His father, Chaim Herzog, served as president in the 1980s after a term as Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, and his grandfather, Yitzhak HaLevi Herzog, was the country's first chief rabbi.

His uncle, Abba Eban, served as foreign minister and ambassador to the United Nations and United States.

Taking office at a time of deep divisions in Israeli society, Herzog said upon his election last month that he intends to be "the president of everyone" and work to preserve Israel's democracy.

While most of the office's function is to receive foreign dignitaries and other ceremonial roles, the president has the power to grant pardons. That could become part of the national agenda if former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is on trial for corruption charges, is ever convicted.

He also is responsible for selecting a political party leader to form a governing coalition and serve as prime minister after parliamentary elections - a task Rivlin has done five times while in office, most recently after the March 23 parliamentary election.

BENNETT SEEKS TO ENERGIZE ECONOMY BY SLASHING REGULATIONS (Israel Hayom 7/7/21)

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, a former software entrepreneur, pledged on Tuesday to slash regulations to cut the cost of living and help Israel's small and medium-size businesses flourish as well as its successful hi-tech sector.

"We want to 'high-techicize' the rest of the economy," he told a news conference in Jerusalem. "We're going to turn ourselves into a paradise for small and medium businesses ... to make it easy and compelling to open a business and succeed."

Bennett, who took office last month, took a swipe at his predecessor Benjamin Netanyahu, saying Israel had endured 12 years of talk and "minimal execution."

Finance Minister Avigdor Lieberman said there were 209 regulators in Israel and that they acted mainly in their own interests instead of aiming to improve productivity, competition, and growth.

He pointed to a 2018 report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that said reducing the level of regulation to the OECD average would increase Israel's per-capita GDP by 3.75% in five years, and 5.75% - 75 billion shekels (\$23 billion) - over a decade.

According to a report by the Prime Minister's Office and Finance and Justice

Ministries, Israel's per capita GDP and productivity have lagged Western peers for a decade due to over-regulation.

Under a framework law, the government plans to establish a single authority to oversee regulatory processes and to factor speed of processing, competitiveness, and pricing into corporate regulations.

LIBERMAN ENDS SUBSIDIZED DAYCARES FOR CHILDREN OF YESHIVA STUDENTS (YNet 7/7/21)

Finance Minister Avigdor Liberman on Wednesday announced major changes to Israel's subsidized daycare, which will primarily hit yeshiva students with children.

The new criteria states that both parents eligible for subsidized daycare of children aged 0-3 must be either employed or study full time at an academic institution, which does not include yeshivas.

Until now, the criteria for eligibility was income-based and if the mother worked at least part-time, it allowed fathers to continue studying in yeshivas.

The Finance Ministry added that in order to be eligible for subsidies in instances where the spouse does not work, he or she must acquire education or skill that will enable future integration in the labor market, such as a bachelor's degree, certificate studies, nursing, vocational training and teaching certificate.

The new criterias are set to take effect from the upcoming school year, which starts on September 1.

Currently, 23,000 families are receiving the daycare subsidy on the grounds that at least one parent is studying. The new rules will mean that just 1,500 of those families will still be eligible as they are enrolled in a recognized academic institution from a list that does not include any yeshivas.

The other 21,500 families involve a father who is studying at a yeshiva and will no longer be eligible for the stipend under Liberman's new criteria.

The annual cost of daycare subsidies currently stands at NIS 1.2 billion, of which NIS 400 million subsidize children of parents who study in yeshivas.

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"It is a very important step that changes the priorities in the country and puts those who work and pay taxes in the forefront," said Liberman. "The current mechanism harms working parents and prioritizes those who do not work. I will continue to lead moves that eliminate negative incentives for labor market integration."

MK GAFNI TO PM BENNETT: 'FREE THE PEOPLE FROM YOUR PUNISHMENT' (Arutz-7 7/7/21)

MK Moshe Gafni, who chairs the Knesset's Ashkenazic-haredi United Torah Judaism (UTJ) party, on Tuesday night slammed the government's actions, alleging that Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is not up to the task.

"I call on Naftali Bennett, and ask you: Free the people of Israel from your punishment," Gafni said. "Leave the prime minister's office. It's not for you."

"Your abilities are close to zero, you're not capable of functioning in any area. Instead of doing things for the sake of the public, during [the] coronavirus, providing tax discounts, and other issues, you have busied yourselves for the last two-and-a-half weeks solely with a collection of laws which pertain to you, the small politicians, and then at the end you fall like flies.

"Let it go. It's too much for you. It's not for you," he concluded.

The statement "fall like flies" is a reference to the coalition's failed attempt to pass the Citizenship Law, which aims to prevent the reunification of Palestinian Authority Arab families.

The law narrowly failed to pass the Knesset, with 59 voting in favor and 59 against, and two abstentions.

KNESSET CREATES FIRST-EVER PARLIAMENTARY NFT FOR PRESIDENT ISAAC HERZOG (JPost 7/7/21)

The Knesset on Wednesday joined the international trend of creating an NFT – a non-fungible token, or unique digital information package – for new President Isaac Herzog, in honor of his swearing-in.

Special NFTs have been sold recently by CNN and have become popular around the world. An NFT of the original World Wide Web code recently sold for \$5.4 million.

Just before his inauguration, Herzog received a one-of-a-kind NFT with a copy of the original oath signed by his late father, Israel's sixth president, Chaim Herzog.

"I am excited to present President Herzog with a special memento of his father that includes the oath he signed 38 years ago," Knesset Speaker Mickey Levy said. "It is a great honor for the Knesset to implement one of the world's most innovative technologies in order to preserve such a significant historical document for future generations."

The Knesset is apparently the first parliament in the world to create an NFT, a sensation that has taken the world of collectibles by storm through blockchain technology.

Now, the Knesset is using this technology to lend the President's Residence a copy of the oath of office signed by the late father of the president 38 years ago.

In the file now published for the first time, president Herzog senior pledged "allegiance to the State of Israel and its laws and to faithfully carry out my duties as president of the state," just as his son did on Wednesday from the speaker's podium in the Knesset plenum.

Acting on guidance from Knesset Director-General Gil Segal, the staff of the Knesset's Technology and Computing Division produced the unique image file using a secure and encrypted mobile device. It will subsequently be lent to staff members of the computer department at the President's Residence.

The idea formed a week ago, when the oath signed by the late president Chaim Herzog was found in the depths of the Knesset Archives. The Knesset employees were very moved by the historic document and suggested giving the new president an elegant copy of it as a gift just before his own inauguration.

The innovative idea sought to bring together the past and the present and make history as the first parliament to utilize this technology. The President's

Residence will hold a copy of the oath of office as an NFT during Isaac Herzog's term.

The technology used by the Knesset is a special type of cryptographic protocol, which represents a unique digital asset. Unlike currencies such as Bitcoin and other tokens, an NFT is, by definition, non-fungible and unique.

In recent months, NFTs have become one of the biggest sensations in the art world; artist Mike Winkelmann recently sold an NFT for a record price of \$69.3 million, the third-highest price ever for a work by a living artist.

Although creating the file cost several hundred shekels, the worldwide success of NFTs could boost its value to millions of dollars.

UNDERCOVER PRESIDENT: PHOTO REVEALS DISGUISED RIVLIN STROLLING THROUGH ISRAEL (Ha'aretz 7/7/21)

In a farewell gesture to Reuven Rivlin, the Shin Bet security service released a photograph on Wednesday featuring the outgoing president wearing a disguise so as to "move around Israel anonymously, without anyone recognizing him and noticing that he was the president."

In the undated shot, Rivlin —wearing a fake beard, scarf and thick toupee— was surrounded by undercover agents belonging to the Shin Bet Operations Unit.

"For several hours, the president enjoyed complete anonymity alongside Shin Bet operatives, who are well trained in covert work," the agency said in a statement thanking the tenth president for "years of significant work for the State of Israel."

Unlike former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – who has not yet left the prime minister's residence – Rivlin prefers to move out of the official residence on the last day of his term and is scheduled to do so at 8 P.M. Wednesday.

As president, Rivlin sought to be a unifying figure, often referring to the need for comity between Israel's "four tribes" – secular people, the religious Zionists, the ultra-Orthodox and Arab Israelis.

Rivlin traveled to the United States to meet with President Joe Biden on Monday as part of a farewell tour which included meetings with congressional leaders, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and representatives of the organized Jewish world.

During his U.S. visit, Rivlin was filmed visiting New York's Central Park. He was not wearing a false beard or wig.

ISRAEL TO HELP NEPAL DEAL WITH COVID-19 PANDEMIC (Arutz-7 7/8/21)

Israel on Wednesday sent Nepal aid meant to help it in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic which has hit that country hard.

The aid was delivered in a cargo plane of the Nepalese airline Nepal Air and included respirators, oxygen generators and advanced protective equipment.

The equipment is a donation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the IsraAid organization, the Shebaa Medical Center, the Israel-Nepal Chamber of Commerce and other donors.

Foreign Minister Yair Lapid said that "the State of Israel is proud to help Nepal deal with the coronavirus pandemic. Israel's friends around the world know that in a time of need, Israel will stand by them."

This month, Israel and Nepal marked 61 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

CORONAVIRUS CZAR RULES OUT ANOTHER LOCKDOWN FOR TIME BEING AS CASES FLARE UP (YNet 7/7/21)

The head of Israel's coronavirus task force Prof. Nachman Ash on Wednesday ruled out the possibility the country would enter another lockdown for the time being as cases of the highly transmissible Delta variant shot up in recent weeks.

He reserved, however, that if serious COVID-19 cases continue climbing in a manner that would endanger the Israeli healthcare system, authorities would have to take drastic measures to prevent the virus from spreading further.

Prof. Ash, who was also recently tapped by Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz to become the ministry's next director-general, said that so far, health officials do not consider reinstating the outdoor mask mandate.

According to him, most Israelis hospitalized with COVID-19 were over the age of 60 and the number of cases remained relatively low, but the trajectory of the pandemic in Israel could quickly change as first cases of the new strain were detected among the country's ultra-Orthodox and Arab sectors which tend to live in close quarters.

Ash also called on those who have yet to get vaccinated against coronavirus to do so since greater vaccination rates would help the country stave off the spread of the highly virulent strain.

He noted that per Prime Minister Bennet's request, the ministry was looking into shortening the isolation period for those exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 patient or inbound travelers from abroad.

Earlier on Wednesday, the Coronavirus Cabinet ruled that all arrivals from abroad will have to get tested for the pathogen upon landing in Israel and self-isolate until receiving a negative answer.

The ruling was part of several measures suggested by the Health Ministry and approved by the ministerial panel to curb the spread of the highly transmissible Delta variant which also include quick virus testing at the entrance to geriatric institutions and summer camps hosting over 100 children.

Coronavirus testing at geriatric institutions and summer camps will be subsidized by the state while arrivals from abroad will have to pay for tests out of pocket.

At the end of a three-hour meeting at Bennett's office in Jerusalem, the virus Cabinet was adjourned without imposing any new restrictions on Israeli society as panel members deemed them "unnecessary at this stage."

The Prime Minister's Office said in a statement that virus Cabinet members decided to press on with their current "soft holding action" strategy that aims to rein in the virus while causing minimal disruptions to daily life in Israel and the economy.

Meanwhile, Israel on Wednesday reported over 500 new daily coronavirus cases, diagnosed a day earlier, for the second day in a row.

The Health Ministry said 521 people tested positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday. After more than 85,429 tests had been conducted, the national contagion rate now stands at 0.7%.

On Monday, 501 Israelis tested positive for COVID-19, the highest daily tally since March of this year.

The tally of serious cases has also gone up and now stands at 40, compared to 33 a day earlier. At least 16 patients are connected to ventilators.

Weizmann Institute of Science's Prof. Eli Waxman told Ynet on Wednesday he feared daily coronavirus diagnoses could soon shoot up to 3,000 and implored the political echelon to quickly reimpose some measures to curb the latest outbreak.

POLAND'S KACZYNSKI SLAMS ISRAEL FOR CRITICISM OVER HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION LAW (Ha'aretz 7/6/21)

Poland's ruling party leader on Tuesday condemned comments from Israel regarding a new law that could have an impact on the restitution of Jewish property after World War II and said the country did not owe anything to anyone.

Poland was home to one of the world's biggest Jewish communities until it was almost entirely wiped out by the Nazis. Former property owners and their descendants have been campaigning for compensation since the fall of communism in 1989.

However, Poland's parliament passed a draft bill in June which is expected to make it harder for Jewish people to recover the property – drawing criticism from Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid who said it was "a disgrace."

The head of the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, said Lapid's comments were unacceptable, in excerpts of an interview for Polish weekly Gazeta Polska published online.

"We make our laws ourselves, and ... we owe nothing to anyone," he added.

Israel's Foreign Ministry declined to comment.

The bill, which is due to be discussed by the upper house of parliament, implements a 2015 ruling by Poland's Constitutional Tribunal that there must be a deadline after which faulty administrative decisions can no longer be challenged.

Kaczynski also reignited Poland's longstanding claim that Germany still owes Poland reparations for World War II.

"There are bills that have not been settled with us. For the crimes and destruction of World War II, Germany owes us over a trillion dollars," he said. Some 6 million Poles, including 3 million Polish Jews, were killed during the war, and Warsaw was razed to the ground following a 1944 uprising. Germany says all financial claims linked to the war have been settled.

ISRAELI DELEGATION WINS OLYMPIC MEDALS IN COMPUTER SCIENCE COMPETITION (JPost 7/8/21)

Four Israeli students won Olympic medals at the International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI) held virtually in Singapore last month.

The IOI, hosted virtually by the National University of Singapore School of Computing, is an international science olympiad held annually. 351 students from 88 countries competed at this year's event.

Israel's computer science delegation consisted of four students, with all of them winning Olympics medals at the event. Yanir Edri and Gonen Gazit won silver medals, while Yoav Katz and Lior Yehezkeili won bronze medals.

The competition spanned over two days and included complex tasks which the students had to solve using codes and algorithms. All tasks had to be completed in under five hours.

The delegation was trained by a coaching staff headed by Dr. Avshalom Elmalech at Bar-Ilan University.

"I would like to congratulate our dear students on winning international Olympic medals. This achievement is due to their hard work and perseverance," said Education Minister Yifat Shasha-Biton.

"The students' impressive achievements in informatics places Israel at the forefront of countries making breakthroughs in this field," She added.

This year marked Israel's 25th consecutive participation in the IOI, competing every year since 1996. The delegation matched a record of four Olympic medals in the competition.

ISRAELI ARCHEOLOGISTS COULD WIN PRESTIGIOUS AWARD OVER 2ND TEMPLE-ERA FIND (Israel Hayom 7/7/21)

Israel is among the five candidate countries for the prestigious annual International Archaeological Discovery Award "Khaled al-Asaad" for an excavation conducted in the Western Wall Tunnels in Jerusalem, the Israel Antiquities Authority announced Tuesday.

A dig headed by Israeli archeologists Barak Monnickendam-Givon and Tehila Sadiel discovered a hidden underground complex that experts think was used by the Jews to prepare for religious services during the Second Temple period before it was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

"We are convinced that everything that now includes the square of the Western Wall was supported by a colonnade," Monnickendam-Givon said.

"We will dig further to prove it."

Sadiel added that various subjects were also discovered in the rooms. "We found terracotta crockery, some bases of an oil lamp used to make light, a stone cup exceptional for the period and a fragment of qalal, [which is] a large stone container used for water, perhaps linked to the Jewish practices of the purification ritual".

The international award was named after Syrian archeologist Khaled al-Asaad, who has the head of antiquities at the heritage site of the ancient city of Palmyra, and was publicly beheaded by the Islamic State in 2015 after hiding precious artifacts to prevent them from ending up in the hands of the terrorist group that was known for destroying cultural heritage sites.

Also in the running for the award are Italy, Indonesia, Germany and Egypt. The winner will be chosen based on the number of likes and comments.

WHY NEW PRESIDENT HERZOG COULD BE KEY TO ISRAEL'S POLITICAL STABILITY (Jonathan Lis, Ha'aretz 7/7/21)

Israel's new president, Isaac Herzog, could well become a key figure for the Israeli public over the next few years. His diplomatic experience and skills will contribute to that, as will the political circumstances and the crisis of governance that Israel has been facing.

The meager diplomatic experience of the new prime minister, Naftali Bennett, combined with the low probability that it will be possible to advance a peace process in the next few years, could leverage the standing of the experienced president and make him a popular figure among world leaders. At the same time, Herzog's decision to begin the day of his swearing-in at the central institutions of the world Zionist movement sends a signal regarding his intention to become "the president of the Jewish people," and a prominent figure in Israel's relations with the Jewish Diaspora.

The goals Herzog has set for himself as president are high. During his term as president, Shimon Peres became the "alternative foreign minister," and Reuven Rivlin wanted to serve as the "people's president." Herzog intends to be both.

Those close to him have said he will be a "social worker" and will act to heal the wounds in Israeli society, while at the same time being "alternative chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel," who will pursue a close relationship with Diaspora Jewry and world leaders.

After four election campaigns in less than two years, and with the coalition liable to collapse at any given time, Herzog has a big advantage: He has seven secure years ahead of him. His term is expected to be an island of stability in a volatile public arena. This has major implications: Traditionally, the president tries to remain politically neutral and avoids favoring one side or another. But in light of the long-lasting political crisis and because the present government represents a very wide range of views, Herzog can allow himself to roll up his sleeves and take controversial initiatives in an attempt to prevent the fall of the government.

Herzog could well become – whether openly or otherwise – a figure who serves as a bridge among the members of the polarized coalition government, and act in an attempt to spare Israel another round of elections. He can help foster compromise between Bennett and Yair Lapid, between Ayelet Shaked and Nitzan Horowitz, between Mansour Abbas and Avigdor Lieberman.

Under certain circumstances, he can even promote the entry of the ultra-Orthodox parties into the government, out of a desire to give them a place at the cabinet table, too. Like his predecessor, Reuven Rivlin, who proposed the parity model of government and pushed Netanyahu and Benny Gantz to form a unity government, Herzog can build the scaffolding that will aid in stabilizing any government that arises during his term.

Herzog is an experienced political operator, too. He has often called himself the "alchemist" because of his ability to create political connections that would have seemed impossible. That's how he was elected president last month, with the support of Likud and other political opponents from the right-wing parties. That's how he paved his way to the leadership of the Jewish Agency in July 2018, in the face of opposition from Benjamin Netanyahu. That was also how he managed to recruit Tzipi Livni to the joint leadership of the Zionist Union in 2014, and became a candidate with a real chance of becoming prime minister. Joining up with Livni gave his party – which until then was going nowhere in the polls – an impressive showing, with 24 Knesset seats. Herzog's three successors as head of the Labor Party – Avi Gabbay, Amir Peretz and Merav Michaeli – were unable to come anywhere close to that number.

But Herzog's potential to become a powerful president could be shattered over his public image: gray, weak and lacking in charisma. Will he be able to rid himself of those traits, which made his term as leader of the opposition in 2015 such a failure?

"Herzog is too calculating. He lacks political courage. He doesn't sweep away people in his speeches and his presence has never aroused too much enthusiasm," said someone who worked closely with him when he led the

opposition. He preferred to conduct negotiations on entering a coalition with Netanyahu over an uncompromising battle against it. Even his supporters became sick and tired of his leadership, and his party quickly faded in the polls. In the end, Herzog was thrown out in an internal party primary and a short time later left the Knesset, too.

THE CITIZENSHIP LAW FLOP IS JUST THE BEGINNING (Mati Tuchfeld, Israel Hayom 7/7/21)

It took the Knesset four years to topple the Benjamin Netanyahu-led government. With the Naftali Bennett-Yair Lapid-led government, it took just three weeks.

Following the failure to pass the citizenship law, the main question is whether, although painful and humiliating, the coalition will be able to overcome this blow or whether we have just witnessed a constitutive event marking the beginning of the end of the bizarre unity government of unlikely bedfellows signed into office just a short time ago.

One cannot overestimate the importance of Tuesday's events and the extent of the humiliation of the fledgling government on such a critical issue. Despite agreeing to shameful concessions to earn the support of Ra'am party chief Mansour Abbas and the Meretz party that resulted in the abandonment of the security of Israel's citizens to the political whims of non-Zionist and radical left-wing figures in the coalition, they still did not have the majority support of this fragile coalition. The opposition has taken to referring to the coalition as a "dangerous government." On Tuesday, the coalition provided further proof of how dangerous it could be. For the first time, the Israeli government proved it is incapable of protecting the security of its citizens.

In a forceful speech, Bennett responded to the vote, saying the opposition had behaved recklessly and that his fellow Yamina party member Amichai Chikli had disappointed the party when he voted against the law. Early on in his speech, Bennett said something that sounded like it had been taken out of the campaign he embarked on upon the government's establishment, and that sounds even more disconnected from reality when repeated now. "The people deserve a functioning government that works for them," Bennett said, forgetting that, just three weeks on the job, he now heads one of the most paralyzed and anemic governments ever established in the Jewish state. In these short three weeks, the lack of a Knesset majority has prevented the establishment of permanent committees in a Knesset in which every piece of legislation is a roadside bomb, and every lawmaker, no matter how inconsequential, can decide what bill passes and what doesn't.

Having attempted to place the blame on to the opposition – which it accused of being uncooperative and taking steps against the state, no less – senior government officials, Bennett and his fellow Yamina lawmaker Ayelet Shaked, in particular, realized a country cannot be run on tears and lamentation alone and began to try and enlist majority support among coalition members. This was the beginning of a shift in the right direction and the internalization of the magnitude of the responsibility on their shoulders. For many hours, and in fact, overnight, the two worked to achieve a majority, meeting with every single recalcitrant lawmaker, signing new agreements, and agreeing to changes to the law Shaked had said she would reject.

Yet for the bizarre coalition they now lead, this was not enough. The polarity they tried to obscure is what ultimately determined the outcome, leaving coalition members in shock at their stinging defeat.

The coalition had over two weeks to prepare for the decisive moment when its members would be required to pass the law, but it's doubtful an additional two weeks would have made any difference. Soon enough, we will begin to see the introduction of private legislation in what amounts to weekly bonanzas of dozens of laws the government will need to bat off if it hopes to avoid losing control of the government budget. Quite a few explosive laws will be buried in opposition members' list of private laws, and it may prove increasingly difficult to take them apart as the weeks go by. That is why Yamina members are in no rush to decide on MK Amichai Chikli's fate: They may still need him around, including to pass a state budget.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Setting Up For Success

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

Parshas Matos begins with the laws of making vows. The *Talmud* relates that one may make a vow to fulfill a *Mitzvah*. One may do so even though making vows is generally discouraged and even though such a vow is superfluous, given that we are already bound to fulfill *mitzvos* as a result of the oath we took at Mount Sinai. The *Talmud* explains that such oaths are viewed favorably because they encourage the person to follow through on his or her obligation.

Rabbi Dessler writes that we can learn from this the importance of setting oneself up for success. People generally know the right thing to do and may even have the internal conviction to act upon that knowledge. But knowledge and conviction are often not enough. Circumstances may challenge our convictions, and we may not always be successful in meeting those challenges. By taking meaningful actions to create circumstances that are conducive to doing the right thing, we are far more likely to bring our convictions to fruition.

May we take this lesson to heart and make our inspirations a reality in a way that demonstrates to *Hashem*, ourselves, and all those around us what is truly important to us, and in that merit may *Hashem* help us to succeed in this endeavor!

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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Point to Ponder

Whoever touched a corpse shall purify himself... you and your captive. (31, 19)

This does not mean that the captives become tamei before they convert. Rather, once they join the covenant they can become tamei. (Rashi)

Rashi cannot be referring to captives who converted because after converting they are definitely bound by the same rules as all Jews. It would seem that Rashi is referring to the captives who become slaves and are termed as joining the covenant.

A non-Jewish slave is not bound by the rules of purity and impurity. (Tosfos Nazir 61b)

Tosfos' opinion seems to differ with Rashi's interpretation of the above posuk. Are Rashi and Tosfos arguing?

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

When is it possible for a healthy Jewish adult to be obligated to eat on Tisha B'Av?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How were Serach and Asher the son of Yaakov related?

Answer: Serach was Asher's daughter. According to some commentaries, she was his step-daughter (see Ramban and Daas Zekeinim, Bamidbar 26:46)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

At the end of *parashas Masei*, the paternal leaders of the family of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Menashe voiced the concern that if the daughters of Zelophechad, who had inherited his property, were to marry men of other tribes, then "their inheritance will be subtracted from the inheritance of our fathers and be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry, and it will be subtracted from the lot of our inheritance." Hashem acknowledged this concern, and accordingly commanded that "Every daughter who inherits an inheritance from the tribes of the Children of Israel shall become the wife of someone from a family of her father's tribe."

The Talmud (*Taanis* 30b) explains that this restriction only applied to the generation of the division of the Land of Israel among the tribes, but women of future generations who inherited property were nevertheless allowed to intermarry between tribes. According to one opinion in the Talmud, the lifting of the prohibition was such a joyful event that it caused the date associated with it, the fifteenth of Av (*Tu be-Av*), to become one of the two most joyous dates on the Jewish calendar (along with *Yom Kippur*, whose joyous character derives from it being a day of (Divine) pardon and forgiveness, and the date upon which the last pair of tablets were given). The precise connection of the date of *Tu be-Av* with the lifting of the prohibition is not entirely clear; some explain that the prohibition had initially been understood to have been permanent, and was eventually reinterpreted (based on a hermeneutical inference from the Biblical text) to be limited to the original generation of the division of the Land of Israel in a meeting of the sages of Israel that took place on that date (*Levush ha-Chur* 580:2; *Rashash Bava Basra* 121a).

In Mishnaic times, the celebration of *Tu be-Av* involved women dancing in the vineyards and men selecting wives from among them. Over the centuries, this particular custom, and the superlatively joyous character of the day in general, have faded away, with only a trace of the latter remaining in the custom to refrain from reciting *tachanun* on *Tu be-Av* (*Shulchan Aruch* 131:6). In modern Israel, the holiday has seen something of a resurgence, although the extent of rabbinic support for its modern interpretation is unclear.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am not seven.
2. I am binding.
3. I could cause destruction.
4. Hold the holy.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. For Bnei Yisrael, I was forty-two.
2. For the Sanhedrin, I was ten.
3. I am not a load.
4. Moving.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Eliyahu Hanavi (I have a special chair, I have a special cup, I'll answer the questions, The birds were my waiters.)

#2 Goral/Lots (I was for Haman, I am for Yom Kippur, I was for the division, I am not "poor.")

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD

Mazel Tov to the members of the Semichat Chaver Program (SCP) who will be celebrating a Siyum this Sunday for completing Hilchos Shabbos: Bishul (Winter 5780), Positive Mitzvos (Summer 5780), Muktzah (Winter 5781)

For more information about SCP, please contact Rabbi Shaps: bshaps@gwckollel.org or visit gwckollel.org/scp

