

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

August 27 - 28, 2021 - 20 Elul 5781 - Ki Savo

Light Candles by 7:27 - Havdalah 8:26

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by Joey Franco - Mortgage Banker - 301-529-5387.

Mazal Tov

- **Eva & Ben Bazian** on the engagement of their daughter, Shira, to Jared Ebrahimoff, son of Alyssa & Ari Ebrahimoff of Scarsdale, NY. Mazal Tov to siblings, Shoshana & Doni Moskowitz, Zachary, Rebecca and Maya; Jessica & Sam Bazian, Rafi and Rena; Sara & Ben Baliti, and Gaby.
- **Gigi & Jerry Kaminetzky** on the engagement of their granddaughter, Daniella Kaminetzky, daughter of Jill & Noam Kaminetzky of Florida to Jacob Schulman, son of Drs. Randi & Jason Schulman of Hollywood, FL.
- **Gigi & Jerry Kaminetzky** on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Sam Kaminetzky, son of Anna & Shimon Kaminetzky of Atlanta, GA.
- **Ruchie & Rabbi Eli Reingold** on the birth of a grandson to their son and daughter in law, Batsheva & Elazar Reingold of Yerushalayim.
- **Diana & Leonard Ruchelman** on the engagement of their granddaughter, Ilana Ruchelman, to Akiva Mase. Mazal Tov to parents Cindy & Charles Ruchelman and Dana & Barry Mase.
- **Marilyn & Don Schwartz** on the birth of a great-granddaughter, Shira Batya. Mazal tov to the proud parents Ariella & Ari Pantiliat of Teaneck, NJ, to the new grandparents, Chaya & Joseph Schwartz, also of Teaneck, and to the entire Mishpacha.

Condolences

- The family of **Rebbetzin Myrna Klavan** on her passing. The funeral took place on Friday. The burial is scheduled to take place at Eretz Hachaim cemetery in Beit Shemesh on Sunday evening. Shiva is being observed at 1006 Lamberton Drive through Thursday morning. Selichos followed by Shacharis, Sunday through Thursday: 7:00 AM. Mincha/Maariv, Sunday through Wednesday: 7:20 PM.

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 7:27, and not before 6:23
- Mincha: 6:30 (B), 7:30 (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), 7:25 (B), 7:20 (Sephardi)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 8:26

Divrei Torah:

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

Kiddush Sponsors:

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

Selichos:

- Rabbi Rosenbaum will speak at 1:00 AM, followed by Selichos at 1:10 AM, in the Belonofsky Sanctuary.

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.

Pre-Rosh Hashana Family Apple Picking and Petting Zoo! - Sunday, August 29 - 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM at Homestead Farms. Admission \$2 per person, age 1+. Produce is charged on a per pound basis at the end of your visit. RSVP strongly encouraged to akramer@yise.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~~ Monday through Friday 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**. Note new time. This Shiur will not meet on Monday, August 30.
 - **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, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, now learning Mishlei, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Women's Navi Shiur, now learning Sefer Shmuel, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**.
 - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM, **Zoom F**.
 - Rabbi Hillel Shaps - Unraveling the Navi: Melachim Aleph
 - **Rabbi Tuvia Grauman** - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sundays at 10:00 AM, **Zoom C**.
 - **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM. For more info, contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, hshaps@gwckollel.org 347-869-9361.
 - For Men:
 - Mondays: Rabbi Hillel Shaps - On the Same Page Gemara - in person (Social Hall) and on **Zoom F**.
 - Wednesdays: Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman - Reading Responsa - **Zoom D**.
 - Thursdays: Rabbi Avraham Sussman - Yesodei Hatorah Gemara Skills Building - **Zoom H**.
 - Thursdays: Rabbi Grossman - Parshas Hashavua, 8:30 PM, **Zoom D**
 - For Women:
 - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Parsha Journeys, will resume after Sukkos.
 - **Semichat Chaver Program**, Tuesdays at 8:45 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** Shiurim for men & women, Monday - Parasha, Tuesday - Halachos, 8:45 AM, **Zoom B**. Note new time.
 - **Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's** Shiur for Men and Women, Tuesdays, 1:30 PM, will resume August 24, learning concepts of Elul and Yamim Noraim, **Zoom E**.
 - "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 Bava Kama 7th perek Merubah. Wednesday evenings, 8:45 PM, **Zoom G**.
- Connection Details:** Go to <https://zoom.us/join/> and enter the meeting ID, or call 301-715-8592 and enter the meeting ID & password:
- Zoom A: ID: 416 963 9000, password 492019
Zoom B: ID: 970 1398 4837, password 613
Zoom C: ID: 978 8156 7874, password RabbiHyatt
Zoom D: ID: 746 455 2195, password Learn
Zoom E: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079
Zoom F: ID: 349 754 2180, password Learn
Zoom G: ID: 539 496 3506, password ygwargz
Zoom H: ID: 803 356 4156, password Learn

COVID-19 Updates

- Masks are required for ALL people in the YISE Arcola building, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, with the exception of children under the age of 3.
- There are no social distancing requirements in the YISE building. There are no in-person Kiddushes at this time.
- 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

Rosh Hashanah Gift Bags - Join YISE in wishing everyone a Shana Tova by sponsoring a gift bag for local members. Sponsorship opportunities available: Shofar \$500, Platinum \$250, Gold \$180, Silver \$100, Bronze \$50, Greetings \$36. All information must be received by Wednesday, September 1, at 10:00 AM. Pay via PayPal at <https://wp.yise.org/giftbag> or send a check to the YISE office, with wording of sponsorship to office@yise.org. A list of all sponsorships will be included with the gift bags. Please email office@yise.org if you can help with delivery.

High Holiday Updates - Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, we will not be able to offer an outdoor option for Davening for the High Holidays. For the High Holidays only, the Baal Tefilah will NOT be required to wear a mask. This is in accordance with the opinion of our medical adviser, as well as in accordance with the current Montgomery County restrictions. Appropriate precautions will be taken.

Selichos Schedule - On Motzei Shabbos, there will be a brief Shiur with Rabbi Rosenbaum at 1:00 AM, followed by Selichos at 1:10 AM. On Sunday morning, the first Ashkenazi Minyan will take place at 6:00 AM with Selichos followed immediately by Shacharis, the second Ashkenazi Minyan will take place at 7:00 AM with Selichos followed immediately by Shacharis, and the 8:45 AM will not include Selichos. Beginning Monday, all Ashkenazi morning Minyanim will have Selichos at the listed time, followed immediately by Shacharis.

Let's cook (virtually) with Chef Yehuda Malka - Learn how to prepare tasty and healthy Yom Tov dishes and expand your culinary skills. Video and recipes available at <https://wp.yise.org/cooking>

Understanding the 13 Attributes of Mercy - A 3-part series with Rabbi Postelnek, continues on August 29 at 8:45 PM on **Zoom A**. First two parts online at <https://wp.yise.org/understanding-the-13-attributes-of-mercy> See flyer for details.

Order Lulavim and Esrogim from YISE - YISE is working this year with Josh Breistein to bring you the finest quality Arba Minim sets. Aleph \$80, Beis \$65, Gimmel \$55, Chinuch \$36. Order deadline: Friday, September 3. Pickup will be on Sunday, September 19, 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM. Due to COVID-19 concerns, individual selection of Esrogim will not be possible. Order online at www.yise.org/lulav See flyer for details.

Ask the Rabbi - Come join our virtual, interactive monthly program featuring Halachos of Shabbos and holidays! This month's topic: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkos. Video available at <https://wp.yise.org/ask-the-rabbi>

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

Rabbi Koss's Jewish History Class will not take place in September. It will resume again in October. Shana Tova!

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

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

Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary!

- Happy belated birthday to **Shmueli Engel** from his family!

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.

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 (Monday 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 8:45 and 9:15 Shabbos Drashas are both available for sponsorship at \$54 each.

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

- **Bobbi & Jules Meisler** in memory of Bobbi's father, Julius Altman, Yehudah ben Mordechai, whose Yahrzeit is 18 Elul.
- **Leonard & Diana Ruchelman** on the engagement of their granddaughter, Ilana Ruchelman, to Akiva Mase.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Shabbos Drasha

- **Jacqueline & Rabbi Haim Arzouan** in commemoration of the Yahrzeit of their son, Gavriel Yehuda ben HaRav Chaim, on the 19th of Elul.

Community Programs & Listings

Tefilah Mehalev - Those who would like to get into the High Holiday spirit are encouraged to listen to the beautiful tracks kindly recorded last year by Judd Lifschitz on his Tefilah Mehalev website www.yomtovnusach.com

The Yad Yehuda Clothing Exchange has available hours for all members of the community to shop at no cost the on Sunday, August 29, from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM at 1910 University Blvd. West. 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

Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington's Pre Yomtiv Pop Up - Sunday, August 29, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM in the KMS outdoor tent. Raffles, refreshments, hats/headwear, jewelry, accessories, kippas, shells, Judaica, art, gifts and more. A portion of the sales goes to BCGW.

Mikvah Emunah Society Call for Volunteers - MES is working to develop a safe plan for men to be able to use the Wallerstein Mikvah prior to the Yomim Noraim. In order to provide this service, MES must have a cadre of volunteers to staff the Mikvah on Erev Rosh Hashanah and Erev Yom Kippur. If there are not enough volunteers to help, we will be unable to open. To volunteer, contact Howie Schulman at drhowies@gmail.com by August 30.

Mitzvos: Quantity vs. Quality - Pre-Rosh Hashanah Shiur for men and women from Kollel Zichron Amram of the Yeshiva of Greater Washington - Tiferes Gedaliah. Tuesday, August 31, 8:00 PM with Rav Ahron Lopiansky, Rosh Hayeshiva. YGW Boys Campus, 1216 Arcola Ave.

The Golden Network - Siddur Class - In-Depth Analysis of the Birkat Hamazon with Mrs. Esther Dziadek. Wednesday mornings, 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM, on **Zoom B**. For more information, call 301-732-1773 or email director@goldennetwork.org

Rosh Hashanah Shofar Blowing 5782/2021 - Do you, or someone you know, need to have the shofar blown this Rosh Hashanah because you can't get to Shul? To arrange for a Shofar blower to visit you at home in Kemp Mill, please call or text Aron Trombka at 301-385-9348 or email atrombka@gmail.com
Locations/times: Chabad of Silver Spring, 519 Lamberton Drive 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00, 5:00; KMS, 11910 Kemp Mill Road 6:30; YGW, 1216 Arcola Avenue 4:00; Cosgrave Court 5:00; Spring Mill MCPS Building, corner of Kemp Mill Rd. and Fulham St. 5:30; N. Belgrade Court 4:45; University Towers (grass field by pool, Warwick side) 5:00

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, September 1, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. Fall Evaluation Contest - winner will compete in the Area 71 contest. Contact Manasseh Katz at secretary@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671

Ko-ach Sports Soccer - Registration is now open. The fun begins October 3 with separate leagues for boys and girls K-3rd grade. All games and practices are on Sundays in Silver Spring. Sign up by September 1 to save on registration fees. Sibling discounts! Register and more info. at www.Ko-achSports.com

Yad Yehuda Yomim Noraim Appeal - Between Rosh Hashanah and Sukkot, Yad Yehuda plans, B'ezrat Hashem, to distribute over \$85,000 to provide Shabbos and Yom Tov meals and Lulav and Etrog sets as needed to households across our community who are struggling financially. These Yom Tov expenses are above and beyond the ongoing financial assistance we provide our recipient households every single month. Please help us bring Simchat Yom Tov to your fellow community members by donating generously at yadyehuda.org

Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur/Franco Foundation Appeal - More of our community, hurt by COVID-19, rely on the Foundation to cover basic needs, such as rent, mortgage and utilities. Your entire donations go to support this safety net. Please send today to: The Franco Foundation, c/o Allan Franco, 613 Bromley Street, Silver Spring, MD 20902, or through Paypal, at thefrancofoundation@gmail.com Tax ID: 52-2172267

Lulav and Etrog sets - The Franco Foundation will be offering to our local community Lulav and Etrog sets to those who are struggling financially. Please contact Allan Franco at thefrancofoundation@gmail.com Your information will remain confidential.

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.

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: High Holidays Edition - Wednesday September 1, 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 merging into the larger, well-established Silver Spring Village (SSV) as of September 1. All current members will have several additional months to try out the many services offered by Silver Spring Village. Non-members will also be able to experience a trial period to decide if they want to join. To learn more about SSV's varied offerings, visit <https://silverspringvillage.org>

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

The Week Ahead		Sunday August 29	Monday August 30	Tuesday August 31	Wednesday September 1	Thursday September 2	Friday September 3
Shacharis	Ashkenazi	6:00, 7:00, 8:45	5:45, 6:15, 8:15	5:45, 6:25, 8:15	5:45, 6:25, 8:15	5:45, 6:15, 8:15	5:45, 6:25, 8:15
	Sephardi	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
Mincha / Maariv	Ashkenazi	7:25	7:25	7:25	7:25	7:25	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi	6:30 *	6:30	6:30 *	6:30 *	6:30 *	
* Sephardi Selichot 6:30 followed by Mincha at approximately 7:40							
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 5:17 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 5:46 AM, Latest Netz: 6:40 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:51 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:42 PM, Earliest Shkia: 7:33 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim: 8:24 PM							

Next Shabbos

September 3 - 4, 2021 - 27 Elul 5781

Parshas Nitzvaim

Light Candles: 7:17

Havdalah: 8:14

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, September 1 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

Rabbi Yosef Postelnek - Asst. Rabbi

Simi Franco - Office Manager

A Quick Thought on the Parsha from Rabbi Rosenbaum

Ki Savo 5781:

Heads or Tails?

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

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

There's a phrase in this week's *Parsha* connoting G-d's blessings for the Jewish people if we conduct ourselves appropriately, ונתנה' לראש, that G-d will make us at the head. It's an interesting question, what does that even mean for G-d to make us at the head? Clearly in context it's supposed to be a good thing. But what does it mean? Of course, it's worthy to think about these days, soon we will be celebrating *Rosh Hashanah* and one of the most famous *Simanim*, one of the most famous signs that we do *Rosh Hashanah* night, has to do with the head of a fish, the head of a ram, whatever it is, but again the sign of being that we ask *Hashem* that we should be for the head.

Rav Shimshon Pincus has an interesting thought about this. He says the image of the head as opposed to the tail, is to be the head is to be the one who's leading. Who's deciding where things are going. And I don't think the point is if someone is going to be in a position of prominence or not, I don't think that's the point, but what he says is what it is to be the leader is to be thoughtful. You can have fifteen people walking in one direction and it could be that one of them has a sense of where he's going, it could be that all fifteen of them have a sense of where they are going. We don't really care who is in the front but the *Beracha* of the head is that we ask *Hashem*, that *Hashem* should help us have a sense of clarity, have a sense of direction, have a sense of focus, that's a tremendous *Beracha*. It's interesting of course that the holiday itself that we have coming up is called *Rosh Hashanah*, literally the head of the year. So much of what will happen the rest of the year is dictated by sort of which way we are pivoted on *Rosh Hashanah*. To receive this *Beracha* of *Hashem* helping us to be people who are clear and have a sense of direction, we need to build ourselves up to merit the assistance from G-d. We don't need to know the answers, we don't need to have great clarity, but *Rav Pincus* says we do need to have שאיפות. We do need to have dreams and aspirations. Our job is to aspire to be the best people we can be. Our hope is that if we have that aspiration, G-d will bless us being the *Rosh*, being people who have a sense of direction, have a sense of what we need to do in order to get to those great aspirations that we have.

Good Shabbos and we should all merit this *Beracha*, *Kesiva V'Chasima Tova!*



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



**August
28th!
10:00-
11:00am**

Indoors

**Masks required
(3+)**

Snacks to go



Peering Past the Rock...



Understanding the 13 Attributes of Mercy

A 3 Part Series with Rabbi Postelnek

- **What ARE the 13 Attributes of Mercy? Back to the Beginning**

Sunday Aug. 15th - 8:45 pm

- **13 Magic Words or a Charge to Change?**

Sunday Aug. 22nd - 8:45 pm

- **Invoking the 13 Attributes and Reciting Selichos; Practical Halacha**

Sunday Aug. 29th - 8:45 pm



Join via Zoom

Meeting ID: 416 963 9000 Password: 492019



Order your Lulavim & Esrogim from YISE and help support the Shul!

YISE is working this year with Josh Breitstein to bring you the finest quality Arba Minim sets. Complete details and order form at: www.yise.org/lulav

Aleph	\$ 80
Beis	\$ 65
Gimmel	\$ 55
Chinuch	\$ 36

Order deadline: Friday, September 3

Due to COVID-19 concerns, individual selection of Esrogim will not be possible.

Pickup will be on Sunday, September 19, 10:00am - 8:00pm.

Payment at pickup - check payable to Josh Breitstein, or cash.

YISE PRE-ROSH HASHANA FAMILY APPLE PICKING (AND PETTING ZOO!)



SUNDAY, AUGUST 29
10:00a-1:00p

*Homestead Farms
15604 Sugarland Rd
Poolesville, MD 20837*

*Admission \$2 per person age 1+
Produce picked is charged on a per pound
basis at the end of your visit*

*RSVP strongly encouraged
to akramer@yise.org*

**FUN FOR
ALL AGES**

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat
Hashavuah via the Internet

Sponsored by Fred and Adina Friedman
on the occasions of the yahrzeits of their mothers:

Helen Friedman, a"h (Henna bas R' Avraham Baruch) on the 24th of Ellul
and Tova Klahr, a"h (Pesha Toiba bas Harav Yehuda Dov) on the 21st of Ellul

Volume 28, Issue

Shabbat Parashat KiTavo

5782 - B"H

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

A Nation of Storytellers – Howard Gardner, professor of education and psychology at Harvard University, is one of the great minds of our time. He is best known for his theory of “multiple intelligences,” the idea that there is not just one thing that can be measured and defined as intelligence but many different facets – which is one dimension of the dignity of difference. He has also written many books on leadership and creativity, including one in particular, *Leading Minds*, that is important in understanding this week's parsha of Ki Tavo.

Gardner's argument is that what makes a leader is the ability to tell a particular kind of story – one that explains ourselves to ourselves and gives power and resonance to a collective vision. So Churchill told the story of Britain's indomitable courage in the fight for freedom. Gandhi spoke about the dignity of India and non-violent protest. Margaret Thatcher talked about the importance of the individual against an ever-encroaching State. Martin Luther King Jr. told of how a great nation is colour-blind. Stories give the group a shared identity and sense of purpose.

Philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre has also emphasised the importance of narrative to the moral life. “Man,” he writes, “is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a story-telling animal.” It is through narratives that we begin to learn who we are and how we are called on to behave. “Deprive children of stories and you leave them unscripted, anxious stutterers in their actions as in their words.” To know who we are is, in large part, to understand the story or stories of which we are a part.

The great questions – “Who are we?” “Why are we here?” “What is our task?” – are best answered by telling a story. As Barbara Hardy put it: “We dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticise, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love by narrative.” This is fundamental to understanding why Torah is the kind of book it is: not a theological treatise or a metaphysical system but a series of interlinked stories extended over time, from Abraham and Sarah's journey from Mesopotamia to Moses' and the Israelites' wanderings in the desert. Judaism is less about truth as system than about truth as story. And we are part of that story. That is what it is to be a Jew.

A large part of what Moses is doing in the book of Devarim is retelling that story to the next generation, reminding them of what God had done for their parents and of some of the mistakes their parents had made. Moses, as well as being the great liberator, is the supreme storyteller. Yet what he does in parashat Ki Tavo extends way beyond this.

He tells the people that when they enter, conquer and settle the land, they must bring the first ripened fruits to the central Sanctuary, the Temple, as a way of giving thanks to God. A Mishnah in Bikkurim describes the joyous scene as people converged on Jerusalem from across the country, bringing their first-fruits to the accompaniment of music and celebration. Merely bringing the fruits, though, was not enough. Each person had to make a declaration. That declaration became one of the best known passages in the Torah because, though it was originally said on Shavuot, the festival of first-fruits, in post-biblical times it became a central element of the Haggadah on Seder night: My father was a

wandering Aramean, and he went down into Egypt and lived there, few in number, there becoming a great nation, powerful and numerous. But the Egyptians ill-treated us and made us suffer, subjecting us to harsh labour. Then we cried out to the Lord, the God of our ancestors, and the Lord heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with signs and wonders.

Here for the first time, the retelling of the nation's history becomes an obligation for every citizen of the nation. In this act, known as vidui bikkurim, “the confession made over first-fruits,” Jews were commanded, as it were, to become a nation of storytellers.

This is a remarkable development. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi tells us that “only in Israel and nowhere else is the injunction to remember felt as a religious imperative to an entire people.” Time and again throughout Devarim comes the command to remember: “Remember that you were a slave in Egypt.”; “Remember what Amalek did to you.” “Remember what God did to Miriam.” “Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you.”

The vidui bikkurim, though, is more than this. It is, compressed into the shortest possible space, the entire history of the nation in summary form. In a few short sentences we have here “the patriarchal origins in Mesopotamia, the emergence of the Hebrew nation in the midst of history rather than in mythic prehistory, slavery in Egypt and liberation therefrom, the climactic acquisition of the land of Israel, and throughout – the acknowledgement of God as lord of history.”

We should note here an important nuance. Jews were the first people to find God in history. They were the first to think in historical terms – of time as an arena of change as opposed to cyclical time in which the seasons rotate, people are born and die, but nothing really changes. Jews were the first people to write history – many centuries before Herodotus and Thucydides, often wrongly described as the first historians. Yet biblical Hebrew has no word that means “history” (the closest equivalent is *divrei hayamim*, “chronicles”). Instead it uses the root *zachor*, meaning “memory.”

There is a difference between history and memory. History is “his story,” an account of events that happened sometime else to someone else. Memory is “my story.” It is the past internalised and made part of my identity. That is what the Mishnah means when it says, “Each person must see themselves as if they (personally) escaped Egypt.”

Throughout the book of Devarim, Moses warns the people – no less than fourteen times – not to forget. If they forget the past they will lose their identity and sense of direction and disaster will follow. Moreover, not only are the people commanded to remember, they are also commanded to hand that memory on to their children.

This entire phenomenon represents a remarkable cluster of ideas: about identity as a matter of collective memory; about the ritual retelling of the nation's story; above all about the fact that every one of us is a guardian of that story and memory. It is not the leader alone, or some elite, who are trained to recall the past, but every one of us. This too is an

aspect of the devolution and democratisation of leadership that we find throughout Judaism as a way of life. The great leaders tell the story of the group, but the greatest of leaders, Moses, taught the group to become a nation of storytellers.

You can still see the power of this idea today. As I once wrote, if you visit the Presidential memorials in Washington, you will see that each carries an inscription taken from their words: Jefferson's “We hold these truths to be self-evident . . .”, Roosevelt's “The only thing we have to fear, is fear itself”, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and his second Inaugural, “With malice toward none; with charity for all . . .”. Each memorial tells a story.

London has no such equivalent. It contains many memorials and statues of historical leaders, each with a brief inscription stating who it represents, but there are no speeches or quotations. There is no story. Even the memorial to Winston Churchill, whose speeches rivalled Lincoln's in power, bears only one word: Churchill.

America has a national story because it is a society based on the idea of covenant. Narrative is at the heart of covenantal politics because it locates national identity in a set of historic events. The memory of those events evokes the values for which those who came before us fought and of which we are the guardians.

A covenantal narrative is always inclusive, the property of all its citizens, newcomers as well as the native-born. It says to everyone, regardless of class or creed: this is who we are. It creates a sense of common identity that transcends other identities. That is why, for example, Martin Luther King Jr. was able to use it to such effect in some of his greatest speeches. He was telling his fellow African Americans to see themselves as an equal part of the nation. At the same time, he was telling white-Americans to honour their commitment to the Declaration of Independence and its statement that “all men are created equal”.

England does not have the same kind of national narrative because it is based not on covenant but on hierarchy and tradition. England, writes Roger Scruton, “was not a nation or a creed or a language or a state but a home. Things at home don't need an explanation. They are there because they are there.” England, historically, was a class-based society in which there were ruling elites who governed on behalf of the nation as a whole. America, founded by Puritans who saw themselves as a new Israel bound by covenant, was not a society of rulers and ruled, but rather one of collective responsibility. Hence the phrase, central to American politics but never used in English politics: “We, the people.”

By making the Israelites a nation of storytellers, Moses helped turn them into a people bound by collective responsibility – to one another, to the past and future, and to God. By framing a narrative that successive generations would make their own and teach to their children, Moses turned Jews into a nation of leaders.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

“You must then make the following declaration before the Lord your God: “I have removed all the

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sacred portions from my house. I have given the appropriate ones to the Levite and to the orphan and widow, following all the commandments You prescribed to us. And I did not forget."

Although the Torah commands us regarding a number of commandments "to remember," such as "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy", we do not find that someone observing the Sabbath must declare that he has not forgotten to fulfill that mitzvah. This makes the abovementioned verse from our portion, Ki Tavo, all the more curious.

Why must the Israelite farmer make this declaration upon fulfilling all of his tithing obligations? It seems superfluous. After all, if he has given his tithes, it is apparent that he has not forgotten to do so!

Rashi suggests that the farmer is affirming that he did not forget to make the appropriate blessing. However, why is this the case only regarding this commandment and not others, some of which may be even more difficult to fulfill? Moreover – notwithstanding the importance of blessings – even if one forgets to recite a blessing, the commandment is nevertheless considered to have been fulfilled. So why did the Torah single out this mitzvah?

Perhaps what Rashi had in mind was the necessity for us to give our charity gladly and full-heartedly, even praising the Almighty for the privilege of being among the donors and not among the recipients. Hence, Rashi highlights the importance of not forgetting the blessing of thanksgiving for giving tithes!

I would like to suggest an additional explanation of the significance of the phrase "I did not forget," which I believe is closely tied to the Biblical words themselves. Recall the closing words of last week's portion: "...obliterate the memory of Amalek...do not forget (lo tishkach)."

Why must Amalek and the philosophy of Amalekism must be obliterated? Because they are the antithesis of the morality of the Torah: "Remember what Amalek did to you on your way out of Egypt, when they encountered you on the way, and you were tired and exhausted.... They cut off those weak and infirm, lagging to your rear, and they did not fear God.... You must obliterate the memory of Amalek from under the heavens. Do not forget".

Amalek is identified with evil incarnate because he represents that cruel and diabolical force within humanity that takes advantage of and preys upon the weak and the disadvantaged. Over the centuries his name changes, but his motto remains the same: might makes right. He aims his poisonous hate toward the weakest members of society: the stragglers, the lame, the blind, the old, and the sick.

Amalek's attack of the weak represents the very opposite of the message that God has just given the Jewish people. If anything, the moral code of this nation of ex-slaves is to never forget its origins, to never inflict upon others what it once suffered on its own flesh at the hands of its Egyptian taskmasters.

Throughout the Torah, the ethical ideal of the Jewish People is to manifest an exquisite sensitivity to the needs of others, especially the disadvantaged other, a landless Levite, a homeless stranger, a defenseless widow, a bereft orphan; the very people Amalek seeks to exploit.

Indeed, Amalek's attack is not only directed toward a few weak, defenseless stragglers, but is hell-bent upon inflicting the death blow to the people who revere a God of compassion and loving-kindness. Amalek is the quintessence of immorality. Hence the Israelites are commanded not only to wipe out the physical presence of Amalek, but also to obliterate the very memory, or remnant, of his message. Remember what Amalek did to you. "Do not forget."

The true significance of the strange phrase ("I did not forget") in our portion now becomes evident.

The sins of Amalek and the tithes to the Levites, the stranger, and the poor are intimately connected. In our portion, when the farmer declares, "I did not forget," the simplest, most straight-forward understanding of this term is that he is referring to the previous command regarding Amalek: he did not forget to give to the widow, to the stranger, to the orphan, to the Levite. After all, if he did not "forget" to help these underprivileged, he did indeed remember to destroy Amalek.

In effect, he is demonstrating to the Almighty that he has internalized the commandment to destroy Amalek and not to forget; in giving his tithes to the disadvantaged he is truly destroying any remnant of the spirit of Amalek.

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb **To Each His Language**

- There was a time when the literary treasures of the Jewish people were accessible only to those with a reading knowledge of Hebrew. This is no longer the case. I know of no major Jewish religious work which has not been translated into English in recent years and, in most instances, into many other languages as well. The past several decades have witnessed the publication of multiple editions of the Bible and the Talmud, commentaries ancient and modern, liturgical works, historical tomes, biographies, and even cookbooks with recipes of our ancestors.

I must confess that when this phenomenon of translation began, I was not all that happy. I am a bit of a purist and have long clung to the belief that sacred Hebrew books should be read in the original. I was willing to make exceptions for those religious classics which were originally written in languages other than Hebrew, such as those works of Maimonides, Saadia Gaon, and Bahya ibn Paquda, which were originally written in Arabic and translated into Hebrew and eventually English as well. But for me, the Bible and classical commentaries were to be read only in the language in which they were written.

I was guided in my opposition to translation by the classic Italian motto, "traduttore traditore", "the translator is a traitor." No translation is exactly accurate, and ideas expressed in one language inevitably lose some of their meaning when rendered into another language. Every translation compromises beauty and forfeits subtlety and nuance.

Ironically, in recent years, I myself have become a translator. My first professional effort was with the elegies that are recited on the solemn day of Tisha b'Av, when Jews recall the seemingly endless chain of catastrophes that have marked Jewish history. Translating these poignantly tragic poems was a difficult challenge. But I undertook the task in the belief that an English translation was better than no translation, and that I was doing a public service by bringing these poems to the public, albeit in a far from perfect form.

Since then, and to this day, I have been involved in the process of translating classical Jewish works, and have come to terms with the fact that translations, although far from perfect, bring Torah study to multitudes of individuals who would otherwise be deprived from so much of our tradition.

These reflections bring us to Parshat Ki Tavo. The relevant verses read, "As soon as you have crossed the Jordan into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you shall set up large stones. Coat them with plaster and inscribe upon them all the words of this Teaching...On those stones you shall inscribe every word of this Teaching most distinctly".

What does this phrase, ba'er heitev, translated as "most distinctly," mean? The Babylonian Talmud suggests that the inscription of the "Teaching," that is, the Torah, should be done in seventy languages,

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in every language known to mankind. How fascinating! Moses himself, speaking on behalf of the Almighty, instructs the people to engage in that "traitorous" task of translation. He seems unconcerned with the difficulties of rendering the word of God from sacred Hebrew into the languages of all mankind.

Why? Why was it necessary to translate the Torah into languages which were incomprehensible to the people of Israel? Our Sages offer two very different answers to this question.

The Jerusalem Talmud takes a universalistic approach and suggests that these translations were to bring the teachings of the Torah to the entire world.

The Zohar, the basic text of the Kabbalah, notes that the members of the Jewish High Court, the Sanhedrin, knew all seventy languages. But the Zohar does not take this literally. Instead, the Zohar understands the seventy languages to be a metaphor for the seventy facets of Torah, the seventy different avenues of interpretation with which the sacred text is endowed. The members of the Sanhedrin were thus not linguists, according to the Zohar, but experts in probing the depths of the Torah's meaning. Perhaps, the seventy languages inscribed on the stones in the River Jordan were also not the languages for the peoples of the world, but were seventy codes enabling so many different approaches to the Torah's interpretation.

Permit me to offer a somewhat different approach. I prefer to understand the word "language" more broadly. The word need not be restricted to its literal meaning, referring to French, Spanish, Swahili, and Portuguese. Rather, "language" can refer to a cognitive modality, or to a learning style. Thus, some of us prefer the language of humor, while others prefer the language of logic and reason. We speak of angry language, soothing language, and the language of love. Music is a language, play is a language, and there is even the language of war.

Every teacher worth his salt knows that he must use different "languages" for different students. This does not mean that he speaks to some students in English and to others in Yiddish. No. This means that some students will respond to clear and logical explanations. Others will require anecdotes and stories. Still others will require humor, or perhaps visual illustrations of the subject matter being taught. This is the lesson which every successful teacher learns sooner or later: no two individuals learn in the same way. Woe to the teacher who delivers his or her prepared lecture once, and expects all thirty pupils to learn the material. The successful teacher discerns the learning styles of each pupil and develops strategies and modalities that facilitate the learning of every member of the class.

Perhaps this is what the Talmud is really teaching. Inscribed on those stones in the River Jordan were seventy different teaching strategies, seventy pedagogical tools, which would enable every recipient of the Torah to learn its messages in his or her own idiosyncratic way. Some would learn best by reciting the words by rote until they were memorized. Others would learn by breaking the text down into small phrases and reflecting on them, and still others would learn by using visual imagery to "see" the meaning of the text.

Our Sages were very aware of a basic lesson in education. That lesson is that there is a need for individualized curricula so that diverse populations can all learn well.

I will conclude with a remark I hear from my teenage grandchildren: Different strokes for different folks. Arguably, this is an apt motto for getting along with people in all situations. But it is especially apt for teachers. And as I have repeatedly stated in this column, we are all teachers! *[Excerpted]*

תפילה

כי תבוא תבואתך

Our *Parashah* opens with the *Mitzvah* of *Bikkurim* / taking the year's first fruits to the *Bet Hamikdash* and giving them to a *Kohen*. The *Mishnah* (*Bikkurim* 3:2) relates that this *Mitzvah* was performed with great fanfare. Groups would be formed to travel to Yerushalayim together, and musicians playing instruments would lead the groups. In each town through which the travelers passed, craftsmen would interrupt their work to greet them.

R' Chaim Zaichyk z"l (1906-1989; *Rosh Yeshiva* of Yeshivat Bet Yosef-Novardok in Buchach, Poland; later in Haifa, Israel) asks: Why, of all *Mitzvot*, was this one performed with such fanfare? He answers: Anything that is "first" has a special place in people's hearts. For example, parents have a special feeling for their firstborn, because their firstborn made them parents. Before the firstborn, parenthood was only something to be imagined or speculated about; afterward, it is real. Likewise, the first fruits are what gives the farmer the feeling that all of his hard work was for a purpose. That is cause for celebration!

Midrash Rabbah teaches that the world was created in the merit of three things: *Ma'aser* / tithes, *Challah* / the piece of each batch of dough given to the *Kohen*, and *Bikkurim*. Why? Because the Torah begins, "*Bereishit*," and each of these things is called "*Reishit*" / "the first." Notably, R' Zaichyk observes, each of these three things is given away to *Hashem's* servants (i.e., a *Kohen* or *Levi*). This teaches that one should always direct that which is most dear to him to help those who serve *Hashem*. (*Ma'ayanei Chaim*)

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 in *Midrashim*.

R' Shimshon Dovid Pincus z"l (rabbi of Ofakim, Israel; died 2001) writes: "*Chilui*" (חילוי) refers to a prayer that includes arguments why the prayer should be accepted. For example, we read (*Shmot* 32:11-13--after the sin of the Golden Calf), "*Va'yechal* / Moshe pleaded before *Hashem*, his *Elokim*, and said, 'Why, *Hashem*, should Your anger flare up against Your people, whom You have taken out of the land of Egypt with great power and a strong hand? Why should Egypt say: "With evil intent He took them out, to kill them in the mountains and to annihilate them from the face of the earth?" ... Remember for the sake of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yisrael'." Likewise, the *Gemara* (*Berachot* 31b) relates that the childless prophetess Chana prayed: "*Hashem*! Everything that you created serves a purpose. Why do I have organs to nurse a child if you will not give me a child?" [*Hashem* answered her prayer, and she gave birth to the prophet Shmuel.]

However, there is a mystery here whose resolution is beyond us, continues R' Pincus. If the arguments being made are valid, why must they be made at all? *Hashem* already knows them all! On the other hand, if they are not valid arguments, why would *Hashem* listen to them? Nevertheless, this is the system *Hashem* created in the world: He wants us to make solid arguments to "persuade" Him to answer our prayers.

It should be noted, R' Pincus continues, that we are best off using the "arguments" formulated by our Sages and predecessors--for example, the words of *Tehilim* and of *Shemoneh Esrei* and the other prayers composed by the Men of the Great Assembly. We can apply to this the verse (*Kohelet* 5:1), "Do not be rash with your mouth, and do not let your heart be hasty to utter a word before *Elokim*; for *Elokim* is in heaven and you are on earth; therefore, let your words be few." Rather than composing our own arguments, we should learn the meanings of those composed by our Sages and King David and recite them with real feeling.

(*She'arim B'tefilah* p.114)

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“Because you did not serve *Hashem*, your *Elokim*, amid gladness and goodness of heart, when everything was abundant.” (28:47)

R' Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook z"l (1865-1935; first *Ashkenazic* Chief Rabbi of *Eretz Yisrael*) writes: A person gets pleasure and joy from his actions only when he understands their purpose. The more one knows the good that will come from his actions, the more he will be happy doing them. Indeed, the happiness and satisfaction that a person gets from his actions is the greatest catalyst to continue doing them, because a human being's nature is to pursue pleasure and run from disappointment. This is why we are commanded to perform *Mitzvot* with joy.

Know, however, continues R' Kook, that the Torah is not simply commanding us to acquire the trait of performing *Mitzvot* joyously. Rather, implied here is a command that we actively take steps to learn what the *Mitzvot* are meant to accomplish. This is similar to the commandments to revere and love *Hashem*. We are not expected to force ourselves to have these feelings just because we are told to. Rather, we are expected to study the Torah and to know *Hashem's* ways and His traits, and then we will develop reverence and love for Him. (Otzrot Ha'Rayah II p.492)

R' Noach Weinberg z"l (1930-2009; founder and *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Aish Ha'Torah*) writes: The source of all joy is the holy Torah, because the Torah teaches us that our lives have meaning.

He adds: There is a special joy that comes from gaining wisdom. Even if you cannot immediately put what you have learned into practice, you still have gained something. Nevertheless, whenever you do learn something new, examine how that new information can improve your life in a practical way. If you would find a diamond and appreciate its worth, you would dance all the way to your safe deposit box. On the other hand, if you find a diamond and use it to play marbles, it probably will end up abandoned in a hole in the ground. Remember that every bit of Torah wisdom you gain is a diamond, and value it as such!

(48 *Derachim L'chochmah* p.112)

R' Eliyahu de Vidas z"l (*Eretz Yisrael*; 1518-1592) quotes the *Zohar*: “The *Shechinah* resides only in a place that is whole--not a place that is lacking, a place that is damaged, a place that is sad--only in a place that is proper, [which is] a place of joy. That is why the *Shechinah* did not rest on Yaakov Avinu all the years that Yosef was separated from him.”

How can a person attain happiness? By reflecting on the good that *Hashem* has done for him.

(*Reishit Chochmah: Sha'ar Ha'ahavah* ch.10)

“*Hashem* will confirm you for Himself as a holy people, as He swore to you--if you observe the commandments of *Hashem*, your *Elokim*, and you go in His ways.” (28:9)

R' Moshe ben Maimon z"l (*Rambam*; 1135-1204; Spain and Egypt) writes: This verse contains a *Mitzvah* to emulate *Hashem* as much as possible, as is written, “You [shall] go in His ways.” Our Sages explain: Just as *Hashem* is called “Compassionate,” so you shall be compassionate; just as He is called “Giving,” so you shall be giving; just as He is called “Righteous,” so you shall be righteous; just as He is called “Pious,” so you shall be pious. The general idea is that we should imitate those good actions and worthwhile qualities that we ascribe to *Hashem*.

(*Sefer Ha'mitzvot: Aseh* #8)

R' Avraham ben Ha'Rambam z"l (son of Maimonides; Egypt; 1186-1237) was asked: Why does *Rambam* interpret “you go in His ways” as a commandment when, according to the *P'shat* / straightforward reading, it appears to be a condition, not a *Mitzvah*?

R' Avraham answers, in defense of his father: How could it be a condition if it were not also a *Mitzvah*? If *Hashem* says, “I will reward you if you do 'X',” clearly *Hashem* wants 'X' to be done!

Moreover, R' Avraham continues, what distinguishes us from the Karaites--a heretical sect that was active in *Rambam's* time--is that we do not look only at the *P'shat* when interpreting a verse. Rather, we interpret verses based on the *P'shat* coupled with the traditions received from our Sages. *Rambam's* interpretation of “you go in His ways” to mean “you shall go in His ways” is, indeed, the interpretation received from our Sages.

(*Teshuvot Rabbeinu Avraham ben Ha'Rambam* #63)

“*Hashem* shall give you bountiful goodness, in the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your animals . . .” (28:11)

The *Gemara* (*Ta'anit* 8b) relates that there once was a famine and a plague simultaneously. The sage Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani said, “One cannot pray regarding two troubles [*i.e.*, famine and plague] at once. Pray that the famine end because *Hashem* will not send plenty only to have it go to waste. When He sends plenty, He necessarily will give life also.” [Until here from the *Gemara*; see *Hamaayan* for *Parashat Devarim* of this year.]

R' Yaakov Yisrael Halevi Stern z"l (18th century; *maggid* /preacher in Kremenets, Volhynia, now Ukraine) writes that, in this light, we may understand our verse as follows: “*Hashem* shall give you bountiful goodness.” And, in order that that bountiful goodness not go to waste, he also will bless “the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your animals,” etc.--more than you asked.

(*Sefat Emet: Mishlei* 10:20)

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ISRAEL 'CANNOT RULE OUT' ACTION AGAINST IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM, TOP DEFENSE OFFICIALS SAY (Israel Hayom 8/25/21)

Defense Minister Benny Gantz said Wednesday that he believes that a threat of an Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear facilities is the only way the Biden administration will be able to negotiate a better nuclear deal with Tehran.

Israel contends its regional archrival Iran seeks nuclear weapons, citing the radical regime's repeated threats to annihilate the Jewish state. Tehran, however, insists its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only.

Earlier this month, the International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed that Iran has accelerated its enrichment of uranium to near weapons grade, a move raising tensions with the West as both sides seek to resume talks on reviving Tehran's nuclear deal.

In a briefing for over 60 foreign ambassadors Wednesday, Gantz doubled down on the threat, saying that Israel "has the means to act and will not hesitate to do so – I do not rule out the possibility that Israel will have to take action in the future in order to prevent a nuclear Iran."

Tehran, he told the ambassadors, "intends to destroy Israel and it is working to ensure it has the means to do that. To that end, it is also working via its emissaries in Iraq, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, and Gaza, using drones and precise missiles, acting against commercial ships in the sea, and even conducting cyberattacks around the world."

The Israeli defense minister further pointed out that intelligence suggests that Iran's defense budget has more than doubled in the past five years growing from the rial equivalent of \$22 billion to the respective equivalent of \$49 billion.

"Iran is just two months away from collecting the required materials for a nuclear bomb. We don't know if the Iranian regime is willing to return to the negotiating table, and the world must prepare a Plan B, and stop Iran's progress right now," Gantz asserted.

"At the end of the day, the goal is to reach an agreement that is 'longer, stronger, and broader.' Iran reaching the nuclear threshold places us on the brink of a regional – and potentially global – nuclear arms race," he warned.

He further stressed that "Israel has no conflict with the Iranian nation, only with the Iranian government."

In another warning, he said, "We in Israel have our own options. We've known how to use them in the past and I don't rule out that we might need to use them in the future. But Iran is first and foremost a challenge for the world, which needs to unite and act."

The defense minister's warning was echoed by remarks made Wednesday by IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi who – citing Iran's not-so-subtle progress toward weapon-grade uranium and the stalled negotiations between Washington and Tehran on the matter – said the military was stepping up its work on plans for a strike on Tehran's nuclear program.

At a special briefing with military correspondents, Kochavi said that "the progress in the Iranian nuclear program has led the IDF to speed up its operational plans, and the defense budget that was recently approved seeks to address this need."

He further hinted that a military operation was not the only tool in Israel's belt: "The IDF is operating constantly and in a variety of ways in order to minimize Iran's influence in the Middle East," Kochavi said.

On the tactical level, the IDF has been fighting Iran's attempts to tighten its grip on the region via surrogates in Syria and Lebanon, which is home to Hezbollah – Tehran's most powerful proxy in the Middle East – and over the past two years, the IDF has destroyed hundreds of Iranian assets in Syria.

Gantz and Kochavi's remarks come as Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is on

his first official visit to Washington, where he will meet with US President Joe Biden, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other top American officials.

According to Israeli media reports, as Israel and the US share close defense ties, the IDF has made this view known to the Pentagon, though the US is not actively involved in Israel's plans.

ROCKET SIRENS SOUND IN SOUTHERN ISRAEL, SHFELA DUE TO TECHNICAL ERROR (JPost 8/26/21)

Rocket sirens sounded in Ashdod, Yavne, Lod and Ben-Gurion Airport, among other locations, on Thursday afternoon due to a technical error, sending thousands of residents into shelters despite no rockets being fired.

The IDF Spokesperson's Unit announced on Thursday afternoon that an initial investigation found that the sirens were set off by a technical malfunction that occurred during a routine check of the alert system at Home Front Command.

"During and after the check there was no impairment in the operational competence of the alert systems," said the IDF Spokesperson's Unit.

The false alarm came amid heightened tensions between Israel and the Gaza Strip after a Border Police officer was shot and critically injured during violent riots along the Gaza border on Saturday. Incendiary and explosive balloons were launched from Gaza towards Israel in the days following the riots and Palestinian factions warned that they would conduct "popular activities" until the blockade on Gaza was lifted.

BENNETT HOLDS FIRST CLIMATE BRIEFING AHEAD OF BIDEN MEETING (Ha'aretz 8/25/21)

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett held his first meeting with climate experts on Tuesday, in preparation for his meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden on Thursday.

Some of the experts who took part in the discussion urged Bennett to set a more ambitious target for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in

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Israel, according to sources.

Israel has set a target that is lower than other developed nations: A reduction of 27 percent by 2030 and 85 percent by 2050, compared to 50 percent and 100 percent, respectively, in the United States, for example. The experts also urged the prime minister to take action on climate change before the UN Climate Change Conference that will be held in Glasgow in November.

In an overview presented to the prime minister, the first of its kind that Bennett has received, the experts outlined the social, economic and security-related aspects of the climate change crisis whose effects on Israel are already evident and will only intensify. The meeting was set up by the Environmental Protection Ministry, which is headed by Meretz's Tamar Zandberg. Also present at the meeting, in addition to ministry personnel, were senior professors from Tel Aviv University, and representatives of the Institute for National Security Studies and the RAND Corporation.

Also attending, at Bennett's request, were five representatives of startups that are working on new environmental developments, and whose inventions will be presented to Biden. Several sources who were present at the meeting said that the prime minister was disturbed by the figures he was shown about global warming, rising sea levels, increasing floods, drought and extreme climate events, and showed interest in holding more discussions.

Asked to comment, Minister Zandberg said, "The summer of 2021 is a turning point in the understanding of the urgency and intensity of the crisis, and the prime minister understands the issue and is attentive to it." She added, "The developed nations are entering a new world in which the fight against the climate crisis is leading their economies, and now Israel is joining in the joint effort. Israel will reduce emissions, will produce renewable energies through regional and global cooperation in the fields of energy, food and water, and will be a leader in technological innovation."

Biden plans to speak with Bennett about the climate crisis and discuss regional cooperation for the development of renewable energies, Haaretz reported on Tuesday, citing a White House source.

The president has put the climate crisis at the top of his administration's agenda, but at their meeting, Bennett will not easily be able to cite ambitious targets or significant actions taken by Israel. According to sources, one topic Biden plans to discuss with Bennett is the target that Israel has set for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

ISRAEL SAYS ALGERIA SHOULD MIND ITS OWN PROBLEMS AFTER SEVERING TIES WITH MOROCCO (YNet 8/25/21)

Israel said on Wednesday Algeria should focus on its own problems a day after Algiers severed ties with Morocco, the latest Arab nation to normalize relations with the Jewish state. Algeria said Tuesday it had cut diplomatic relations with Morocco because of "hostile actions", following months of resurgent tensions between the North African rivals.

Algerian Foreign Minister Ramtane Lamamra also accused Israel's foreign minister of "senseless accusations and veiled threats", after Yair Lapid expressed "worries about the role played by Algeria in the region".

On his first visit to Morocco since the countries normalized ties, Lapid said his concerns were based on fears that Algeria was "getting close to Iran", as well as "the campaign it waged against the admission of Israel as an observer member of the African Union".

On Wednesday, an Israeli diplomatic source called Lamamra's allegations "unfounded and without interest -- they bring nothing new".

"Algeria should focus on its own problems, serious economic problems especially, so its citizens can live the life they deserve, rather than trying to harm their neighbor and involve Israel in its disputes," the source told AFP.

"What matters are the very good relations between Israel and Morocco."

ISRAEL AEROSPACE INDUSTRIES, ETIHAD TO OPEN AIRCRAFT CONVERSION SITE IN ABU DHABI (Ha'aretz 8/25/21)

Israel Aerospace Industries said Wednesday it signed an agreement with Etihad Engineering to establish a facility in Abu Dhabi that will convert Boeing 777-300ER passenger planes into cargo aircraft.

The new facility, which will operate as the company's maintenance center in Abu Dhabi, aims to meet the growing demand for large cargo jets.

"Not only do we see the demand, but we view it as a greener, more profitable, highly innovative solution for our airline customers, and an excellent way to drive value for our business," Tony Douglas, chief executive of Etihad Aviation Group, said in a statement.

Demand for cargo plane conversions has been on the rise with the increase in ecommerce and the decline in value of used planes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

State-owned IAI currently converts 737, 747 and 767 passenger aircraft for cargo use. It has said it is currently developing a conversion method for the Boeing 777 and expects to finish the licensing process in 2023.

The deal comes a year after Israel and the United Arab Emirates agreed to normalize relations under the U.S.-sponsored Abraham Accords.

Over the past year, Israeli firms have forged a number of deals in the UAE.

In March, IAI said it would jointly develop an advanced drone defense system with the UAE's state-owned weapons maker EDGE.

WESTERN WALL PLAZA TO BE SPLIT INTO CAPSULES FOR SLICHOT (JPost 8/26/21)

The Western Wall plaza will be split into a number of capsules starting on Thursday in order to follow Health Ministry coronavirus guidelines, as thousands of worshippers plan to visit the site for the slichot prayers leading up to Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Worshippers are required to wear masks at the site and are asked to listen to instructions by ushers.

Up to 10,000 worshipers will be allowed into the plaza at a time, divided into the capsules. The Western Wall Heritage Foundation asked worshipers to arrive in the early evening and to come in the early days of the slichot period instead of just at the end, in order to avoid overcrowding and protect the health and safety of all visitors.

If overcrowding occurs, the entries to the Old City and the Western Wall will be closed. Visitors must listen to the instructions of Israel Police and should keep an eye on changes in the routes leading to the Western Wall.

All of the slichot services will be live streamed at www.thekotel.org.

DEAN OF TOP HAREDI YESHIVA: 'FOLLOW CORONAVIRUS GUIDELINES' (Arutz-7 8/25/21)

Rabbi Gershon Edelstein, a leading Lithuanian-haredi rabbi, has instructed his students to follow the government's coronavirus guidelines and do everything possible to avoid infections, Kikar Hashabbat reported.

In a Tuesday evening class for married yeshiva students, Rabbi Edelstein, who serves as one of the heads of the Ponovezh yeshiva in Bnei Brak, told his students to take the "fourth wave" of the coronavirus outbreak seriously.

"As is known, the coronavirus disease has once again spread in Israel, and this is a dangerous thing for health," Rabbi Edelstein said. "Therefore, we need to know that there is an absolute obligation to keep all of the the rules regarding precautions, to take every known means of being careful, and be sure not to become infected."

He added: "This is a disease that spread and spreads a lot, so I heard, and so it is known. This is an obligation to protect health, 'and you shall guard your lives carefully.' Protecting a person's health [since] a person needs to be healthy, because if he is not healthy, without health, none of G-d's service can be done properly. So we are obligated to be very careful about all of the known precautions that can help us be spared this sickness."

Earlier, it was reported that Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, another leading Lithuanian-haredi rabbi, met with coronavirus czar Professor Salman Zarka, to discuss the rise in infections.

During that meeting, Prof. Zarka asked Rabbi Kanievsky for his opinion on the issue of teachers and educators who have not yet received the vaccine, especially those who teach children who are too young to be vaccinated.

Rabbi Kanievsky responded that all teachers and educators have an obligation to get vaccinated, and said that in his opinion, school principals

must suspend all teachers and educators who have not received the vaccine.

DEFYING ALL ODDS, GAZA ROCKET FIRE SURVIVOR LEAVES HOSPITAL WITH A SMILE (YNet 8/26/21)

Despite doctors giving her just hours to live, a woman gravely hurt during Israel's latest war with Gaza terrorist factions was discharged from the hospital this week after making a miraculous recovery.

Yulia Zalotsky, 44, was given almost no chance of survival after a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip exploded near her and sent shrapnel flying in her direction.

On May 11, the second day of the 11-day conflict, Zalotsky — a single mother from Holon — was making her way to work when the Gaza-based terrorist group Hamas launched a volley of rockets into Israeli cities.

One of the projectiles crashed directly onto a bus, just feet away from where Zalotsky was standing. The powerful blast ejected a large chunk of shrapnel which lodged in her left thigh, causing her to lose massive amounts of blood.

Zalotsky was rushed in critical condition to Holon's Wolfson Medical Center and doctors had to amputate her left leg almost in its entirety.

After lying in a two-month coma — hanging between life and death — and 13 complex surgeries, Zalotsky opened her eyes three weeks ago.

on Wednesday, she was finally discharged from the hospital to continue her recovery at home.

"I did not believe I would ever be released from the hospital,"

"It's clear to me that I still have a long way to go, but I am full of hope. What keeps me going is the chance I have to someday walk on my own again with a prosthesis. I am strong and the will to continue living is what keeps me going."

Zalotsky's daughter, Suzana was thrilled to have her mother finally come home.

"The doctors did not think she would live at first, they told us these were her last hours," the 26-year-old said. "I did not believe she would live, and now she is finally smiling and happy."

"Now she has hope. She will be able to go and do whatever she wants and all thanks to the medical team here. If it were not for them, she would not have survived."

ISRAELI TRAVELERS FLOCKED TO EILAT IN JULY, SHUNNED JERUSALEM (JPost 8/25/21)

Israelis visited hotels in droves in July, enjoying the opportunity to travel locally despite COVID restrictions. That helped hotels offset some of the loss from the nearly complete stoppage of foreign visitors, according to data from the Israel Hotels Association.

The situation in hotels looked far different than it did in July 2019, in the summer before the pandemic began. This year, because tourism from abroad was extremely limited due to coronavirus restrictions, only 6% of visits were made by foreigners, compared to 94% by Israelis. Put differently, the number of stays by foreign tourists was down 85% from 2019, while visits by Israelis rose 19%.

The inconveniences of overseas travel due to coronavirus testing and quarantine requirements spurred many Israelis to forgo their vacations abroad in favor of domestic respites.

In total, some 2.1 million overnight stays were recorded in hotels during July, 17% less than were recorded in July 2019.

Eilat and the Dead Sea had the highest levels of hotel occupancy, at 87% and 71%, respectively. Jerusalem, usually one of the country's most popular destinations for travelers, had just a 36% occupancy rate during July, as the total number of hotel visitors dropped 54% from 2019 to 186,000.

The comparison between Jerusalem and Eilat is starker when considering that both cities have about 11,000 hotel rooms each, by far the most in Israel.

Tel Aviv has about 8,800 hotel rooms, and Tiberias and the surrounding towns around the Sea of Galilee have approximately 5,600. The Dead Sea has about 4,000 hotel rooms available.

The total number of visitors to Eilat, Tiberias and Dead Sea Hotels were

nearly even with July 2019 levels, while hotel stays were down 54% in Jerusalem and 37% in Tel Aviv.

The trend away from the big cities should not be surprising. A survey of Israelis' travel habits published Tuesday by Agoda.com found that 14% more people now said they value relaxing beach vacations than before the pandemic.

ISRAELI-ARAB SWIMMER WINS GOLD AT TOKYO PARALYMPICS (Arutz-7 8/25/21)

On the first day of the Paralympic Games in Tokyo, swimmer Iyad Shalabi became the first Israeli-Arab athlete to win a medal in the Olympics or Paralympics.

Shalabi, 34, won gold Tuesday in the 100-meter backstroke in the S1 division in a time of 2 minutes, 28 seconds. Paralympic sports have a wide range of classifications; S1 denotes severe activity limitations.

"My heart was pounding," Shalabi's father, Yusuf Shelby, told the Israeli media. "When he overtook his competitor, I cried. He was constantly training. Six years every day he trains. It's like a dream."

Shalabi was born deaf to a Muslim family in Shfar'am, in northern Israel. At age 12 he was paralyzed in an accident falling from a rooftop and lost the full use of his limbs.

He competed in the Beijing and London Paralympics but failed to medal. A 2017 short documentary "Swimming Against the Current," directed by Assel Abu Hjoul, documented Shalabi's path to the World Championships in Scotland. The documentary premiered at the 2017 Jerusalem Film Festival.

BENNETT'S PANDEMIC STRATEGY BEGINS TO BEAR FRUIT BUT THE END IS NOWHERE NEAR (Nadav Eyal, YNet 8/22/21)

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's dealing with the continued surge in coronavirus infections over the past weeks is very reminiscent of the Allies' strategy against Nazi Germany's submarine fleet during World War II.

In his book "Why the Allies Won," historian Richard Overly says the UK and the U.S.'s strategy consisted of a number of small maneuvers that eventually led to the change of the naval war's direction in their favor.

Alluding to Overly, Bennett told his ministers that "we are taking an array of different actions, some will work and others will not, but they will lead to a change."

Looking at the latest Health Ministry data, the premier can say that Israel's counteroffensive against the virus is starting to bear fruit.

During a cabinet meeting about ten days ago, no expert predicted that on August 21, the number of seriously ill will hover at only 650, that the infection rate will stabilize, the virus' reproduction rate (R) will continue to decline, along with the rate of hospitalizations among Israelis who had received the third vaccine booster shot.

So what happened? First of all, as we have learned over the past year and a half of living with the pandemic, we need to analyze this data with a dose of modesty.

If tomorrow morning Israel was to see a rapid deterioration of the infection rate, no one would be too surprised considering many people are still getting infected and uncertainty still rules over the government's decisions.

While the Health Ministry has yet to present any concrete data on the vaccine booster's efficacy, experts estimate that the third jab and the change in behavior for people over the age of 60, is contributing to a positive change in infection data among this age group.

Either way, Bennett is currently in a much better situation when it comes to coronavirus than was experts had predicted at the start of the fourth wave.

Even the most optimistic predictions put the number of infected and seriously ill at impossible rates by the end of August, which would have dealt a death blow to the health system.

But Bennett was unusually determined: give the booster shot time to take effect, increase hospitals' capacity for coronavirus patients and refrain from any major restrictions until serious cases reach 1,200.

Many would see the actions taken by the government so far as a gamble,

which is not true. The ministers relied on people getting their booster shots in high numbers, after explaining to the public that the third jab would not only prevent serious illness but also bring down infections.

The government also received assurances from the health system that they will be able to cope with the high number of COVID patients, they tightened the Green Pass rules and expanded rapid virus testing centers, knowing the restrictions put in place so far would cost the economy much less in the first two weeks of September when the economy will be shut down anyway due to the Jewish High Holidays.

The most critical issue now is testing. Last Thursday, 1,600 rapid test results returned positive. Most of those infected likely would have attended weddings or went with their kids to other social events. Locating these cases and sending them into quarantine prevents infections from rising and gives the economy some breathing room.

However, while the requirement for children under the age of 12 – who are not eligible for the vaccine – to get tested brings down morbidity, it still hurts businesses and leaves parents and business owners frustrated.

Bennett and his associates see the testing apparatus as a national safety net, whether he is right will be determined by the reality on the ground.

Despite all of this, Israel is still deep inside the fourth infection wave, with some 1,000 hospitalizations, 660 serious cases and 290 dead since the start of August.

We still do not know how effective the booster would be in the long run and health experts are still calling for tougher restrictions on public gatherings.

Despite the government's apparent positive outlook on the pandemic, this is not the end nor the beginning of the end – but the end of the beginning.

REELING FROM AFGHAN FIASCO, BIDEN WILL LIKELY TREAT BENNETT WITH KID GLOVES (Abraham Ben-Zvi, Israel Hayom 8/25/21)

On September 4, 1975, following intense negotiations led by President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Israel and Egypt signed the Sinai Interim Agreement. One of the principal stumbling blocks on the way to the agreement was Israel's concern that the administration wouldn't honor its commitment to set up an early warning station at Um Hashiba in the Sinai Peninsula manned by 200 American technicians (the station was aimed at providing Israel with up-to-date intelligence on any Egyptian violation of the agreement).

This was just a few months after the rushed American withdrawal from Saigon after a decade of military involvement in Vietnam. Even though Washington in the end honored its commitment to establish and man the early warning system in Sinai, one can not ignore the similarities between the withdrawal of the American superpower from Vietnam, which showed weakness and dealt a terminal blow to its standing and prestige, and its no-less embarrassing flight from Afghanistan under the presidency of Joe Biden. Afghanistan has raised questions about the reliability and determination of the American eagle to provide inspiration and security to allies dealing with radical challenges such as Iran. This in an age where within the American arena there is growing insulation and hesitancy to engage in conflict.

These doubts, which the Afghan tragedy has exposed with full force, serve as the backdrop to Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's first visit to Washington. From the point of view of the timing of his trip to the American capital, lady luck has shined on the prime minister. The shadow of the humiliating American withdrawal from Kabul will hover over the White House this week, even if it is not explicitly mentioned in talks between the two leaders. This cloud will force President Biden to make an extra effort to persuade Bennett that the special ties between Israel and the United States remain firm, and that no conclusions should be drawn from the Afghan arena when it comes to Iran.

In other words, Biden can be expected to claim that even if a return to the nuclear accords between the powers and Tehran is agreed on, this will not come at the expense of his Israeli partner or harm its security. The fact that Bennett, contrary to the approach adopted by his predecessor Benjamin Netanyahu toward the Obama-Biden administration, has adopted a policy

that is less pugilistic and contrarian regarding the Iranian nuclear issue, and that instead of an overt diplomatic and public campaign against the nuclear agreement currently being negotiated in Vienna, he has chosen to focus his efforts on maximal coordination with the administration and attaining military and diplomatic compensation – if an agreement is reached – may also contribute to a conciliatory and cordial atmosphere.

Thus, the orders to 'all the President's men' in their contacts with the prime minister over the next few days will be to deal with him with kid gloves when it comes to diplomatic and strategic affairs and to take into account the fragile nature of the current coalition. Moreover, while President Biden's relations with Netanyahu over the past decade were highly charged, Prime Minister Bennett, despite his fundamental political and diplomatic stance, comes with a clean slate for the president.

In addition, one of the aims of the visit will be a visible effort from Bennett to rehabilitate Israel's relations with the Democratic party after a decade in which it has put all its efforts in the support of the Republican camp while neglecting its traditional ties with the Democrats. Indeed, after the chill that characterized Jerusalem's ties with the Democrats and their leader Barack Obama, and after the golden age of ties between Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Republican President Donald Trump, Israel's new government is signaling that it intends to renew the broad bi-partisan partnership and that it desires to build bridges to Democratic fortresses, including those that over the past decade have become growingly opposed to Israeli policies.

With regard to the essence of the visit, in addition to the Iranian issue, which is likely to be the main element along with an American effort to calm Israel's fears and offer it compensation, one can assume that the overall regional arena, which is directly impacted by the United States withdrawal from the Middle East, will be discussed at length.

In this context as well, we can expect to see full coordination between Washington and Jerusalem. In the current era when the world's only superpower is abandoning the dimension of hard military power and physical presence as the foundation of its strategic operations, the importance of regional partnerships in the pro-Western camp as the only means to curb (with American assistance from over-the-horizon) the radical front that sprawls from Kabul to Damascus and Beirut is paramount.

The fact that with Biden's encouragement the strategic infrastructure has been laid for a new 'peripheral alliance' of this nature, with Israel, Egypt and Jordan (together with the partners in the Abraham Accords) at its core is therefore in line with the American desire to stabilize the region and strengthen the various elements of this braking bloc.

Thus, in view of Israel's centrality and proven equity in this critical bloc, we can expect the president, on Bennett's first trip to Washington, to employ promises and temptations, and, at the same time, to avoid exerting pressure on the prime minister, including on the Palestinian issue.

The only area of conflict that may arise and dampen somewhat the euphoria over the beginning of what is expected to be a beautiful friendship is with regard to the Chinese giant. With the after effects of the Phalcon spy plane crisis still firmly seared in collective memories in Beijing and Jerusalem, and with the Biden administration, as with the Trump administration before it, seeing China as its main diplomatic and strategic threat, one can assume that the administration will recommend to Bennett that he act with extreme caution before giving a green light to Chinese companies to continue with their takeover of data-rich transport and technology infrastructures.

For his part, Bennett can be expected to try and avert this bump in the road by adopting an approach straight out of the text book of Israel's first prime minister, David Ben Gurion – 'walking between the raindrops' while trying to find a balance between continued extensive trade and technology ties with Beijing without crossing Washington's red line. One can only hope that Bennett is not blinded by the generosity of his hosts or intoxicated by Uncle Sam's embrace.

Following the collapse in Afghanistan, it needs to be clear to Israel that gestures are not an adequate alternative to a reliable, robust and sober American policy – first and foremost on the Iranian issue.



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.

This week's Torah portion, Ki Savo, speaks to the nation of Israel of the blessings they would enjoy for their observance of the commandments and the curses they would endure for their failure. Chapter 28, verse 13 relates the following blessing: "You shall be only above and you shall not be below." The Kotzker Rebbe, of blessed memory, interprets the verse as follows: G-d created a ladder from which the souls of the upper world would descend to the world below into the bodies of human beings. As soon as the souls descend, the ladder from above is removed. From Heaven the call goes forth to the souls: "Return, return!!" The souls, heeding the call, desire to return, but alas, there is no ladder.

Three groups of souls emerge. One group, observing there is no ladder, gives up immediately in its quest to return Above. The second group is more tenacious and jumps Heavenward repeatedly in an attempt to go back to its roots Above. However, with time, it too succumbs to its earthly abode below, acclimating itself to its new environment. The third group remains determined to soar Heavenward and return to its place of origin. With every failure, it regroups with new vigor and strength. What distinguishes this group is that it continuously hears the Heavenly voice from Above, "Return, return!!" unabated. Eventually, the Lord Himself turns to this third group and lifts it above. As the Rabbis say, "One who comes to purify himself is Divinely assisted." Heavenly assistance is commensurate with the measure of the desire and sincerity we exhibit in our effort to return to our spiritual roots. G-d lifts, "with both hands," those whose will it is to meet the challenge and go forth. With assistance from Above, there is no limit to our capacity for growth and ultimate success. Ours is but to do and G-d will do the rest.

This, then, is the meaning of the blessing "You shall be only above and you shall not be below." Our aspirations should always be Heavenward, never complacent and acclimated to those values which are below.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

You shall take from the first of every product of the ground... (26, 2)

Not from all produce must one bring the first of its fruit... only from the shivas haminim (seven species). (Rashi)

The majority of the shivas haminim grow on trees. Shouldn't they be referred to as 'products of the tree' rather than 'products of the ground'?

Parsha Riddle

How many curses are there in Parshas Ki Savo?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How many times do we mention Hashem in Shema?

Answer: 18 (Brachos 28b)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *Parshas Ki Savo*, the Torah enumerates the terrible calamities that will befall the Jewish people if they do not hearken to the voice of Hashem, among which is exile from Eretz Yisrael (28:64): "Hashem will scatter you among all the peoples, from the end of the earth to the end of the earth ..."

The fate of exile is not just descriptive, but normative; our Sages teach that G-d adjured the Jewish people with several oaths to accept their exiled state (*Kesubos* 111a; *Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah* 2:7). There are various different accounts of exactly what these oaths were, but the oath most widely discussed in the later literature is the admonition "that the Jews should not ascend to Eretz Yisrael as a wall (*ke-chomah*)."¹ Rashi explains *ke-chomah* to mean "together, by force;" later authorities vary in their understanding of the scope of the prohibition.

R. Yitzchak de Leon, in explanation of the position of Rambam, who does not count the *mitzvah* of settling Eretz Yisrael among the six hundred and thirteen Biblical commandments, argues that the prohibition against ascending *be-chomah*, along with the related prohibition against rebelling against the nations of the world, suspend the applicability of the *mitzvah* until the coming of the Messiah (*Megillas Esther to Mitzvas Aseh* #4 of Ramban). He is not entirely clear as to whether he believes that the oaths apply even to peaceful *aliyah*, but if they do not, it is difficult to understand why they would render the *mitzvah* to settle Eretz Yisrael inapplicable until the coming of the Messiah.

R. Shmuel Yoffe Ashkenazi suggests that collective *aliyah* even with the consent of the world's governments is prohibited: "Since Hashem has scattered us to the corners of the world, we have no permission to gather together and to be like a wall to ascend together to Eretz Yisrael until Hashem will gather us via the Messiah" (*Yefeh Kol* p. 71a). R. Chaim Palagi, however, counters that insofar as the nations of the world allow collective *aliyah*, and it is a positive *mitzvah*, why should it matter that Hashem has scattered us to the four corners of the world? (*Shut. Nishmas Kol Chaim YD* #49)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am almost a hundred.
2. I am quiet.
3. I result from not listening.
4. I am not wanted.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I get tied.
2. I get brought up.
3. I am the first.
4. I am waved.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Shiluach Haken (Sending away the mother bird) (I am scary, I am not for foot, I am not empty nested, I am only for a mother.)

#2 Kilayim (Prohibited mixtures) (I am for plowing, I am for clothing, I am for planting, I am not for tzitzis.)

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