

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

July 2 - 3, 2021 - 23 Tammuz 5781 - Pinchas/Mevorchim Hachodesh

Light Candles by 8:19 - Havdalah 9:26

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by David & Esther HorneStay to commemorate the 13th Yahrzeit of Esther's father, Walter Berman, Yitzchak Zeev ben Yosef Chaim, A"H, and by Roz Malin and Rose & Izzy Miller to thank Rabbi Rosenbaum and the community for their support during the Shiva in memory of our sister, Miriam Miller. We deeply appreciate the phone calls, Shiva visits, delicious meals, snacks and donations made in Miriam Miller's memory. May we IY"H be Zocheh to share in Simchas.

Mazal Tov

- **Marsha & Yitz Kasdan** on the birth and Bris of their new great-grandson Yisrael, son of Shira & Moshe Neger, and grandson of Rookie & Judah Gross. Mazal Tov to the other grandparents and great-grandparents, Faige & Tuli Neger and Phyllis & Jack Gross, and especially to Marsha's mother, Evelyn Elbogen, and great aunt and uncle **Shana & Hirschel Wohl**, as well as to the entire extended family.
- **Judy & David Marwick** on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Ezri Benoff, son of Miriam D. & Dr. Peretz Benoff of Teaneck, NJ.
- **Naomi & Nechemia Mond** on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Aryeh. Mazal Tov also to grandparents Betty & Stuart Ozar and Ita & Jimmy Mond. The Monds invite the Kehilla to join them for a Kiddush at their home, 812 Hyde Court, at 11:30 AM.

Condolences

- **Dr. Debra Frenkel** on the passing of her father, Irwin Solomon, Yisroel ben Avraham HaKohain. The funeral took place in California on Thursday. Shiva is being observed at 614 Lamberton Drive through Wednesday morning. Outdoor visits Sunday/Monday/Tuesday 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM and 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM; Zoom 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM, Zoom details will follow by email phone calls 301-807-3488.

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 8:19
- Mincha: 7:00 (S), 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: 9:26 (B and Sephardi)

Divrei Torah:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| • 8:45 Main Minyan | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • 9:15 | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • Shiur after Mincha | Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman |

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 info. contact Michal Merkin, YISE Youth groups coordinator, at mmerkin@yise.org *See flyer for details.*

Camp Shomrai is back for another fun-filled summer with programming for children in preschool through ninth grade! Camp runs from July 5th to August 13th. For more info or to register, visit our website at <https://campshomrai.org> *See flyer for details.*

Weekday Shiurim

Options for remote learning are listed below. For the latest list and 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 8:30 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

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.

YISE Programs and Listings

Thank You to Services Squad for providing the tents for outdoor Shabbos Groups.

Come Join Rabbi Koss's Monthly Jewish History class on Zoom! Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and the YISE Chesed Committee: Rabbi Koss will be speaking on a topic in Jewish history, Monday, July 5, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on **Zoom A**. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at mfriedman2@yahoo.com

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.

- Simi & Sammy Franco wish **Barbara Billauer Price** a very happy birthday!
- Jules Meisler wishes his wife **Bobbi**, a happy 56th wedding anniversary.
- Shoshana & Doni Moskowitz wish their parents, **Eva & Nissy Moskowitz**, a happy 52nd anniversary.

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

- **Yale Ginsburg** in memory of his brother-in-law, Chayim Dimont, Chayim ben Harav Avraham Mordecai.
- **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

- **Steve Kalin** in honor of Rabbi Rosenbaum.
- **Judy & David Marwick** in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson Ezri Benoff, son of Miriam D. and Dr. Peretz Benoff of Teaneck, NJ.
- **Roz Malin** and **Rose & Izzy Miller** to thank Rabbi Rosenbaum and the entire YISE Community for all their support during the Shiva in memory of our sister, Miriam Miller. The learning should be for an Aliya 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 their support during the Shiva in memory of our sister, Miriam Miller. The learning should be for an Aliya for Miriam Elka bas Zvi Dov.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Shabbos Drasha

- **Debi & Max Rudmann** on the Yahrzeit of Max's mother, Rivka bas Haim, Z"l.

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, 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

Condolences to former YISE Preschool teacher Jessica Neufeld on the passing of her brother, Gregory Hilfer. Jessica will observe Shiva at 1111 University Blvd. W, Apt. 204 through Sunday morning. The family requests visitors Motzei Shabbos 10:00pm - midnight.

Federal Holiday Learning Program - Kollel Zichron Amram presents "Appetizers and Desserts: Do they require a Bracha during the meal?" - Independence Day (observed), Monday, July 5, at the YGW Boys Campus. 8:00 AM Davening, 9:00 AM breakfast, 9:30 AM Chavrusa learning, 10:40 AM Shiur with Rabbi Eli Reingold, Rosh Kollel. For questions, contact Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate at mbate@yeshiva.edu or 404-273-3392.

Sacred Not Secret: Marital Education Begins in Childhood - for men and women, featuring Elisheva Liss. This program is brought to you by the Robin Niman Mikvah Education Fund, Leilui Nishmat Tziporah bat Avraham Tzvi. A project of the Mikvah Emunah Society. Tuesday, July 6, 8:30 PM on Zoom, Meeting ID: 836 7859 1335, Passcode: 720411.

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, July 7, 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

NO FEAR: A Rally in Solidarity with the Jewish People - Sunday, July 11, 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM at Lafayette Square, Washington, DC. For more information, go to <https://www.alliance4israel.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.yadvehuda.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/webinar/register/1715843153121/WN_n6jNGqUpTpCN6ikCabUutA

Daf Yomi Shiur currently meets online via a WebEx video conference. There is still room for a few more participants. Anyone interested may email Judd Lifschitz at lifschitz@slslaw.com to be added to the invite list. Sunday 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 4 Independence Day	Monday July 5	Tuesday July 6	Wednesday July 7	Thursday July 8	Friday July 9
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: 8:25 PM (B). Sephardi: Shacharis: Sunday through Friday: 7:30 AM; Mincha/Maariv: Sunday: 8:15 PM; Monday - Thursday: 8:30 PM.						
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 4:10 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 4:48 AM, Latest Netz: 5:52 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:30 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:51 PM, Earliest Shkia: 8:35 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim: 9:26 PM						

Next Shabbos

July 9 - 10, 2021 - 1 Av 5781

Parshas Matos/Masei/Rosh Chodesh

Light Candles: 8:17

Havdalah: 9:23

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, July 7 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: Closed Monday (Independence Day observed);

Tuesday - 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

Pinchas 5781:

A Lifetime in a Moment

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

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

The end of last week's *Parsha* and the beginning of this week's *Parsha* describe a remarkable event. *Pinchas* was not a leader among the Jewish people. *Pinchas* was not a *Kohen* among the Jewish people, and yet when *Pinchas* saw this very despicable public act, *Pinchas* rose to the occasion. And because *Pinchas* rose to the occasion, he's given this remarkable reward from G-d. *Hashem* makes him a *Kohen*, in a way that no one else was ever made a *Kohen*, and as we say in this week's *Parsha*, והיתה לו ולזרעו אחריו, this is now for him and for his offspring after him. His whole family become *Kohanim*. Because *Pinchas* grabbed this moment.

The *Sfas Emes* cites the famous *Gemara* in *Avodah Zorah*, יש קונה עולם בשעה אחת, there are people in this world who can acquire their world in a remarkable way in one moment. And he says that *Pinchas* is an example of that. It's simply an amazing thing to think about and particularly when you think about it in context of the *Medrash*. The *Medrash* explains that *Pinchas* didn't just pick up his spear and go and kill *Zimri* and *Kosbi*. *Medrash* says he went to go ask *Moshe* a *Shaila*. He said isn't it the *Halacha* that in this case the proper thing to do is to kill the people. He wasn't asking to do it. *Moshe Rabeinu* says to him "you are right." Because you were the one who had the idea you should do it. So it's such a significant part of the picture. That means he wasn't sitting there waiting for his dramatic moment he was just living his life. And there was a moment that required remarkable decisiveness and remarkable courage and remarkable initiative and since *Pinchas* did it, he changed his life and the life of his descendants forever. Imagine if he wouldn't have risen up at that moment? Imagine after a hundred and twenty years he would have gotten to *Shamayim*, surely he would have lived a lovely life, special things, wonderful *Mitzvos*, but they would have told him you missed your great chance. He wouldn't have known what they were talking about. And this carries with it such a powerful *Mussar* for each and every one of us.

Thank G-d, we live in a community that is developed in so many different ways. Each aspect of the community's development is because someone or some group of people stood up and took the initiative. In the vast majority of these situations it wasn't the person's job, it wasn't a person's clear responsibility to take that initiative. Things just happened. There are institutions and organizations and essential community entities in our community that a person who started those things, this project, that project and G-d willing they will get up to heaven in a hundred and twenty years and they'll get a remarkable reward. Imagine if they wouldn't have done it. One never knows. Today could be our day. Today there could be a moment of something that we would have never imagined. And if we just take the initiative, it doesn't have to be public, it could be something in our private lives. But greatness is built moment by moment. Something worthy for each and every one of us to think about.

Have a wonderful *Shabbos*!



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



**July
3rd!
10:00-
11:00am**

Indoors

**Masks required if
unvaccinated**

Snacks to go





JULY 5 - AUGUST 13

Preschool *Division*

.....
**ENTERING
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**Torah-Based,
Safe and Nurturing**
Known for excellent staff,
profound commitment to
safety and a creative and
joyous attitude towards
learning and discovery!
Daily Specials

Elementary *Division*

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**ENTERING
1ST-6TH GRADE**
**Separate Programs for
Boys and Girls**
Swim
Sports
Learning
Specialized Crafts
Dance

Teen *Division*

.....
**BOYS ENTERING
7TH-9TH GRADE**

Weekly Trips
Swim
Sports
Learning
Woodworking

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website: www.campshomrai.org
or Email: camp@yise.org

REGISTER ONLINE

<https://shomrai.campintouch.com/ui/forms/application/camper/App>

Local licensed, child-centered Preschool
FOR CHILDREN 2-5 YEARS OLD



shomrai
PRESCHOOL



Play-based, supportive learning
environment that promotes exploration
and builds foundational skills

Warm, dedicated and experienced teachers

**Customizable extended care
options from 7:30 AM- 6:00 PM**

FOR MORE INFORMATION



Visit our website
preschool.yise.org



Or Email
preschool@yise.org

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Sponsored by Judy & David Marwick in honor of:

- the Bar Mitzvah (Parashat Balak) of their grandson Avi Marwick,
son of Dr. Miriam S. & Rabbi Binyamin Marwick of Baltimore and
- the Bar Mitzvah (Parashat Pinchas) of their grandson Ezri Benoff,
son of Miriam D. & Dr. Peretz Benoff of Teaneck, NJ

Volume 27, Issue 37

Shabbat Parashat Pinchas

5781 - B"H

Covenant & Conversation: R. Jonathan Sacks

Moral vs. Political Decisions - [This essay was written on 11 Iyar 5780, 5 May 2020. Things will have moved on since, but the issues raised here are of general significance and not always fully understood.] The coronavirus pandemic raised a series of deep moral and political issues. How far should governments go in seeking to prevent its spread? To what extent should it restrict people's movements at the cost of violating their civil liberties? How far should it go in imposing a clampdown of businesses at the cost of driving many of them bankrupt, rendering swathes of the population unemployed, building up a mountain of debt for the future and plunging the economy into the worst recession since the 1930s? These are just a few of the many heart-breaking dilemmas that the pandemic forced on governments and on us.

Strikingly, almost every country adopted the same measures: social distancing and lockdown until the incidence of new cases had reached its peak (Sweden was the most conspicuous exception). Nations didn't count the cost. Virtually unanimously, they placed the saving of life above all other considerations. The economy may suffer, but life is infinitely precious and saving it takes precedence over all else.

This was a momentous victory for the value first articulated in the Torah in the Noahide covenant: "He who sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God He created man". This was the first declaration of the principle that human life is sacred. As the Sages put it, "Every life is like a universe. Save a life and it is as if you have saved a universe."

In the ancient world, economic considerations took precedence over life. Great building projects like the Tower of Babel and the Egyptian pyramids involved huge loss of life. Even in the 20th century, lives were sacrificed to economic ideology: between six and nine million under Stalin, and between 35 and 45 million under Chinese communism. The fact that virtually all nations, in the face of the pandemic, chose life was a significant victory for the Torah's ethic of the sanctity of life.

That said, the former Supreme Court judge Jonathan Sumption wrote a challenging article in which he argued that the world, or at least Britain, had got it wrong. It was overreacting. The cure may be worse than the disease. The lockdown amounted to subjecting the population to house arrest, causing great distress and giving the police unprecedented and dangerous powers. It represented "an interference with our lives and our personal autonomy that is intolerable in a free society." The economic impact would be devastating. "If all this is the price of saving human life, we have to ask whether it is worth paying."

There are, he said, no absolute values in public policy. As proof he cited the fact that we allow cars, despite knowing that they are potentially lethal weapons, and that every year thousands of people will be killed or maimed by them. In public policy there are always multiple, conflicting considerations. There are no non-negotiable absolutes, not even the sanctity of life.

It was a powerful and challenging piece. Are we wrong to think that life is indeed sacred? Might we be placing too high a value on life, imposing a huge economic burden on future generations?

I am going to suggest, oddly enough, that there is a direct connection between this argument and the story of Pinchas. It is far from obvious, but it is fundamental. It lies in the difference – philosophical and halachic – between moral and political decisions.

Recall the Pinchas story. The Israelites, having been saved by God from Bilam's curses, fell headlong into the trap he then set for them. They began consorting with Midianite women and were soon worshipping their gods. God's anger burned. He ordered the death of the people's leaders. A plague raged; 24,000 died. A leading Israelite, Zimri, brought a Midianite woman, Cozbi, and cohabited with her in full view of Moses and the people. It was the most brazen of acts. Pinchas took a spear and drove it through them both. They died, and the plague stopped.

Was Pinchas a hero or a murderer? On the one hand, he saved countless lives: no more people died because of the plague. On the other hand, he could not have been certain of that in advance. To any onlooker, he might have seemed simply a man of violence, caught up in the lawlessness of the moment. The parsha of Balak ends with this terrible ambiguity unresolved. Only in our parsha do we hear the answer. God says:

"Pinchas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the Priest, has turned back My anger from the Israelites by being zealous among them on My behalf, so that I did not wipe out the Israelite people in My zeal. Therefore say: I am making with him My covenant of peace."

God declared Pinchas a hero. He had saved the Israelites from destruction, showed the zeal that counterbalanced the people's faithlessness, and as a reward, God made a personal covenant with him. Pinchas did a good deed.

Halachah, however, dramatically circumscribes his act in multiple ways. First, it rules that if Zimri had turned and killed Pinchas in self-defence, he would be declared innocent in a court of law. Second, it rules that if Pinchas had killed Zimri and Cozbi just before or after they were engaged in cohabitation, he would have been guilty of murder. Third, had Pinchas consulted a Bet Din and asked whether he was permitted to do what he was proposing to do, the answer would have been, No. This is one of the rare cases where we say Halachah ve-ein morin kein: "It is the law, but we do not make it known." And there are many other conditions and reservations. The Torah resolves the ambiguity but halachah reinstates it. Legally speaking, Pinchas was on very thin ice.

We can only understand this by way of a fundamental distinction between moral decisions and political decisions. Moral decisions are answers to the question, "What should I do?" Usually they are based on rules that may not be transgressed whatever the consequences. In Judaism, moral decisions are the province of halachah.

Political decisions are answers to the question, "What should we do?" where the "we" means the nation as a whole. They tend to involve several conflicting considerations, and there is rarely a clear-

cut solution. Usually the decision will be based on an evaluation of the likely consequences. In Judaism this sphere is known as mishpat melech (the legal domain of the king), or hilchot medinah (public policy regulations). Whereas halachah is timeless, public policy tends to be time-bound and situational ("a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build").

Were we in Pinchas' position, asking, "Should I kill Zimri and Cozbi?" the moral answer is an unequivocal No. They may deserve to die; the whole nation may be eyewitnesses to their sin; but you cannot execute a death sentence without a duly constituted court of law, a trial, evidence and a judicial verdict. Killing without due process is murder. That is why the Talmud rules Halachah ve-ein morin kein: if Pinchas had asked a Bet Din whether he were permitted to act as he intended, he would be told, No. Halachah is based on non-negotiable moral principle, and halachically you cannot commit murder even to save lives.

But Pinchas was not acting on moral principle. He was making a political decision. There were thousands dying. The political leader, Moses, was in a highly compromised position. How could he condemn others for consorting with Midianite women when he himself had a Midianite wife? Pinchas saw that there was no one leading. The danger was immense. God's anger, already intense, was about to explode. So he acted – not on moral principle but on political calculation, relying not on halachah but on what would later be known as mishpat melech. Better take two lives immediately, that would have been eventually sentenced to death by the court, to save thousands now. And he was right, as God later made clear.

Now we can see exactly what was ambiguous about Pinchas' act. He was a private individual. The question he would normally have asked was, "What shall I do?", to which the answer is a moral one. But he acted as if he were a political leader asking, "What shall we do?" and deciding, based on consequences, that this would save many lives. Essentially, he acted as if he were Moses. He saved the day and the people. But imagine what would happen anywhere if an ordinary member of the public usurped the role of Head of State. Had God not endorsed Pinchas' action, he would have had a very difficult time.

The difference between moral and political decisions becomes very clear when it comes to decisions of life and death. The moral rule is: saving life takes precedence over all other mitzvot except three: incest, idolatry and murder. If a group is surrounded by gangsters who say, "Hand over one of you, or we will kill you all," they must all be prepared to die rather than hand over one. Life is sacred and must not be sacrificed, whatever the consequences. That is morality; that is halachah.

However, a king of Israel was permitted, with the consent of the Sanhedrin, to wage a (non-defensive) war, even though many would die as a result. He was permitted to execute a non-judicial death sentence

In memory of Scott Leitner, a"n

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against individuals on public policy grounds (le-takken ha-olam kefi mah she-ha-sha'ah tzerichah). In politics, as opposed to morality, the sanctity of life is a high value but not the only one. What matters are consequences. A ruler or government must act in the long-term interests of the people. That is why, though some will die as a result, governments are now gradually easing the lockdown provisions once the rate of infection falls, to relieve distress, ease the economic burden, and restore suspended civil liberties.

We have moral duties as individuals, and we make political decisions as nations. The two are different. That is what the story of Pinchas is about. It also explains the tension in governments during the pandemic. We have a moral commitment to the sanctity of life, but we also have a political commitment, not just to life but also to "liberty and the pursuit of happiness." What was beautiful about the global response to Covid-19 was that virtually every nation in the world put moral considerations ahead of political ones until the danger began to recede.

I believe that there are moral and political decisions and they are different. But there is a great danger that the two may drift apart. Politics then becomes amoral, and eventually corrupt. That is why the institution of prophecy was born. Prophets hold politicians accountable to morality. When kings act for the long-term welfare of the nation, they are not criticised. When they act for their own benefit, they are. Likewise when they undermine the people's moral and spiritual integrity. Salvation by zealot – the Pinchas case – is no solution. Politics must be as moral as possible if a nation is to flourish in the long run.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"And the Lord said to Moses, 'Take for yourself Joshua the son of Nun, an individual who has spirit within him, and lay (or lean) your hand upon him. Stand him up before Elazar the Priest and before the entire congregation, and command him before their eyes. And give of your glory upon him in order that the entire congregation of the children of Israel may obey him.'"

In these three verses we see the "passing of the guard," the succession of leadership from Moses to Joshua. Embedded within the three different actions which God commanded Moses to perform, we may begin to define three necessary aspects of traditional Jewish leadership. Firstly, Moses was to "lay his hands" upon Joshua, an act which expressed a conferral of rabbinic authority, semikha (literally a laying upon or leaning upon), from master to disciple. Since Moses was traditionally known as Moshe Rabbenu (our religious teacher or rabbi) and since Joshua is biblically and midrashically pictured as Moses' devoted disciple, it is perfectly logical to assume that the first transference from Moses to Joshua was that of religio-legal authority, conveying the law to the next generation and continuing the march of the Oral Law – Torah Se'b'al Peh – from generation to generation.

Moses is then commanded by God to "stand Joshua up" before Elazar the Priest. The Kohen Gadol or High Priest was certainly a leader in ancient Israel – but his Divine service was more spiritual than intellectual, more emotional than legal. His areas was the Sanctuary or Holy Temple. And as the Bible expresses it: "They shall make for Me a Sanctuary (a Holy Temple or Synagogue) so that I may dwell among (and within) them". The task of the High Priest and the Priest-teachers was to have the wherewithal to constantly bring the living word of God to the people and to inspire them with love of God and love of Torah (the Priestly Benediction). The Rav (Moshe Rabbenu) was expected to teach

and interpret God's word for every generation; the High Priest was expected to ritually perform and maintain the ritual experience from generation to generation, and to inspire every Jew to feel God's loving presence within him/herself.

And finally, Moses was to "give of his glory (Hebrew hod) upon (Joshua) in order that the entire congregation of Israel may obey him," as we find referring to King Solomon who was gifted with "the glory of majesty which was unique only to him. It was precisely this glorious majesty which Moses conferred upon Joshua, which can best be translated as charismatic influence. The great British Philosopher and Chief Rabbis, Jonathan Sacks of blessed memory, defines power as a function of strength to overcome one's enemies whereas charismatic influence secures posterity and continuity. He evokes the Midrash, which compares the giving over of power to "a pouring out from one vessel to another," whereas the conferral of influence is likened to "the kindling of one candle from another candle." When wine, for example, is poured from one goblet into another, the first goblet becomes emptied and devoid of its joy-giving liquid. Similarly, when a political leader leaves office and his successor takes over, no authority remains in the hand of the incumbent.

How different is charismatic influence? After the initial candle has kindled its flame onto another candle, the light of the first candle has in no way become diminished; much the opposite, now there are two candles shining brightly, providing double the amount of light in the room. My revered teacher, Rabbi Joseph B Soloveitchik, went even one step further when he interpreted the text of our weekly portion at the celebration of my class's rabbinical ordination. The "laying of the hands" is usually interpreted as an inter-generational conferral of authority: the master from a former generation is "handing over" the authority of our ancient tradition to the younger generation.

However, says Rav Soloveitchik, that is not the picture presented by the biblical text. The Hebrew Samokh (Semikhah) principally means to lean on, so that the picture being conveyed is that of an elderly Moses leaning with his hands upon a younger Joshua. The message seems not to be that of a young Joshua dependent on the authority of an elder Moses; it rather seems to be that of an elder Moses dependent for his support on a younger Joshua. Rabbi Soloveitchik looked at us, his student-rabbis, with great yearning and expectations. "It is I who am dependent upon you. Without you, my Torah and my unique teaching, indeed all of the traditions which I imbibed from the previous generations, will all die with me. You are my insurance policy. It is through you and your teachings that my Torah will continue to live."

This is why Moses had to put down Korah – who wanted to usurp power for a false end – but encouraged Eldad and Medad, who were influenced by a Divine spirit. And this is the true meaning of our Sages' adage that a father is never jealous of a child nor is a teacher ever jealous of a disciple. Politics yield power, which disappears in the sand-dunes of times; learning and piety breed influence, which last for all eternity. The Israelite Kings are scarcely remembered while the Israelite prophets and sages are still being studied and interpreted today. Lust for power is ultimately consumed by fiery flames, while the influence of Torah education will enable the light of the menorah to emblazon the path to the tree of life in our return to Eden.

Dvar Torah: Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

What is the hallmark of a great leader? In Parashat Pinchas we find Moshe appealing to Hashem prior to his passing, to appoint his successor. This would be

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in order to guarantee a smooth transition of authority from one leader to the next. But what would the qualities of the next leader need to be? Moshe said to Hashem, please appoint a man, אשר יצא לפניו ואשר – who will go out ahead of the people and come in ahead of the people ... כצאן ה' – in order that the assembly of the nation should not appear to be like sheep who have no shepherd".

Why did Moshe use this particular comparison? The Ktav Sofer explains beautifully – he says, often when a shepherd guides his sheep, he allows them to run ahead to pasture, while he remains at the back, with his staff in hand in order to keep the flock together. Therefore somebody looking at this flock might not notice the shepherd lagging behind – they might appear as sheep who have no shepherd.

Why is the shepherd doing this, asks the Ktav Sofer? He is doing it to protect himself. If a thief or a wild animal should attack, at least the shepherd would be able to flee for his own life.

Moshe was appealing to Hashem for the next leader to be visible, who would be there for their sake and not merely to protect his own position. Let the next leader be one who will go out ahead of the people always, in order to guarantee their successful future.

Ever since that time, our nation has been blessed with some truly outstanding leaders who have gone out ahead of the nation, who have been visible and who have been trailblazers. It is as a result of these courageous leaders of conviction that our nation has not appeared as sheep who have no shepherd.

Dvar Torah: TorahWeb.Org [Excerpt]

Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky

Never Too Early to Prepare for Rosh Hashana

The summer is first beginning and Rosh Hashana appears a long way off. Many shuls have begun plans for Yomim Noraim. In today's challenging times, extra preparation must be made to prepare for a safe celebration of these special days. This week's parsha begins our preparation. The mitzvah of shofar appears in two places. In parshas Pinchas, Rosh Hashana is described as a yom teruah - a day of sounding the shofar. In parshas Emor, however, the actual blowing of the shofar isn't mentioned, rather Rosh Hashana is referred to as a day of zichron teruah - a time to remember the sounding of the shofar without actually blowing...

The Rambam in Hilchos Teshuva notes that clearly tekias shofar is not just a mitzvah, but it is also a call to teshuva. On a day when our very lives hang in the balance, as the Books of Life and Death are opened, there is a tremendous opportunity to refocus on our priorities, which ultimately enables us to embark on the process of teshuva. It is this similar feeling that a person experiences when visiting the Beis Hamikdash. The Ramban in the beginning of Sefer Vayikra comments that when a person offers a korban he begins to realize that according to the strict rules of justice any sin should bring about immediate punishment. Yet, Hashem in His mercy gives us the vehicle of teshuva and kappara. By experiencing his korban being offered, the baal teshuva realizes that his life should have been taken from him and it is only the love and compassion of Hashem which keeps him alive. The shofar on Rosh Hashana and the korbanos that atone both highlight how our lives depend on Hashem's kindness. By acknowledging how frail our very existence is, we turn to Hashem and begin the process of teshuva... Although it may seem that Rosh Hashana is far away, if we listen carefully we can hear the call of the shofar beginning to sound. May Hashem help us to open our hearts and help us use these next months in a proper way, enabling us to hear the shofar of teshuva that will lead to the shofar of Moshiach and binyan Beis Hamikdash.

תשפ"א

R' Moshe Yehoshua Hager z"l (1916-2012; Vizhnitzer Rebbe) writes: With the month of Tammuz waning, the High Holidays are rapidly approaching. Indeed, "Tammuz" (Tav-Mem-Vav-Zayin) can be seen as an acronym of the Hebrew phrase, "Z'manei Teshuvah Me'mashmishin U'va'in" / "The times for repentance are coming closer and closer." Therefore, now is the time to examine one's actions, cease any bad deeds, and increase one's good deeds.

The Vizhnitzer Rebbe continues: This is alluded to in our Parashah, in the verse (28:3), "And you shall say to them, 'This is the fire-offering that you are to offer to Hashem--male lambs in their first year, unblemished, two a day, as a continual elevation offering.'" The Gematria of the Hebrew words "Ve'amarta La'hem" / "And you shall say to them" equals the Gematria of "Atah" (Ayin-Tav-Heh) plus 248. Midrash Bereishit Rabbah says that the word "Atah" alludes to Teshuvah. [An explanation of this connection is beyond the scope of this space.] Thus, the verse is exhorting us to repent now in order to "repair" all 248 of our limbs. This Teshuvah should be done with Simchah / joy, out of both Yir'ah / fear or awe and Ahavah / love for Hashem. Indeed, the Hebrew word "Ha'isheh" (Heh-Aleph-Shin-Heh) / "the fire-offering" has the same Gematria as the initials of Simchah, Yir'ah, and Ahavah.

The Vizhnitzer Rebbe concludes: Know that repenting completely requires setting aside time to examine one's deeds. Otherwise, one cannot know for what to repent. Also, one must study works that teach Yir'ah in order to understand why one is in this world and to learn how to perfect his soul. (Yeshuot Moshe)

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 Shimoni.

R' Shimshon Dovid Pincus z"l (rabbi of Ofakim, Israel; died 2001) writes: "**Ne'akah**" is a moan, as in the verse (Shmot 2:24, regarding Bnei Yisrael who were enslaved in Egypt), "Elokim heard their moaning..." At first glance, Ne'akah is not a form of prayer; it is a natural response to hurt. Nevertheless, a person can direct his Ne'akah toward Hashem, like someone who shares his pain with a friend.

R' Pincus continues: Hashem implanted in nature that one who is suffering will moan or cry out, often involuntarily. Looking at it more deeply, a person reacts this way because subconsciously, if not consciously, he knows that there is Someone who can hear and help him. Thus, every moan is, in fact, a prayer. All a person needs to do is to be conscious of this fact.

It is told that when R' Baruch Ber Lebowitz z"l (1862-1939; Rosh Yeshiva in Slabodka and Kamenitz) was a child, his father spanked him, causing him to cry. Immediately, the young Baruch Ber took a Siddur and began reciting Mincha. His father asked him why he was praying just then, and he replied, "If I am already crying, I may as well use these tears for praying." Many times, writes R' Pincus, we hear some tragic news that causes tears to well up in our eyes. A thinking person will seize that moment and turn that emotion into a prayer.

(In a footnote, R' Pincus adds: One can similarly turn many everyday deeds into Mitzvot. For example, most people need to work for a living. One can look at his work in a self-centered way--"I am taking care of myself"--or, in many cases, one can view his work as an act of Chessed / kindness. If one is a storekeeper or a service provider, for example, his attitude can be: "I am spending my day serving others. Thank G-d, I am earning a living at the same time!") (She'arim B'tefilah p.44)

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"Moshe spoke to Hashem, to say. 'May Hashem, Elokim of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly!'" (27:15-16)

R' Reuven Katz z"l (Prague; died 1673) writes: These verses allude to our tradition that no one is appointed as a leader of a congregation before he is so designated in Heaven. First, "Moshe spoke to Hashem, to say [in Heaven]" and only then, "May Hashem, Elokim . . . appoint a man over the assembly." (*Yalkut Reuveni*)

"Moshe did as Hashem had commanded him. He took Yehoshua and stood him before Elazar Ha'kohen and before the entire assembly. He leaned his hands upon him and commanded him, as Hashem had spoken through Moshe." (27:22-23)

Midrash Yalkut Shimoni comments on the verse (*Hoshea* 11:1): "For Yisrael is a lad, and I loved him" -- Moshe said to Yehoshua: "This people that I am turning over to you are still kid goats. They are still infants, and you should not be too exacting with them, for even their Master is not exacting about their misdeeds. At the *Yam Suf*, they rebelled, and the angels said, 'They are rebelling, and You are silent?!' Hashem replied, 'They are but youth, and one cannot be too exacting with youth. Just as a baby is born dirty and is washed off, so it is with Yisrael.'" [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Yerachmiel Shulman z"l Hy"d (*Menahel Ruchani* of the Bet Yosef-Novardok Yeshiva in Pinsk, Poland; killed in the Holocaust) writes: Our Sages refer to the Generation of the Desert as the "*Dor De'ah*" / "Generation of Discernment." Nevertheless, Hashem judged them as if they were youth, whose ability to discern right from wrong is limited. In this vein, our Sages say, "A person cannot fully grasp what his teacher of Torah is imparting until 40 years have passed." Hashem tolerated *Bnei Yisrael's* misdeeds, because the Torah had not yet "settled in" and become a part of their reality; they were but "youth" when it came to living a Torah life in day-to-day practice.

R' Shulman continues: A parent's love for his child enables him to tolerate the hard work of raising that child. We read (*Kohelet* 3:11), "He has also put an *Olam* / enigma into their minds so that man cannot comprehend what Elokim has done from beginning to end." The word "*Olam*" can be read "*Elem*" / "youth." Hashem put the youth into their minds (and hearts) -- He caused parents to love their children so they will tolerate their mistakes.

This, concludes R' Shulman, is what Moshe told Yehoshua: Emulate Hashem's ways! When a wise person behaves in a way that is beneath him, think of him as a youth; then, you will be able to tolerate him and lead him gently. (*Peninei Ha'shlaimut: Sha'ar Ha'savlanut* 1:4)

"Therefore, say, 'Behold! I give him My covenant of peace.'" (25:12)

Midrash Bemidbar Rabbah states: "Justice requires that Pinchas receive his reward." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Shalom Mordechai Schwadron z"l (1835-1911; a leading *Halachic* authority in Galicia) writes: R' Yosef Albo z"l (Spain; 1380-1444) teaches that when Hashem judges man's sins, He judges based on man's level, as if to say, "What more could one expect from a lowly human?" In contrast, when He weighs man's good deeds, He does so from His own perspective, as if to say, "Look how man did the Will of the King of Kings!"

In light of this, writes R' Schwadron, we can understand the above *Midrash* as follows: "Justice requires that Pinchas receive his reward," i.e., Strict Justice would dictate that man be rewarded only on his own level. But, due to My Kindness, I reward man with eternal reward, a reward on My level. (*Techelet Mordechai*)

R' Eliezer Papo z"l (1785-1827; rabbi in Sarajevo, best known as author of *Pele Yo'etz*) explains the above *Midrash* as follows: We read (*Devarim* 6:25), "And it will be a *Tzedakah* for us if we are careful to perform this entire commandment before Hashem, our Elokim, as He commanded us." R' Moshe ben Nachman z"l (*Ramban*; 1194-1270; Spain and *Eretz Yisrael*) explains that all reward we receive for our *Mitzvot* is "*Tzedakah*" / "charity," for we are Hashem's servants and we are obligated to serve Him, whether or not He would reward us. However, writes R' Papo, that is true only when we are doing only what we are commanded, as the quoted verse says: "As He commanded us." When Pinchas risked his life to save *Bnei Yisrael* from annihilation, he went well beyond what he was commanded to do. Therefore, "Justice requires that Pinchas receive his reward."

(*Elef Ha'magen*)

"Hashem said to Moshe, 'Go up to this mountain of Avarim and see the Land that I have given to Bnei Yisrael. You shall see it and you shall be gathered to your people . . .' Moshe spoke to Hashem, to say. 'May Hashem, Elokim of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the assembly!'" (27:12-16)

R' Chaim Zaichyk z"l (1906-1989; *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshivat Bet Yosef-Novardok in Buchach, Poland; later in Israel) writes: What would most people do upon receiving the news that Moshe received here? Most people would first lose their composure, then they would plead with Hashem to change the decree. What was Moshe Rabbeinu's first thought? The well-being of *Bnei Yisrael*. (*Ohr Chadash*)



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

**It is an honor to present this week's Torah Minute from our archives.
The following was penned by our founder, Rabbi Kalman Winter ZT"L**

Following the plague that killed 24,000 Jews, the Torah, in this week's portion of Pinchas, details the census of the remaining Jews. Chapter 26 verse 41 records the count of the tribe of Benjamin as 45,600. Just a few verses later, the Torah records the count of the tribe of Dan as 64,400.

It is startling that Dan, the son of Jacob, had only one child, whereas Benjamin had a total of ten children. Yet over the course of time, the tribe of Dan had 15,800 more offspring than Benjamin. The Rabbis draw a lesson in life from this historic anomaly. There is neither counsel nor wisdom, save for G-d's own determination. Whether in matters of financial security, life, or pleasure and joy from our children and grandchildren, there is no trajectory other than the mercy and will of the Creator above.

Though Dan had but one child, he was not to be denied. History and time shined their grace upon him, and his progeny developed into one of the most populous tribes. So too, we should not be dismayed nor deterred. Though our fortunes might appear bleak, there is a greater wisdom than ours that directs and guides our future. King David in Psalms chapter 27 best expressed our aspirations: "Place the hope in G-d, strengthen yourself and He will instill courage in your heart."

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Therefore say, "Behold I give him My covenant of peace." (25, 12)

Hashem said, "It is just that he should receive his reward." (Bamidbar Rabba 21, 1)

The reward for mitzvas is not in this world. (Kiddushin 39b)

How could Pinchas receive reward for his good deed in this world?

Parsha Riddle

How were Serach and Asher the son of Yaakov related?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Hashem opened the mouth of the donkey and it said to Bilaam, "What have I done to you that you struck me these three times?" (22, 28)

When did Hashem open the mouth of a different animal?

Answer: When Eliyahu HaNavi took the cow to give to the idolaters on Har HaCarmel, the cow told Eliyahu that it did not want to be used for avoda zora (idolatry).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Pinchas* (27:8-11), the Torah sets forth the laws of inheritance: the deceased's primary heirs are his sons; if he has no sons, his daughters are his heirs; if he has no daughters, there is a sequence of blood relatives who are next in line as heirs; ultimately, "you shall give his property to the closest relative in his family, who shall then be his heir."

There is no explicit mention of spousal inheritance. The rabbinic tradition, however, is that a husband inherits his wife, although a wife does not inherit her husband (*Bava Basra* beginning of *Yesh Nochalin*). The inheritance right of a husband is unanimously accepted, although a variety of different hermeneutical derivations for it are advanced in the Talmud and midrash (*ibid.* 111b; *Sifrei Zuta* to v. 8). Furthermore, there is a dispute over whether it is actually a Biblical law at all or merely a rabbinic institution (*Kesubos* 83b-84a).

The Rashba (*Shut.* 6:254) was asked about a community in medieval Perpignan where the custom was to follow non-Jewish law that a husband did not inherit his wife. The father of a married woman who had died argued that this custom should be followed (and thus he, rather than his son-in-law, should inherit his daughter), since "anyone who marries a woman there, it is as though he so stipulated." Although the Rashba concedes the general principle that "in all monetary matters, [any] stipulation is valid," he nevertheless adamantly rejects the father's argument:

"But to conduct oneself so because it is the custom of the non-Jews, this truly seems to me to be prohibited, for he is imitating the non-Jews, and this is what the Torah has prohibited (by the words: "And these are the ordinances that you shall place) **before them**" – and not before non-Jews (*Gittin* 88b), even if they both desire this, and it is a civil matter, for the Torah has not left the nation that is an inheritance to Him to its own desires, to give honor to the ordinances of the non-Jews and their laws."

Some authorities infer from this passage that choice of law provisions in contracts that specify secular law as governing are generally prohibited; this issue is the subject of considerable debate and discussion.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I have a special chair.
2. I have a special cup.
3. I'll answer the questions.
4. The birds were my waiters.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was for Haman.
2. I am for Yom Kippur.
3. I was for the division.
4. I am not "poor."

Last Week's Answers

#1 Balak (Don't confuse my father and Gershom's mother, Ruled, Unscrambled, I am "to curse", I was a foreigner.)

#2 Cherev/Sword (I was Bilaam's end, Unscrambled, I am a "friend", I guard the garden, Zeroa Netuya/Outstretched arm.)

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