

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

December 24 - 25, 2021 - 21 Teves 5782 - Shemos

Light Candles by 4:32 - Havdalah 5:36

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by the Edeson & Stern Families on the Yahrzeit of Jacob S. Edeson, Yaakov Shlomo Ben Yosef Nosson, Z"L, beloved husband, father, grandfather & brother, on the 19th of Teves, and on the Yahrzeit of Elliott Salsbury, Eliyahu Ben Nachum, Z"L, brother of Esther Edeson, on the 27th of Teves, and anonymously in honor of Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum, Sharon Freundel, Lianne Heller, Rabbi Ari Koretzky and Rabbi Dr. Ivan Lerner for the beautiful and insightful program that they presented. If you did not have the opportunity to hear it, please go to YISE's website, <https://wp.yise.org/to-kindle-a-soul/> It may make you aware of important things in our lives and might even change the way you live your life.

Mazal Tov

- **Sheila Gaisin** on the recent birth of a great-grandson, Aharon, born to Shalva & Netanel Twersky. Mazal Tov to big brother Moshe and to the grandparents, Dr. Miriam & Rabbi Elchanan Adler. Mazal Tov to Uncle Jeremy, **Uncle Reuven & Aunt Shera** and the extended Gaisin family.
- **Sheila Gaisin** on the Bat Mitzvah of her granddaughter, Chanala Benschar, daughter of Meredith & Rabbi Tal Benschar. Mazal Tov to Uncle Jeremy, **Uncle Reuven & Aunt Shera** and the extended Gaisin family.
- **Arona & Rabbi Amram Hes** on the engagement of their son Chaim to Sora Bess, daughter of Reva & Rabbi Meir Shlomo Bess of Lakewood, New Jersey. Mazal Tov also to grandparents **Sara & Rabbi David Hyatt** and Debbie & Rabbi Ezra Hes.

Condolences

- **Mark Livingston** on the passing of his mother, Bette Livingston. Shiva is being observed through Monday morning at 714 South Belgrade Road. Shacharis Sunday: 8:00 AM, Monday: 6:45 AM. Mincha/Maariv Sunday: 4:35 PM. The family requests vaccinated visitors only and masks required.

Shabbos Schedule

Minyan locations are listed as B = Belonofsky Sanctuary, S = Social Hall, LBM = Large Beis Medrash, SBM = Small Beis Medrash.

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 4:32
- Mincha: 4:35 (B), 4:25 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM), 9:15 (Teen Minyan, SBM)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 4:30 (B), 4:25 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 5:36

Divrei Torah:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| • 8:45 Main Minyan | Rabbi Menachem Winter |
| • 9:15 | Rabbi Hillel Shaps |
| • Sephardi | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • Shiur after Mincha | Rabbi Rosenbaum |

Kiddush Sponsors:

- 8:45 Minyan Kiddush in a Bag is sponsored by the Edeson & Stern Families on the 3rd Yahrzeit of Jacob S. Edeson, Yaakov Shlomo Ben Yosef Nosson, Z"L, beloved husband, father, grandfather & brother, on the 19th of Teves, and on the Yahrzeit of Elliott Salsbury, Eliyahu Ben Nachum, Z"L, brother of Esther Edeson, on the 27th of Teves.

COVID-19 Updates

- The YISE Board has mandated that everyone 16 and older who is medically eligible for an FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccine must be **fully vaccinated for COVID-19 in order to enter the Shul building.**
 - **Masks are required for ALL people in the YISE Arcola building, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, except for children under the age of 2.**
 - 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.

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. Monday through Friday 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday 7:30 PM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Gemara Shiur for Men, Tuesdays and Fridays, 6:00 AM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, 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 information, 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**.
 - For Women - **Zoom I**
 - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Parsha Journeys
 - Tuesdays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Sefer Bereishis
- **SCP (Semichat Chaver Program)** - Tuesdays at 8:45 PM. A new semester began on October 19. Join the fastest growing Halacha learning program in the world! Now back in person at YISE. Register at gwckollel.org/scp
- **Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's** Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, Sunday through Friday, 6:35 AM - 7:20 AM, in the Franco Beit Midrash.
- **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiurim for men & women, Monday - Parasha, Tuesday - Halachos, 8:45 AM, **Zoom B**.
- **Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's** Shiur for Men and Women, Tuesdays, 1:30 PM, "A Second Look - Stories in the Torah from a Deeper Perspective", **Zoom E**.
- **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Bava Kama 7th Perek Merubah. Wednesday evenings, 8:00 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 ygwazr
Zoom H: ID: 803 356 4156, password Learn
Zoom I: ID: 601 853 4021, password Winter

YISE Youth Announcements

YISE Youth wants to express our deep gratitude to Mrs. Michal Merkin for her service to our Shul as Shabbos Groups Coordinator during a particularly critical time for our Shul: before and during Covid. Thank you so much, Michal. As Michal has recently chosen to retire, we would like to introduce Ms. Talya Miller as our new Shabbos Groups Coordinator. Talya is an experienced educator who works for Sulam. Talya grew up in our Shul and has worked extensively with our Shabbos Groups over many years. Welcome, Talya!

Shabbos Groups this Shabbos, December 25, from 10:00 AM until Shul ends. Masks required indoors for age 2+. Age 18-36 months (Mommy & me) in the toddler room off the Lower Lobby. Ages 2-5 years (drop off) in the room behind the balcony. Ages 6-9 years will meet at Shomrai and walk over to the Yeshiva. For more info., contact Talya Miller, YISE Youth groups coordinator, at tmiller@yise.org

Dor L'Dor - The Family Chevrusah-style Learning in a fun environment! Next session will take place Motzei Shabbos, January 8, 7:00 PM in the Social Hall. Please email mshimoff@yise.org if you would like to sponsor. *See flyer for details.*

Bat Mitzvah Program for 6th Grade Girls - First event: Paint your own candlesticks. Motzei Shabbos, December 25, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM in the Social Hall. *See flyer for details.*

YISE Programs and Listings

Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura - A weekly Chabura in the Nesivos Shalom on the Parsha. Delve into the deeper dimensions of the Parsha and Holidays by learning the Nesivos Shalom's weekly insights. Begins at 8:55 AM Shabbos mornings in the Social Hall. This Shabbos, December 25, the Shiur will be given by Rabbi Moshe Holzer. *See flyer for details.*

Ask the Rabbi: Lashon Hara - NEW DATE - Tuesday, December 28, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM on **Zoom A**. Send in your questions about Lashon Hara to AskTheRabbi@yise.org by Sunday, December 26. For more information and to submit questions by phone or anonymously, contact Miriam Friedman at 301-754-1517 or mfriedman2@yahoo.com *See flyer for details.*

Kashrus in the Kitchen - Learn the background and practical laws of Kashrus. Tuesdays, 8:15 PM - 9:00 PM, at the home of David & Tamara Goodman: 11611 Kemp Mill Road. Masks optional. Given by Rabbi Postelnek. For questions or to join the WhatsApp group, contact Rabbi Postelnek at 571-340-0227 or rypostelnek@yise.org Recordings available at <https://wp.yise.org/kashrus-kitchen>

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, January 3, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on **Zoom A**. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at mfriedman2@yahoo.com

Book Repair 101 with Roberta Redfern - Repair your Sefarim and other treasured books. Presented by YISE Youth for teens and adults. Sunday, January 9, 2:00 PM in the Social Hall. \$10 per person. RSVP to dkatz@yise.org by January 4. *See flyer for details.*

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 Minyan. To sponsor the Kiddush in a Bag, contact Simi Franco at simi@yise.org

Volunteers Are Needed Weekly to help assemble Kiddush in a Bag. If you can help please contact Simi Franco at simi@yise.org or 301-593-4465 x403.

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>

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 the Shiurim sponsors for this Past Week:

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

- **The Edeson & Stern Families** on the 3rd Yahrzeit of Jacob S. Edeson, Yaakov Shlomo Ben Yosef Nosson, Z"L, beloved husband, father, grandfather & brother, on the 19th of Teves, and on the Yahrzeit of Elliott Salisbury, Eliyahu Ben Nachum, Z"L, brother of Esther Edeson, on the 27th of Teves.

8:45 Minyan Drasha

- **Simi & Sammy Franco** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Jacob S. Edeson, Yaakov Shlomo Ben Yosef Nosson, Z"L.

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.

Community Programs & Listings

Throwing the Dice - Is one allowed to play games of chance? Fantasy football, March madness, lottery tickets, charity auctions, bingo, casino games... Federal Holiday Learning Program with Kollel Zichron Amram. Sunday, December 26 at YGW Boys Campus and on Zoom: Meeting ID: 892 627 5592, passcode 1216613. Davening 8:00 AM, breakfast 9:00 AM, Chevrusa learning 9:30 AM, Shiur with Rabbi Moshe Walter, 10:40 AM - 11:20 AM. For questions, contact Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate at mblate@yeshiva.edu or 240-858-2041.

The Creation Code - How the Holy Hebrew Language, Lashon Hakodesh, contains secrets that define reality itself. Wednesday, December 29 and Wednesday, January 5, 8:00 PM on **Zoom F**. Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps. More info. and registration at <https://linksgw.org/classes>

The Capital Closet of Yad Yehuda (formerly the Clothing Exchange) will be open to the community this Sunday, December 26, from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM, at 1910 University Blvd. West. Come peruse our beautiful, curated selection of winter clothing for men, women and children. Masks are required in the Capital Closet. If you prefer to schedule a private shopping appointment, please email Naomi Carmel at ncarmel@yadyehuda.org. There is no charge for items in The Capital Closet, but donations to Yad Yehuda are always appreciated.

Women's Online Shiur with Rabbi Yehoshua Levy - Free 1-hour shiur on Zoom on the first and third Sundays of each month at 7:15 PM. Topic: Eishet Hayil, with principles from Mesilat Yesharim and weekly Sidra. In English. All levels of ability are welcome. You needn't attend every Shiur, but RSVPs are requested. Contact Shiur Coordinator at womensshiur@gmail.com for details.

YGW Kollel Zichron Amram Machshava - Probing Jewish Thought Through the Works of Rav Yitzchak Hutner, ZT"L, with Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold, Rosh Kollel, Sundays at 8:00 PM on Zoom, Meeting ID: 825 0731 6850, Passcode: 1216613. For more information, contact Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate at 404-273-3392.

Dirshu - Please join Dirshu as it began Bava Metzia on December 20. Shiur options at YGW: Monday - Friday, 5:45 AM (R. Reingold) or Monday - Thursday, 9:00 PM - 10:00 PM (R. Cortell/R. Werner). About 2.5 Daf covered each week.

Join the Mikvah Emonah Society - MES asks for assistance twice a year - once through an event, and then through membership fees. Membership, only \$30 per month, includes user fees and provides educational opportunities, but most importantly keeps our community strong and thriving. The MES urges all who live in our community to join by becoming a member. Visit <http://www.mikvahemunah.com/membership> to show your support.

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, January 5, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator. Contact Manasseh Katz at secretary@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671

Learning Tanach in Memory of Avi West, Z"L - Please join a Siyum Tanach for our friend and mentor, to be completed by his Yahrzeit, August 22, 2022, 25 Av, 5782. Learning from Chumash has been subscribed. There are a number of sections remaining in Neviim and Kesuvim. Sign up for as many as you wish and please share this info. with others who may be interested in joining this learning. Sign up at <http://hadranalach.com/2090>

Save the Date! Nach Yomi Siyum - Sunday, January 16, hosted by SEHC and WSAT. Many women in the local area are poised to complete the OU Women's Initiative Torat Imecha Nach Yomi cycle. This first-time event is a culmination of an intensive two-year, daily, chapter-by-chapter, learning program of all Nevi'im and Ketuvim. The OU Women's Initiative will be celebrating a Siyum in New York. We are excited to be hosting a local Siyum at SEHC, in White Oak, starting at 11:30 AM, with a Zoom option. The celebration will continue with a livestream of the New York event at 1:00 PM. This event is open to all women and girls of the Greater Washington & Silver Spring communities. Light lunch provided.

Parsha Explorations with Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman - Presented by the Greater Washington Community Kollel and Kemp Mill Synagogue, Sunday evenings, 7:30 PM at KMS and on Zoom, Meeting ID: 655 813 1022, Passcode: 365636. For men and women.

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

Navigating the Dating Experience - The Shidduch Spot of Greater Washington presents a series of talks to enhance the dating journey, featuring Rachel Burnham, Shidduch Dating Coach for Marriage-Minded Singles. Wednesday, January 5, 8:30 PM on Zoom, Meeting ID: 776 143 4208, password 613613.

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 info.

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. Go to <https://getizun.org> or email us at barbara@getizun.org

Daf Yomi Shiur currently meets online weekdays 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. Shabbos in-person at 7:30 AM in the YISE Social Hall.

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

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

The Week Ahead		Sunday December 26	Monday December 27	Tuesday December 28	Wednesday December 29	Thursday December 30	Friday, December 31 New Year's Day Observed
Shacharis	Ashkenazi (S, B, B)	6:30, 7:30, 8:45	6:15, 6:45, 8:45	6:15, 6:55, 8:45	6:15, 6:55, 8:45	6:15, 6:45, 8:45	6:30, 7:30, 8:45
	Sephardi (LBM)	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
Mincha / Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)	4:40	4:40 / 7:30	4:40 / 7:30	4:40 / 7:30	4:40 / 7:30	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi (LBM)	4:30	4:30	4:30	4:30	4:30	
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 6:01 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 6:30 AM, Latest Netz: 7:28 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:47 AM, Earliest Mincha: 12:42 PM, Earliest Shkia: 4:52 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim: 5:41 PM							

Next Shabbos

December 31, 2021 - January 1, 2022 - 28 Teves 5782
Parshas Vaera

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 4:37
- Mincha: 4:40 (B), 4:30 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 4:35 (B), 4:30 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 5:41

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, December 29 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 - Closed

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Yale Ginsburg - President

Rabbi Yosef Postelnek - Asst. Rabbi

Simi Franco - Office

A Quick Thought on the Parsha from Rabbi Postelnek

Shemos 5782:

Seeing with One's Heart

Video available at <https://wp.yise.org/shabbos>

We are told Moshe Rabeinu was chosen to lead the Jewish people because of his great sensitivity, open heart and ability to feel others' pain. As he grows up in Pharaoh's palace, Moshe finds himself outside watching his fellow Jews hard at work. The Pasuk (Shemos 2:11) describes: "וַיֵּרָא, בְּסִבְלָתָם – he saw their burdens." Rashi, citing the Medrash, writes: "נתן עיניו ולבו – he focused his eyes and his heart to be distressed over them." At its most basic level, the phrase "וירא – he saw" means that Moshe Rabeinu saw and witnessed their suffering. But in actuality, he didn't just *see* their suffering, he was *moved* and distressed by the Jewish nation's miserable experience. What his eyes saw, his heart felt.

Interestingly, the Hebrew word "to see" (ראה) appears in an episode earlier in Moshe's life. When his mother, Yocheved, was no longer able to protect Moshe by hiding him at home, she placed him in a basket into the Nile. As Moshe floats through the river and reeds, the daughter of Pharaoh is the first to find him. "וַתִּפְתַּח וַתֵּרְאֶהוּ אֶת-הַיֶּלֶד, וְהִנֵּה-נֶעַר בֶּכֶה וַתַּחֲמַל עָלָיו - she opened [the basket] and saw the child, and he was crying, and she had compassion on him." Seemingly, a more appropriate phrase could have been "she saw him and *heard* his crying", yet the Torah seems to emphasize וַתֵּרְאֶהוּ – she *saw*.

Rabbi Mordechai Ilan (a Dayan in Tel Aviv in the 1900s) suggests Bas Pharaoh heard something more than the cries of a child. Through his sobs, she saw the grief of a mother leaving her child and the suffering of an enslaved nation. It's certainly no surprise that the Gemara (Sota 13b) teaches us she converted to Judaism. Similar to Moshe Rabeinu, Bas Pharaoh opened her eyes and her heart to the pain of others.

We may not be leaders of an entire Jewish nation or daughters drawing babies out of water, but we all have that same potential to look at the world with eyes that discern and hearts that feel. Hashem should help us open our eyes and hearts to see others' needs, sense their pain, and to know when and how to help.

Have an amazing Shabbos!

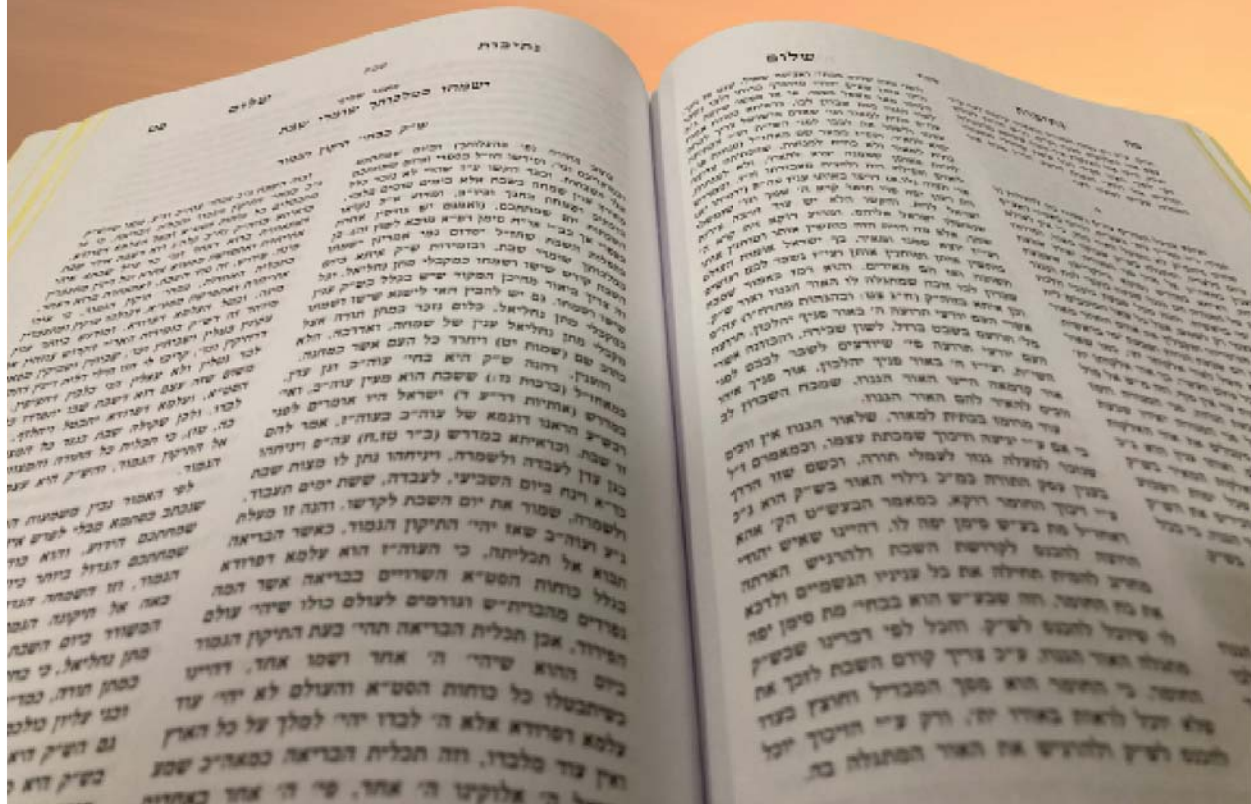
סור מרע

ועשה טוב

Pre-9:15 Minyan Chaburah Nesivos Shalom on the Parsha 8:55am Shabbos Mornings in the Social Hall

Given by Rabbi Postelnek
& Rabbi Rosenbaum

ואתער ותא דל עילא





YISE YOUTH PRESENTS

Bat Mitzvah Program

For 6th Grade Girls

\$10 per event or \$36 for the year

First Event: December 25, 2021

7:00 - 9:00 pm | YISE Social Hall

RSVP by 12/20 to

batmitzvahprogram@yise.org

PAINT YOUR OWN GLASS CANDLESTICKS!

Mrs. Atara Rosenbaum will lead a discussion about Sarah Emainu, and the importance of candle lighting in Jewish history.

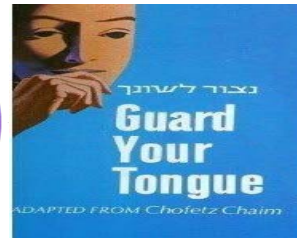
REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED TO
TAKE HOME.

Masks are required in accordance with
Montgomery County policy

ASK the RABBI

Come join our virtual, monthly interactive program featuring different Halachic topics!

Topic: **Loshon Hara**



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

- *If someone asks for a reference about a lazy employee I worked with, how should I respond?*
- *Can I talk about someone if the information about this person is in the paper or on social media?*
- *May I call and volunteer my opinion about a shidduch even if no one asks for it?*

Send in your questions about Loshon Hara to: AskTheRabbi@yise.org by Sunday, December 26.

When: Tuesday, December 28, 8:00 PM – 9:00 PM

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

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

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

To sponsor the program, please contact the YISE office.

NEW SHIUR
with YISE Young Professionals

KASHRUS IN THE KITCHEN

BY RABBI POSTELNEK

**TUESDAYS
8:15-9:00PM**

At the home of
David & Tamara Goodman
11611 Kemp Mill Rd
Masks Optional

**FOR QUESTIONS OR
TO JOIN THE WHATSAPP GROUP
MESSAGE RABBI POSTELNEK - 571 340 0227**



DOR L'DOR

At Young Israel Shomrai Emunah!

A Family Chevrusah-style Learning in a fun environment

Delicious Pizza!

Interactive Discussions!

Raffle of Exciting Prizes!

Due to COVID concerns, while learning and discussion will be in person, the pizza will be taken to-go.

It is YISE policy that everyone 16 and older who is medically eligible for an FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccine must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 in order to enter the Shul building.

Furthermore, we ask that everyone wear a mask.

5782 Motzei Shabbos Times:

November 20 — 7:00 pm

December 4 — 7:15 pm

December 18 — 7:00 pm

January 8 — 7:00 pm

January 29 — 7:15 pm

February 12 — 7:30 pm

February 26 — 7:45pm

YISE Arcola Social Hall

To sponsor this program, please
contact Michael Shimoff at
mshimoff@yise.org



YISE YOUTH PRESENTS

BOOK REPAIR 101

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Shabbat Parashat Shemot

Shabbat Shalom

5782 - B"H

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

On Not Obeying Immoral Orders: The opening chapters of Exodus plunge us into the midst of epic events. Almost at a stroke the Israelites are transformed from protected minority to slaves. Moses passes from prince of Egypt to Midianite shepherd to leader of the Israelites through a history-changing encounter at the Burning Bush. Yet it is one small, often overlooked episode that deserves to be seen as a turning-point in the history of humanity. Its heroines are two remarkable women, Shifra and Puah.

We do not know who they were. The Torah gives us no further information about them other than that they were midwives, instructed by Pharaoh: 'When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live'. The Hebrew description of the two women as *hameyaldot ha'ivriyot* is ambiguous. It could mean "the Hebrew midwives"; so most translations and commentaries read it. But it could equally mean, "the midwives to the Hebrews," in which case they may have been Egyptian. That is how Josephus, Abarbanel and Samuel David Luzzatto understand it, arguing that it is simply implausible to suppose that Hebrew women would have been party to an act of genocide against their own people.

What we do know, however, is that they refused to carry out the order: "The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the King of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live".

This is the first recorded instance in history of civil disobedience: refusing to obey an order, given by the most powerful man in the most powerful empire of the ancient world, simply because it was immoral, unethical, inhuman.

The Torah suggests that they did so without fuss or drama. Summoned by Pharaoh to explain their behaviour, they simply replied: "Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive". To this, Pharaoh had no reply. The matter-of-factness of the entire incident reminds us of one of the most salient findings about the courage of those who saved Jewish lives during the Holocaust. They had little in common except for the fact that they saw nothing remarkable in what they did. Often the mark of real moral heroes is that they do not see themselves as moral heroes. They do what they do because that is what a human being is supposed to do. That is probably the meaning of the statement that they "feared God." It is the Torah's generic description of those who have a moral sense.

It took more than three thousand years for what the midwives did to become enshrined in international law. In 1946, the Nazi war criminals on trial at Nuremberg all offered the defence that they were merely obeying orders, given by a duly constituted and democratically elected government. Under the doctrine of national sovereignty every government has the right to issue its own laws and order its own affairs. It took a new legal concept, namely a 'crime against humanity', to establish the guilt of the architects and administrators of genocide.

The Nuremberg principle gave legal substance to what the midwives instinctively understood: that there are some orders that should not be obeyed, because they are immoral. Moral law transcends and may override the law of the state. As the Talmud puts

it: "If there is a conflict between the words of the Master [God] and the words of a disciple [a human being], the words of the Master must prevail".

The Nuremberg trials were not the first occasion on which the story of the midwives had a significant impact on history. Throughout the Middle Ages the Church, knowing that knowledge is power and therefore preferring to keep it exclusively in the hands of the priesthood, had forbidden vernacular translations of the Bible. In the course of the sixteenth century, three developments changed this irrevocably. First was the Reformation, with its maxim *Sola scriptura*, "By Scripture alone," placing the Bible centre-stage in the religious life.

Second was the invention, in the mid-fifteenth century, of printing. Lutherans were convinced that this was Divine Providence. God had sent the printing press so that the doctrines of the Reformed church could be spread worldwide.

Third was the fact that some people, regardless of the ban, had translated the Bible anyway. John Wycliffe and his followers had done so in the fourteenth century, but the most influential rebel was William Tyndale whose translation of the New Testament, begun in 1525, became the first printed Bible in English. He paid for this with his life.

When Queen Mary I took the Church of England back to Catholicism, many English Protestants fled to Calvin's Geneva, where they produced a new translation, based on Tyndale, called the Geneva Bible. Produced in a small, affordable edition, it was smuggled into England in large numbers. Able to read the Bible by themselves for the first time, people soon discovered that it was, as far as monarchy is concerned, a highly seditious document.

It tells of how God told Samuel that in seeking to appoint a King, the Israelites were rejecting Him as their only Sovereign. It describes graphically how the Prophets were unafraid to challenge Kings, which they did with the authority of God Himself. And it told the story of the midwives who refused to carry out Pharaoh's order. On this, in a marginal note, the Geneva Bible endorses their refusal, criticising only the fact that, in explaining their behaviour, they told a lie. The note says, "Their disobedience herein was lawful, but their dissembling evil."

King James understood clearly the dire implication of that one sentence. It meant that a King could be disobeyed on the authority of God Himself: a clear and categorical refutation of the idea of the Divine right of Kings. Eventually, unable to stop the spread of Bibles in translation, King James decided to commission his own version which appeared in 1611. But by then the damage had been done and the seeds of what became the English revolution had been planted. Throughout the seventeenth century, by far the most influential force in English politics was the Hebrew Bible as understood by the Puritans, and it was the Pilgrim Fathers who took this faith with them on their journey to what would eventually become the United States of America.

A century and a half later, it was the work of another English radical, Thomas Paine, that made a decisive impact on the American revolution. His pamphlet, *Common Sense*, was published in America in January 1776 and became an instant best seller, selling 100,000 copies almost immediately. Its impact was huge, and because of it he became known as "the father of the American Revolution."

Despite the fact that Paine was an atheist, the opening pages of *Common Sense*, justifying rebellion against a tyrannical King, are entirely based on citations from the Hebrew Bible. In the same spirit, that summer Benjamin Franklin drew, as his design for the Great Seal of America, a picture of the Egyptians (i.e. the English) drowning in the Red Sea (i.e. the Atlantic), with the caption, "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." Thomas Jefferson was so struck by the sentence that he recommended it to be used on the Great Seal of Virginia, and later incorporated it in his personal seal.

The story of the midwives belongs to a larger vision implicit throughout the Torah and Tanach as a whole: that right is sovereign over might, and that even God Himself can be called to account in the name of justice, as He expressly mandates Abraham to do. Sovereignty ultimately belongs to God, so any human act or order that transgresses the will of God is by that fact alone *ultra vires*. These revolutionary ideas are intrinsic to the biblical vision of politics and the use of power.

In the end, though, it was the courage of two remarkable women that created the precedent later taken up by the American writer Thoreau in his classic essay *Civil Disobedience* (1849) that in turn inspired Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. in the twentieth century. Their story also ends with a lovely touch. The text says: "So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. And because the midwives feared God, He gave them houses".

Luzzatto interpreted this last phrase to mean that He gave them families of their own. Often, he wrote, midwives are women who are unable to have children. In this case, God blessed Shifra and Puah by giving them children, as he had done for Sarah, Rebecca and Rachel.

This too is a not unimportant point. The closest Greek literature comes to the idea of civil disobedience is the story of Antigone who insisted on giving her brother Polynices a burial despite the fact that King Creon had refused to permit it, regarding him as a traitor to Thebes. Sophocles' *Antigone* is a tragedy: the heroine must die because of her loyalty to her brother and her disobedience to the King. By contrast, the Hebrew Bible is not a tragedy. In fact biblical Hebrew has no word meaning "tragedy" in the Greek sense. Good is rewarded, not punished, because the universe, God's work of art, is a world in which moral behaviour is blessed and evil, briefly in the ascendant, is ultimately defeated. Shifra and Puah are two of the great heroines of world literature, the first to teach humanity the moral limits of power.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"And Pharaoh commanded his entire nation saying, every male baby born must be thrown into the Nile, while every female baby shall be allowed to live." In decreeing the destruction of the Israelites in Egypt, why does Pharaoh distinguish between the genders? Apparently afraid to keep the Israelite men alive lest they wage a rebellion against him, Pharaoh is confident that the Israelite women will not pose a threat, as they will presumably marry Egyptian men and assimilate into Egyptian society.

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This strategy underscores Pharaoh's ignorance – or denial – of the pivotal role women play in the development of a nation, and stands in stark contrast to the perspective of our Sages [Midrash Yalkut Shimoni], who declare that it was “in the merit of the righteous Israelite women that the Jewish People were redeemed from Egypt”.

The Talmud teaches, “I always call my wife ‘my home,’ since the real bulwark of the home is the woman of the house. As the Jewish nation emerged from a family, and family units are the bedrock of every society, it is clearly the women who are of supreme importance.

Pharaoh was blind to this. Apparently, he had no tradition of matriarchs such as Sarah and Rebecca, who directed the destiny of a national mission. For him, women were the weaker gender who were there to be used and taken advantage of. This is why Pharaoh attempts to utilize the Hebrew midwives to do his dirty work of actually murdering the male babies on the birth stools. To his surprise, the women rebelled: “And the midwives feared the Lord, so they did not do what the king of Egypt told them to do; they kept the male babies alive”.

Taking it one step further, the Talmud identifies the Israelite midwives as Yocheved (the mother of Moses and Aaron) and Miriam, their sister. The Midrash continues that Amram, their husband and father was the head of the Israelite court. Upon learning of Pharaoh's decree to destroy all male babies, he ruled that Israelite couples divorce, in order to cease reproduction. After all, why should people continue normal married life, only to have their baby sons killed? Miriam chides her father: “Your decree is harsher than that of Pharaoh! He made a decree only against male babies, but you are making a decree against female babies, as well.” Amram, persuaded by his daughter's rebuke, remarries Yocheved, who conceives and gives birth to Moses, savior of Israel from Egyptian bondage.

Miriam is actually following in a fine family tradition of fortitude and optimism. Her grandmothers, the mothers of Amram and Yocheved, gave birth to children during the bleakest days of oppression. Despite the slavery and carnage all around, one mother gives her son the name Amram, which means “exalted nation”; the other mother gives her daughter the name Yocheved, which means “glory to God.” Such was their confidence in the potential of the Jewish People and their faith in the Source of their people's greatness.

These two women were able to look beyond the dreadful state to which the Israelites had fallen in Egypt; their sights were held high, upon the stars of the heavens which God promised Abraham would symbolize his progeny and the Covenant of the Pieces which guaranteed the Hebrews a glorious future in the Land of Israel. These two proud grandmothers from the tribe of Levi merited grandchildren such as Moses, Aaron and Miriam.

Pharaoh begins to learn his lesson when Moses asks for a three-day journey in the desert; Pharaoh wants to know who will go. Moses insists: “Our youth and our old people will go, our sons and our daughters will go – our entire households will go, our women as well as our men”. A wiser Pharaoh will now only allow the men to leave; he now understands that he has most to fear from the women!

And so it is no wonder that Passover, the festival of our freedom, is celebrated in the Torah with “a lamb for each house,” with the women included in the paschal sacrificial meal by name no less than the men. In our time, we find this idea expressed in the observances of the Passover Seder (the drinking of the four cups of wine, the eating of matza, and the telling of the story of the exodus, etc.), which are binding on women no less than men.

A post-script - One of my strongest childhood memories take place at a Seder at the home of my maternal grandparents. The entire family comprised well over fifty participants. My grandfather led the entire gathering in the reading of the Haggadah word for word; when anyone had a question about any of the passages, he or she was encouraged to ask. My grandfather would then always defer to my grandmother to give the answer, because he greatly respected the fact that she had learned Talmud with her father, the Dayan Rav Shlomo Kowalsky. During the Seder, when my grandmother would go into the kitchen to check on the food, my grandfather would stop the Haggadah reading until my grandmother re-joined us and only then would the Seder continue.

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersch Weinreb **Imagining Redemption** - Jewish people will begin our rapid and inexorable march toward Passover this week.

For it is on this Shabbat that we begin the book of Shemot, the story of the Exodus. And henceforth, for many weeks, every weekly Torah portion deals, in a dazzling variety of ways, with the drama of our servitude and our redemption, with the heroes of the Exodus and with its villains. Each parsha provides us with an opportunity to prepare ourselves, intellectually and spiritually, for the wonderful holiday which lies ahead.

Somehow, more than any other Jewish holiday, we tend to speak of “preparing” for Passover. These preparations entail a variety of activities. Cleaning the house, for example, and making sure that none of the foods forbidden on Pesach, even in minute quantities, are to be found. This certainly is an onerous chore. Purchasing the provisions for quite a few festive meals is an expensive and time-consuming task. Another important task is assuring that there are sufficient quantities of the ritual foods such as matzah and maror, the ingredients for charoset, and sufficient wine for the entire household. And a proper Seder table requires appropriate decorations, which include tablecloths, silverware, candlesticks, goblets, and often floral arrangements and embroidered pillowcases and matzoh coverlets.

The more scholarly among us will spend significant time intellectually preparing for the festival. The Talmud tells us that the proper length of time necessary to review the laws and customs of Passover is thirty days, beginning on Purim and extending throughout the entire Passover holiday. Preparation must also involve at least a perusal of several haggadot, if not careful study of at least some of one's personal favorite haggadot.

But I have often thought that we are called upon for an extremely unique and quite challenging preparation which is often overlooked. I refer to the passage in the haggadah which reads: In each and every generation, a person is obligated to see himself, lirot et atzmo, as if he personally left Egypt, as it is written, “And you shall explain to your son on that day, ‘It is because of what the Lord did for me when I went free from Egypt.’”.

Note the underlined phrase: “for me when I went free.” We are called upon to visualize ourselves as having experienced the Exodus in all of its detail. How many of us are capable of such a feat?

For me, this is the greatest challenge of the entire Passover experience: imagining myself, picturing myself, as a helpless slave and then reliving the frustration of the initial phases of the redemption process; personally witnessing a series of wondrous miracles; living through the original Passover experience, safely protected in our slave quarters while, hurriedly and almost surreptitiously, gulping down that first Passover festive meal.

And feeling, in the depths of my bones, the burst of sudden freedom, casting aside bonds and chains, and marching as a free man into an unknown wilderness.

Likutei Divrei Torah

Is this not an almost impossible task? Can I possibly relive the powerful emotions that my ancestors felt millennia ago? How am I to “see myself as if I personally left Egypt”?

I suggest a careful reading of all the Torah portions that we will be encountering, beginning this Shabbat and continuing for the next many weeks. My plan is to devote my columns for each of those weeks to a suggestion or two which might prove helpful in achieving this goal of creatively reimagining the entire experience as if we were there.

Let us begin our adventure with a teaching of the great commentator, Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, Ramban, or Nachmanides. He provides a brief introduction to the entire Chumash Shemot, commonly called the Book of Exodus. But the very point of his introduction is to reject the common title of this second book of the Bible. Instead, he insists that the book be known as the “Book of Redemption,” Sefer HaGeulah. Why is he so insistent on his choice of this unusual title for this sacred and multi-themed book? And what does geulah, redemption, even mean?

Ramban considers the second book of the Torah to be the sequel to the first book, Genesis. For Ramban, Genesis is primarily a book about the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is less a book about the creation of the universe than it is a book about the creation of the people of Israel. Its theme is “the status of our forefathers,” by which he means the ethical and moral stature of our first ancestors.

With the descent of our people into Egypt, exile, and slavery, there is a loss of “the status of our forefathers,” a diminution of their ethical and moral stature. Redemption is the process by which we regain that status, that ethical and moral stature. Redemption is not the Exodus from Egyptian bondage. Rather, it involves the revelation at Sinai, the construction of the Tabernacle, and, ideally and ultimately, the return to the Land of Israel. Redemption is the reclaiming of the ethical and moral stature of our patriarchs.

Following this approach, the requirement of “seeing ourselves as if we personally left Egypt” is less about imagining ourselves as slaves, or even imagining ourselves as marching out of Egypt as free men. Instead, it is about the implications of freedom for our reclamation of the ethical and moral stature of our forefathers.

Ramban offers us a profound insight: a slave, a person in bondage, is not free to act ethically and morally. This is certainly true of a person who is literally enslaved. But it is also true of one whose choices in life are dictated by political propaganda, cultural influence, pressures to conform blindly, and other forces with which we are all very familiar.

Ramban's concept of “the status of our forefathers” is explained beautifully in the commentary of Rabbi Naftali Tzvi Yehudah Berlin, the Netziv. For him, the defining quality of our Patriarchs was the characteristic of yashrut, which he defines as an ethic that transcends piety and saintliness and extends to the ability to relate to people very different from oneself, working together with others in a harmonious and constructive fashion.

We now know of one way that we can “see ourselves as if we have left Egypt.” To do so, we must each come to grips with what it means for us to experience redemption. Following Ramban and Netziv, our charge is to reclaim what the former calls the “status of our forefathers” and what the latter terms the ability to act yashar. We must improve our ethical conduct, our interpersonal relationships, by cooperating with others in our surroundings and especially with those who are different from us. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were yesharim, and it is by emulating their “status” that we “leave Egypt,” depart bondage, and experience redemption.

Our *Parashah* opens, "And these are the names of *Bnei Yisrael* who are coming to Egypt; with Yaakov, each man and his household came." *Midrash Rabbah* comments: Thus it is written (*Mishlei* 13:24), "He who loves [his child] disciplines him in his youth." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

What does one verse have to do with the other? R' Eliezer Dan Ralbag z"l (1832-1895; Yerushalayim) answers: The *Midrash* is bothered by the verse referring first to "*Bnei Yisrael*" and then to "Yaakov." After all, they were first the sons of Yaakov, and only later, the nation of *Bnei Yisrael*!

To this, the *Midrash* answers: "He who loves his child disciplines him in his youth." R' Ralbag explains: *Hashem* brings *Yissurin* / suffering upon the Jewish People to atone for our sins so we may merit *Olam Ha'ba*, and also so we may merit to receive *Eretz Yisrael* and the Torah. This is why our ancestors had to go down to Egypt in the nation's youth. In contrast, Esav, who did not go down to Egypt, did not receive *Eretz Yisrael*, though he too was a descendant of Avraham and Yitzchak.

R' Ralbag concludes that the *Midrash* is teaching us to read the verse as follows: "And these are the names of *Bnei Yisrael*." Why do I refer to them as *Bnei Yisrael*, the name that alludes to the nation that received *Eretz Yisrael*? Because, they "are coming to Egypt" as a young nation to undergo *Yissurin*. That is now ("are coming"--present tense). In contrast, when they left home ("with Yaakov, each . . . came"--past tense), they did not yet have the merit of the exile, so they were only the family of the individual, "Yaakov." (*Damesek Eliezer*)

Bitachon

This year--a *Shemittah* year--we will iy"H devote this space to discussing the related subject of *Bitachon* / placing one's trust in *Hashem*.

In previous issues, we learned what *Bitachon* means according to R' Avraham ben Ha'Rambam z"l (son of Maimonides; Egypt; 1186-1237): A person with *Bitachon* engages in natural means to obtain his needs, achieve his goals, and avoid harm, never relying on miracles, but always remembering that his success or failure is determined by *Hashem*. He prays to *Hashem* before each endeavor and thanks Him for his success afterward, never attributing success or failure to his own effort or lack of effort--unless he did not make a reasonable effort. A person with *Bitachon* does not engage in excessive effort that distracts him from his primary obligation, which is to study Torah and perform *Mitzvot*. R' Avraham continues:

A person who practices *Bitachon* as described above is the true master of *Bitachon*, and from there he will rise higher and higher until *Hashem*, in His kindness, if it is His will, will free him from having to work for his sustenance. . .

Having *Bitachon* may result in distancing harm from a person or may help him achieve some end--not only an end that is necessary, but even one that is a complete luxury. *Bitachon* can help a person achieve material goals and, also, spiritual goals. However, why *Bitachon* sometimes results in a person getting what he wants and sometimes does not is a secret that has not been revealed even to the prophets. Thus, the Psalmist says (*Tehilim* 73:16), "When I reflected to understand this, it was iniquity in my eyes." Likewise, *Hashem* said to the master of all prophets, Moshe (*Shmot* 33:19), "I shall show favor when I choose to show favor, and I shall show mercy when I choose to show mercy."

(*Ha'maspik L'ovdei Hashem*, ch. 8)

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“Behold, he is going out to meet you and when he sees you he will rejoice in his heart.” (4:14)

Midrash Yalkut Shimoni states: If Aharon had known that the Torah would write about him that he was happy to see Moshe, he would have come to meet his brother with a marching band. [Until here from the *Midrash*]

Is the *Midrash* suggesting that Aharon would have performed his *Mitzvot* better if he had known his acts would be publicized? G-d forbid! writes R' Yosef Yozel Horowitz z"l (1847-1919; the *Alter* of Novardok).

Rather, explains the *Alter*, this *Midrash* is teaching the following: Aharon felt absolutely no jealousy towards his younger brother Moshe when the latter was appointed to lead the Jewish People; the thought never even crossed Aharon's mind. Nevertheless, had Aharon known that the Torah would praise him for not being jealous, he would have realized that he had a reason to be jealous, so he would have taken extra steps to ensure that he would feel no jealousy. He would not have relied on his intellectual understanding that jealousy is wrong. Rather, he would have taken extreme tangible steps, such as hiring a marching band, to forestall any jealousy.

This, concludes the *Alter*, is the difference between someone who reveres G-d intellectually and someone who “lives” reverence of G-d.

(*Madregat Ha'adam: Ma'amar Yir'ah Va'avahavah* ch.9)

R' Shmuel Hominer z"l (1913-1977; Yerushalayim) writes: One is obligated to rejoice at another's success as if it was his own success. When Moshe Rabbeinu anointed Aharon as the *Kohen Gadol*, he rejoiced as if he himself was being anointed. Thus, *Midrash Rabbah* comments on the verse (*Tehilim* 133:2), “Like the precious oil upon the head running down the beard, the beard of Aharon”--Did Aharon have two beards? Rather, says the *Midrash*, when Moshe saw the oil running down Aharon's beard, he rejoiced as if it was running down his own beard. (*Eved Ha'melech*)

“And the people believed, and they heard that Hashem had remembered Bnei Yisrael and that He saw their affliction, and they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves.” (4:31)

R' Shalom Noach Berezovsky z"l (1911-2000; *Slonimer Rebbe* in Yerushalayim) writes: Many people try to grow in their spirituality and religious observance, but they do not succeed; therefore, they resign themselves to remaining at their current level. This is a great tragedy! If one refuses to be satisfied with his current level, that itself will ensure his eventual growth, though it may take additional time and effort. Just as the key to the redemption from Egypt was *Emunah* and *Bitachon* / faith and trust, so *Emunah* and *Bitachon*, believing that one can succeed and trusting in Hashem's assistance, is the key to personal redemption.

(*Netivot Shalom: Divrei Shalom Ve'emet* p.74)

“But the midwives revered Elokim and they did not do as the king of Egypt spoke to them, and they caused the boys to live.” (1:17)

R' Meir Juzint z"l (1924-2001; rabbi and educator in Chicago) asks: Did the midwives really require *Yir'at Elokim* / reverence of G-d in order to save the newborn boys? Wouldn't basic human decency and empathy require the same result?

He answers: There is a significant difference between assistance that one offers because of empathy and assistance one offers as a fulfillment of the *Mitzvah* to love one's fellow (“ואהבת לרעך כמוך”). One who is motivated by the *Mitzvah* will go “above and beyond,” even when there may be negative consequences. In contrast, one whose entire motivation is to quiet his own feelings of empathy and decency will not continue his assistance if it causes discomfort--and, certainly, danger--to himself.

R' Juzint adds: The practical lesson we can derive from this is to always perform good deeds because they are *Mitzvot*--even deeds that we would have performed anyway. (*Nechamat Meir* Vol. II, p.31)

“And it was because the midwives revered Ha'Elokim that He made them houses.” (1:21)

Rashi z"l explains: “Houses” refers to houses--i.e., dynasties--of *Kohanim*, *Levi'im* and royalty that descended from these midwives.

R' Moshe Binyamin z"l (Baghdad; early 1700s) asks: Why does the verse say that they revered “*Ha'Elokim*” / “the *Elokim*,” instead of just “*Elokim*”?

He answers: The introductory letter “*Heh*” refers to those who are ancillary to or associated with “*Elokim*”--i.e., Torah scholars. The verse is teaching that the midwives--who were actually Yocheved and Miriam--revered Torah scholars, and that is why they merited to be the ancestors of Moshe Rabbeinu, Chur, King David, and other Torah scholars.

(*Sha'arei Yerushalayim* p.352)

“Hashem saw that he turned aside to see, and Elokim called out to him . . .” (3:4)

R' Ovadiah Seforno z"l (1470-1550; Italy) explains: Moshe “turned aside to see”--to reflect on the phenomenon. “And *Elokim* called out to him”--as our Sages say, “One who comes to purify himself receives Divine assistance.” Similarly, we read (*Shmot* 19:3), “[First,] Moshe ascended to *Elokim*, and [then] *Hashem* called to him from the mountain.”

R' Dovid Kviat z"l (1920-2009; Rosh Yeshiva in the Mir Yeshiva and rabbi in Brooklyn NY) observes: *Hashem* “created” Moshe specifically in order to take *Bnei Yisrael* out of Egypt. Even so, if Moshe had not taken some initiative, he never would have been given that mission. Likewise, without his initiative, he would not have been called to ascend Har Sinai to receive the Torah.

(*Succas Dovid* [English edition] p.17)

ISRAEL REPORT

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NETANYAHU GOES INTO QUARANTINE AFTER EXPOSURE TO COVID-19 CARRIER (Arutz-7 12/17/21)

Opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu was exposed to a COVID-19 carrier in the Knesset and has gone into quarantine, a spokesperson for Netanyahu's Likud party announced on Friday.

"On Wednesday, the head of the opposition held a fitness training session in the Knesset. After it became clear that the trainer was positive for coronavirus, Netanyahu was asked by the Knesset Sergeant-at-Arms to go into isolation," the statement said.

"The former Prime Minister is acting in accordance with the guidelines and is waiting for the results of the tests," added the Likud.

On Thursday, the Health Ministry announced that one of the Knesset's security guards had tested positive for the Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

The guard was last at the Knesset on Sunday, December 12.

Following an epidemiological investigation aimed at cutting off the chains of infection, which was carried out in collaboration with professionals in the Health Ministry, 21 other guards and Knesset employees, as well as MK Meir Porush (United Torah Judaism) were ordered to go into quarantine.

UKRAINE RECOGNIZES JERUSALEM AS CAPITAL OF ISRAEL (Israel Hayom 12/17/21)

Ukraine recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's "one and only capital" and will open a branch of its embassy in the capital in the upcoming year, Ambassador to Israel Yevgen Korniychuk said on Thursday.

Korniychuk's announcement came at the Kyiv Jewish Forum, an event marking 30 years of Israel-Ukraine ties, which was attended by Jerusalem Affairs Minister Ze'ev Elkin, who grew up in Ukraine. Elkin is also the housing and construction minister.

The embassy branch in Jerusalem would be responsible for promoting bilateral trade and technological ties and will be inaugurated during a visit by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to Israel next year.

The aim of the annual Kyiv Jewish Forum – which was held online this year due to coronavirus restrictions – is to foster dialogue among leaders from around the globe that will help bring about solutions to such challenges as antisemitism, the rise of the anti-Israel boycott movement, and the effects of the ongoing pandemic. Discussions also centered on pressing issues facing Jewish communities worldwide, and relations between Ukraine, Israel, and the global Jewish community.

MUHAMMAD AND MAYA WERE ISRAEL'S MOST POPULAR BABY NAMES IN 2020 (YNet 12/21/21)

Mohammad and Maya were the most popular names for Israeli babies born in 2020, according to data by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) released Tuesday.

According to the CBS, the name Tamar remained the most popular among Jewish girls for the fifth straight year. It was followed very closely by Maya, Abigail and Noa.

Other popular names include Sarah, Ayala, Adele, Yael, Shira, Esther, Chana (Hanna), Ela, Miriam, Rachel, Rivka (Rebecca), Lia, Chaya, Talya, Ronni and Romi.

Among Jewish boys, the most popular name remains David, followed by Lavi, Ariel, Yosef, Noam, Uri/Ori, Raphael, Ari, Moshe and Yehuda.

One in eight Muslim boys, a total of 2,393, were given the name Mohammad, securing its place at the top of the list.

Other popular ones include Adam, Yosef, Omar, Ali, Amir, and Ibrahim.

Among Muslim girls the most common name was Maryam, followed by Sham, Lynn, Malak, Joury, Lian and Mila, Alin and Nur.

Among Christian boys, the most popular names were Charbel, Jude, Elias, Liam and George and for Christian girls: Lynn, Maria, Celine and Leah.

The most popular name for Druze boys was Adam, followed by Taim, Neil, Amir and Jude. For Druze girls it was Mila, followed by Ayla, Lur, Lynn and Yasmin (Jasmin).

MANSOUR ABBAS: ISRAEL IS A JEWISH STATE AND WILL REMAIN THAT WAY (Arutz-7 12/22/21)

Ra'am chairman MK Mansour Abbas on Tuesday acknowledged that Israel is a Jewish state and will remain that way.

Speaking at the Globes Israel Business Conference, Abbas told journalist Mohammad Majadele, "The State of Israel was born as a Jewish state, and the question is how to integrate Arab society into it."

Abbas added that "there is no doubt that we are on the threshold of a new era, and I say this cautiously and hope that the process will succeed and that the coalition-level partnership [of Ra'am] will be a trend towards more partnerships in the economy, in the industry and more."

"We are at the beginning of the partnership but I believe in it - it is impossible to wait for change without creating a new reality. We had always demanded to make the change without moving forward. Instead of waiting for the change and then there will be a partnership, Ra'am came and said 'let's make a partnership that will bring about the change,'" he continued.

Abbas was asked if he was satisfied with the current political situation and replied, "I am satisfied with the process itself which we started. We are inside and now we need to play the game and find solutions to the problems we

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encounter and deal with in one way or another."

When asked if he could accept the State of Israel as a Jewish state, Abbas replied, "The State of Israel was born as a Jewish state. It is the decision of the people and the question is not about the identity of the state. It was born this way and will remain so."

"I was at a demonstration against the Nationality Law and I do not want to deceive anyone. The question is what is the status of the Arab citizen in the Jewish state of Israel. That is the question. Therefore, the challenge now is not only with Mansour Abbas, but with the Jewish public and citizens. We have to decide whether we want to wage struggles that have a chance to succeed and then we can develop as a society and prosper and have an influence, or whether we want to be in a separatist position and continue to talk about these things for another 100 years."

The chairman of Ra'am said he did not neglect the promotion of peace and diplomatic issues. "If I were in their place, I would do things. If I were the Prime Minister, I would recognize the state of Palestine. If I were the chairman of the PA, I would declare that I demand an end to all activities that involve violence and unite the West Bank and Gaza and call to sit at the negotiating table. These two steps will surely lead us to increase trust and move towards a process in which a State of Palestine will be established here next to the State of Israel in accordance with the vision I believe in. To live together in partnership and equality and tolerance."

ELITE GOLANI UNIT TOPS IDF RECRUITS' SERVICE WISHLIST (Israel Hayom 12/19/21)

Israel Defense Forces recruits have become slightly less interested in serving in the Border Police and more interested in joining the Infantry Corps, latest data reveals.

Figures show that the number of new recruits between November 2018 and November 2021 who marked the Border Police as their first choice decreased by 6%, whereas the number who wanted to serve in the Infantry Corps increased by 8%. Four years ago, less than a quarter of new conscripts preferred to serve in Infantry brigades, whereas by 2021, they made up a third of all recruits.

The Golani Brigade, which has been one of the most sought-after infantry units for years, has recorded a 5% increase in the number of recruits seeking to serve in its ranks in the last four years. For the first time, in the winter draft, the Golani and the Border Police reported the same number of recruits wishing to serve in their units.

The second, third, and fourth most popular infantry brigades are Nahal, Givati, and Kfir.

A slight decrease was reported in the number of recruits marking the Air Defense Corps as their number one priority in the last four years. Other sought-after units among recruits are the Front Home Command's Search and Rescue Brigade and the Combat Engineering Corps. There is less interest in serving in the Armored Corps.

SETTLERS ATTACK ISRAELI FORCES AT WEST BANK OUTPOST DAYS AFTER DEADLY SHOOTING (Ha'aretz 12/19/21)

Violence broke out on Sunday when settlers at the Homesh settlement in the West Bank attacked security forces, according to the Israeli army.

About 200 settlers attempted to reach Homesh, but encountered army and police forces at checkpoints en route. The army stated that settlers were physically and verbally violent, attacked soldiers, vandalized military property and broke through the checkpoints.

During the clashes, a settler vehicle hit an Israeli soldier and lightly wounded him.

Residents of Homesh were evicted as part of Israel's 2005 disengagement plan, and Israelis are banned from staying within its bounds. However, settlers often visit the area and operate the yeshiva, which in practice serves as an outpost, with yeshiva students moving between it and the nearest settlement, Shavei Shomron.

On Sunday, the settlers managed to reach the outpost area and erected three temporary structures there, but police evacuated the buildings later in the afternoon.

Dozens of settlers spent the weekend at the Homesh outpost, following Thursday's murder of Yehuda Dimentman. Since his murder, about 30,000 NIS (\$9,500) have been raised to build the outpost.

In a statement, the army said that they condemn "all forms of violence against security forces and will act decisively in relation to any attempt to harm" them, while also "fulfilling their role of protecting the security of Israeli citizens."

They added that the army will continue "maintaining the security of civilians alongside law enforcement and preventing illegal activity." They did not state whether any settlers were arrested during the incident.

Settlers at the Homesh yeshiva contested the claims of the Israeli army, calling them "serious lies."

They argued that the pictures and videos of the event showed "zero violence" and accused the military of slandering the yeshiva students. In reference to the military's efforts to dismantle the illegal outpost, the settlers said: "Instead of destroying the terrorist's house, they decided to destroy the spiritual home of the murdered man. The place and the buildings are erected in his memory."

Religious Zionism chairman Bezalel Smotrich called on Knesset members to join in him and the settlers in their efforts "to break the siege on Homesh." He called the Israeli military's actions – in which soldiers stifled settler efforts to build illegal structures – "a shame and a disgrace," constituting "a reward for terrorism."

Meanwhile, police arrested three Israelis suspected of setting a Palestinian car on fire near a West Bank checkpoint. They will appear in court for a hearing at the Jerusalem Magistrate's Court.

According to the Israeli army, clashes broke out at the site between settlers and security forces trying to prevent the passage of building materials.

DERI TO PLEAD GUILTY IN PLEA BARGAIN, RESIGN FROM KNESSET (Arutz-7 12/20/21)

Shas chairman MK Aryeh Deri's attorneys are on the verge of signing a plea bargain with Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit.

According to the agreement, the chairman of Shas will plead guilty to relatively minor tax offenses and in return will not be sentenced to actual imprisonment or community service.

Deri will be able to remain chairman of his party, but will have to resign from the Knesset.

He will also be able to run for the Knesset in the future and return to serve as an MK in the next Knesset.

47% OF ARAB-ISRAELIS SPEAK ONLY SOME TO NO HEBREW – BUREAU OF STATISTICS (JPost 12/22/21)

Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics released results of a 2020 survey on the Hebrew language level among Israel's population, finding that 47% of Arab-Israelis said they speak between "medium" and "almost zero" Hebrew.

The survey primarily tracked Hebrew proficiency among Jewish-Israeli men and women compared to Arab-Israeli men and women. Further findings included that 53% of Arabs rated their Hebrew as "good" to "very good," compared to 91% of Jewish-Israelis. While Jewish men and women had nearly identical levels of mastery, disparities across gender were more pronounced in Arab populations, as 66% of Arab men said their Hebrew was good to very good, compared to just 41% of Arab women.

Additionally, only 8% of Arab men said they spoke or understood "little" to "almost zero" Hebrew – compared to 25% of women. These differences are more pronounced among senior citizens, as 46% of Arabs aged 65 or older said they cannot read or write in Hebrew, compared to just 8% to 9% of Jewish respondents. Some 30% of Arab Israelis aged 65 or older cannot speak Hebrew, compared to a mere 2% of Jewish respondents.

A total of 93% of Jewish Israelis speak good to very good Hebrew, though 8% speak little to no Hebrew.

Last October, a NIS 9 billion initiative to reduce gaps in education among Arab Israelis was launched.

The agreements will introduce a comprehensive program to improve Hebrew literacy, develop more relevant educational content, promote after-school education, reduce dropout rates, and more.

The proposal also pledged NIS 2.4 billion for the construction of classrooms in Arab regions, which will provide over 3,500 classrooms and kindergartens, and an additional NIS 7,000 investment per Arab student.

70% OF SHOOTING ATTACKS IN ISRAEL USED STOLEN IDF WEAPONS (JPost 12/20/21)

70% of all shooting incidents in Israel over the past 12 months were carried out with stolen IDF weaponry, Walla news reported on Sunday.

Some 675 shooting incidents were reported throughout 2021 in the country, according to an official IDF statistics report. Out of those 675, a staggering 464 used stolen, military-grade weapons.

In a 2011 report, the number of shooting incidents carried out by IDF weapons stood at 65%, meaning a 5% rise was recorded within the last decade.

The report also notes that most of those stolen IDF weapons were initially smuggled through Israel's borders with Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan.

"While the Egyptian and Lebanese borders are harder to smuggle weapons or drugs through, the Jordanian border is basically just barbed wire," a defense establishment source told Walla.

Some in Israel suggest the army's incompetence in guarding its arsenal correlates with the rising number of deaths and violent clashes in Israel's Arab sector.

More than 100 Israeli-Arabs have died since the beginning of 2021 in crime-related incidents. Early in December, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said Israel is "moving from defense to offense" in the way it combats crime in the Arab sector.

The long-term issue of Arab-Israeli violence is a greater threat to the State of Israel than Hamas and Hezbollah, Justice Minister Gideon Sa'ar told The Jerusalem Post in October.

In 2017, there were an estimated 267,000 illegal weapons in Israel. By 2020, that number nearly doubled, with a Knesset estimate reporting some 400,000 illegal weapons circulating around the country.

The IDF has also seen a record amount of explosives stolen from its bases in a year where the number of explosive devices used in organized crime violence rose to 22%.

In the past, explosive devices used in the streets typically contained between 500g. to 1kg. of military-grade explosives. In 2021, they contained more than 1.5kg., sometimes even reaching 2.5kg. of IDF explosives.

'CARMEI' STORM HITS ISRAEL WITH POWERFUL WINDS AND HEAVY RAINFALL (YNet 12/20/21)

The massive "Carmel" winter storm arrived on Israel's shores on Monday and is set to bring with it powerful winds, heavy rainfall, thunderstorms, cold temperatures and even snow.

The storm, which will peak on Monday evening and gradually weaken by Wednesday, has already seen its first victim when a man in his 50s from the central coastal city of Netanya was seriously hurt when a tree collapsed on him.

A United Hatzalah volunteer, who was the first responder at the scene said, "When I arrived at the scene I found a man in critical condition lying under a tree. According to an eyewitness the tree fell on him while he was walking. Together with city workers and another United Hatzalah volunteer that arrived we picked up the tree and began CPR on the critically injured man."

The man was transferred to Rabin Medical Center in Petah Tikva in severe but stable condition.

Meteorologists, meanwhile, warned of high winds of up to 80 to 100

kilometers per hour, high rain of up to 100 millimeters and waves of up to four to six meters.

Snow was also expected on Mount Hermon and throughout the Golan Heights.

Flood warnings have been issued for all communities along the coast, as well as in the Judean Desert and the Dead Sea area.

The northern coastal city of Haifa announced on Sunday that it had raised its level of preparedness in anticipation of the storm, preparing for flooding and falling debris due to strong winds.

Likewise, Nahariya announced it would be conducting remote learning for students.

"We are facing some challenging days and rainfall amounts that will bring hazards. The emergency forces will be ready to meet the challenges but I ask you to take care of yourselves," said Public Security Minister Omer Barlev.

The storm is the third named storm in the Eastern Mediterranean Group of EUMETNET, which includes the meteorological services of Israel, Greece and Cyprus. Other Hebrew names in the list for the 2021/2022 season include Irit, Joel, Lavi, Ora and Raphael.

ISRAELI AIR FORCE INADVERTENTLY REVEALS IDENTITY OF SECRET UNIT IN MARATHON SNAP (Ha'aretz 12/20/21)

The Air Force, as it is sometimes jokingly said, acts on social media like a separate corps, which is friendly to the Israeli army. Last week the Air Force boastfully posted on Twitter a picture of the Shaldag unit combatants and wrote: "Our champions! Today the IDF championship was held in 10 kilometers and the big winners are the Shaldag unit! Shaldag came first in the unit heats, and two of its combatants came first and second in the personal heats with an average of 37:10 minutes!"

The event was the Tiberias Marathon, which also has a 10 kilometer heat. The Air Force spokesman's staff blurred the combatants' faces, but the group picture shows the numbers on their chests. It takes 10 minutes to look up a picture and the name of the IDF's elite units. It's simple and easy, courtesy of the Air Force's arrogance and its ignorance of what the chest number means. In such races, if you have a competitor's chest number you can get his name and photograph. In fact, not only one photo, but a whole bunch of them from various angles. The combatant on the left in the picture, whose chest number is 15132, is Omer Ben Gdalya. No. 15133 is Shmuel Shuman, 15131 in the middle is Amit Beneta and so on and so forth.

The skilled reader can detect that the numbers are in serial order, i.e. they were all registered together and received consecutive numbers. This isn't the only unit that was registered. Bahad 8, the physical training camp, registered all the special units that took part in the 10 kilometer heat in Tiberias.

From the unit's shirt, it is also possible to identify each runner, his picture and what unit he belongs to. Maglan combatants' numbers begin with 15002, the number of Ohad Ben Noon, and so on.

The Tiberias Marathon site has 53,000 pictures. Even someone who wanted to block his pictures appears behind other runners, and all the names and pictures of the IDF's elite unit combatants can easily be mapped.

The military said in response to the report: "We thank the reporter for bringing this to our attention. It was, indeed, necessary to blur the soldiers' numbers. The issue of the policy for registering for competitions of this type will be examined, and the procedures will be made clearer."

THE ISRAELI-IRANIAN WAR OF PERCEPTION (Yossi Yehoshua, YNet 12/17/21)

"Just one wrong move!" — that was the Tehran Times' Wednesday headline, which was accompanied by a map of Israel dotted with markers, each symbolizing a potential target.

This article — as amateurish as it may seem — is a part of the ongoing psychological warfare campaign being waged between the two countries, and is in fact meant to serve as a direct threat to Israel following Jerusalem's own series of threats regarding a potential independent attack on Iran.

Proof of that can be found in the article's very first paragraph: "An intensification of the Israeli military threats against Iran seems to suggest that the Zionist regime has forgotten that Iran is more than capable of hitting them from anywhere."

The article also quotes Ynet and its sister publication Yedioth Ahronoth as saying that Israel's attack on a chemical storage facility in Syria six months ago is "a direct message" to Iran.

The article further cited that the Pentagon recently rejected Israel's request to expedite delivery of two KC-46 refueling jets, which are set to play a vital role in the potential 1,000 km journey from Israel to Iran.

It seems that the Iranians are particularly interested in what is happening in Israel and are therefore trying to correspond with publications both in Israel and abroad.

This merely marks Tehran's retort to The Washington Post's recent article which revealed Israel's recent attack in Syria — which itself was meant to show the Islamic Republic that Israel is working with precise and reliable intelligence and that it is, in fact, dead serious regarding the prospect of a future attack on any of Iran's nuclear facilities.

And yet, all those who deal with the issue understand that the two cases are incomparable.

An attack in Syria, where the Israeli Air Force sometimes operates relatively freely, is not an attack on Iran, which lies 1,000 km away from Israel and boasts robust air defense capabilities.

Despite the high stakes, Iran's latest move was extremely low effort.

The map accompanying the article shows a variety of "targets", some in the West Bank, including Nablus and Jenin, as well as along the border with Egypt, and generally cover almost every point in Israel — a highly unlikely scenario.

And yet, it seems that the map and the article did manage to generate some panic among the Israeli public, the majority of which lack the knowledge to dive into the details of Iran's actual capabilities.

These publications and articles won't stop any time soon though, quite the opposite in fact.

As tensions between the two sides continue to mount, we will see more and more use of psychological warfare, which has proven to be a powerful tool in today's day and age.

Maybe the government should prepare the Israeli public for the inevitable continuance of the psychological campaign against Iran in order to remind them to keep things in proportion.

BENNETT, THE COALITION, AND THE COLD REALITY PAINTED BY POLLS (Herb Keinon, JPost 12/19/21)

The threat by coalition parties to bring down the government unless they get their way on one issue or another is as much a part of Israel's political game as the Knesset itself.

It happens in every coalition, and it happens with even greater frequency in narrow coalitions — such as the current one — where every party has outsized influence.

No one, therefore, should get too worked up by Ra'am and Meretz threats to trigger a coalition crisis — and even bring about new elections — over Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked (Yamina). It's all pretty par for the course.

Ra'am's threat comes against the background of the party's differences with Shaked over the Electricity Law, with the Arab party accusing Shaked of trying to keep the Negev's Bedouin out of the plan that would link homes built illegally to the country's electricity grid.

Meretz threatened a coalition crisis if Shaked tried to bring back to the Knesset a revised version of the controversial Citizenship Law, which prevents Palestinians from gaining citizenship in order to live with their Israeli-Arab spouses inside Israel. The bill was defeated in July when the opposition parties voted against it in a bid to embrace the new government.

Before acting on these threats, however, both parties — in fact, all the coalition partners — would do well to look at the Panels Research poll conducted Thursday for The Jerusalem Post Group media outlets.

This poll showed that if a new election was held today, and opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu remained the Likud leader, neither the coalition nor the opposition would be able to form a government. In other words, if the parties gamble and roll the dice yet again, the political logjam that led to four indecisive elections in two years would re-emerge.

It has now been nine months since the last election (and six months since the formation of the new government), and nothing significant has moved politically. There have been some slight movements, according to the poll, within the Right-Left blocs, but not between the two blocs. So if Meretz and Ra'am bring down the government hoping that it will change the coalition math to their benefit, they are likely to be disappointed.

The strength of the blocs has not changed: The coalition would win 57 seats, the four Jewish opposition parties 56, and the Arab Joint List would win seven.

Once again there would be no clear winner; once again the elections would render a political stalemate. The balance between the blocs would not change, and there would be a strong likelihood that these elections would spawn yet another — something the country can ill afford.

Interestingly, of the eight parties that make up the coalition, three would slightly improve their situation according to this poll — Yesh Atid would gain two seats, and Blue and White and Ra'am would gain one apiece. Labor would stay the same, and four of the coalition parties would lose ground.

In this poll, Gideon Sa'ar's New Hope Party would be wiped out, not passing the electoral threshold and losing all of its six seats, while Meretz, Yisrael Beytenu and Yamina would each drop a seat from what they won the last time around.

While dropping a seat is obviously discouraging for Yisrael Beytenu and Meretz, for Yamina it must be particularly concerning, because it is losing seats even as its leader is running the country. If Yamina can't attract voters when it is in control of the Prime Minister's Office, then its prospects for ever being able to do so again are very slim.

What must be most frustrating for Prime Minister Naftali Bennett is that he has not been able to gain any traction, and is losing some ground compared to the results of the last election, even though his first six months have been anything but a failure.

The new government he heads has shifted the country's conversation away from all-Netanyahu, all-the-time; it demonstrated that parties with ideological differences can cooperate for the benefit of the collective; it passed a budget; it is engaged with the Americans over Iran; it has built on the Abraham Accords; and it has dealt as well as most other countries with the curveballs being thrown by the Coronavirus.

Despite the Likud's dire predictions that everything would sink were Netanyahu not in power, the ship of state continues to sail — with the ship's passengers not feeling that much of a difference as a result of the changes at the helm.

For those on the Center-Left, Bennett was useful in ousting Netanyahu. And even if they are not displeased with his overall performance, even if they might see him overall as a mensch, they disagree with him when it comes to the questions of the Palestinians and settlements, and are not going to vote for him.

For those on the Right, Bennett's natural base, his willingness to break with the right-wing camp and form a government with Yesh Atid's Yair Lapid and Ra'am's Mansour Abbas are unpardonable sins. Granted, he is not rushing headlong — or at all — into a Palestinian state, nor has he "sold out" the settlements. But the breaking of his campaign promises not to form a government with Lapid, and his teaming up with an Arab party, are perfidies they have not forgiven and, as the polls indicate, they will not forget.

By forming a government with Lapid, Abbas, Labor and Meretz last June, Bennett's gamble was that he would do such a bang-up job as prime minister, that he would be able to regain the confidence of his natural base, and even expand it.

This latest poll shows that, at least so far, this gamble is not politically paying off.



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TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

A Most Fitting Reward

Presented by Rabbi Zacharia Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

"And G-d bestowed good upon the midwives and the nation increased...and He made for them houses" (1:20)

After instituting his program of slavery and oppression, Pharaoh goes a step further towards his goal of destroying the Jewish people by commanding the Jewish midwives to kill every baby boy as soon as he is born. Nevertheless, the righteous midwives refuse to obey Pharaoh's evil decree and instead ensured that each baby received proper post-natal care. The Torah declares the righteousness and G-d fearing nature of these women and tells us that Hashem rewarded them and they became the matriarchs of some of the most illustrious families of the Jewish people.

The Torah's presentation of the midwives' reward is a bit strange. The Torah first tells us that "G-d bestowed good upon the midwives", and then informs us "and the nation increased," and only then does it go on to describe what the reward actually was ("and He made for them houses"). Isn't the phrase "and the nation increased" out of place?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein answers that we see from here that the real reward for the midwives' efforts was the very fact that the Jewish people increased. He explains that the midwives could have been tempted to wish that the Jewish babies would not survive given the grave danger that they would be in if they were caught disobeying Pharaoh's orders. The Torah is teaching us, however, that they instead wanted nothing more than to see the nation flourish and be successful, so much so that it could be said that they considered this very success a sufficient reward in and of itself.

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Point to Ponder

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

Hashem said to Moshe in Midian, "Go return to Egypt, for all the people who seek your life have died." (4, 18)

One who is sent to perform a mitzva does not get harmed. (Pesachim 8b)

Since Moshe was being sent to perform a mitzva of redeeming Bnei Yisrael from Egypt, it should protect him from all harm. If he would have been protected anyway, why did Hashem have to tell Moshe, "The people who seek your life have died?"

Who did Basya bas Pharaoh marry?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What did Yosef merit as a reward for going to Eretz Yisrael to bury his father?

Answer: That Moshe would bring Yosef's coffin up to Eretz Yisroel.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Shemos* (2:15), the Torah relates that "Pharaoh heard" of Moshe's vigilante killing of the Egyptian, and sought to execute him, and the *midrash* (*Shemos Rabbah* 1:30) explains that Dasan and Aviram had informed upon him. The *midrash* also interprets Moshe's earlier declaration (2:14) that "Indeed, the matter is known!" as an expression of his dismay at their willingness to expose his dangerous secret: "now I know the cause of Israel's enslavement" - "such *lashon ha'ra* [evil speech] is amongst them, how would they be worthy of redemption?"

As we have previously discussed, the special case of *lashon ha'ra* that endangers Jewish persons or property by informing upon them is termed *mesirah* ("giving over"), and is considered one of the most heinous of sins (*Rosh Hashanah* 17a). One who threatens to do so may be extrajudicially executed (*Bava Kama* 117a). According to the *Rosh* (*ibid.* 10:27), this is due to the concern that the rapacious enemy will eventually, after seizing all the victim's property that he can find, torture and even kill him in the attempt to extract even more from him. The *moser* is therefore classified as a "pursuer," who may be killed in order to save his victim.

In light of this understanding, R. Yaakov Blau initially suggests that in modern, civilized countries, insofar as it is clear that the government will not kill someone who falls into its hands, although *mesirah* is certainly still prohibited, a *moser* may be classified merely as a tortfeasor, but might not be subject to the various stringent rules that apply to a classic *moser*. He counters, however, that perhaps the contemporary *moser* does retain his classic status, since prison entails lethal danger to its inmates. Additionally, governmental interrogation can be lethal (*Pischei Choshen Nezikin* ch. 4 n. 1).

R. Blau's latter concern, while perhaps credible in a national security context, does not seem quite plausible in the context of ordinary criminal and civil matters. R. Ezra Batzri, however, dismisses this attitude as dangerously naive, arguing that "only the external appearance [of governmental conduct] has changed ... Even if they bring all matters to court, it is clear that, through interrogation and the police, government can destroy people and in many places they do, in fact, destroy people." (cited by R. Michael J. Broyde, *Informing on Others for Violating American Law: A Jewish Law View*)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was silent.
2. I rejoiced for my brother.
3. I was a peacemaker.
4. I was my brother's equal.

#2 WHO AM I?

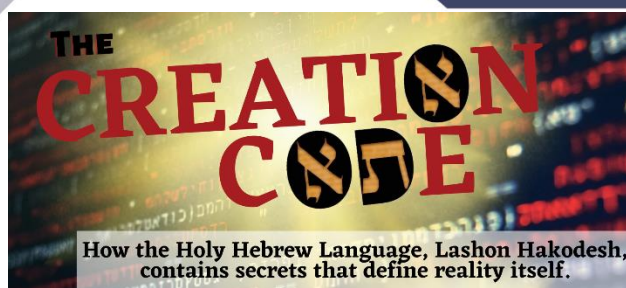
1. My food is dusty.
2. I tricked the Mother Of All Life.
3. I almost swallowed the humble.
4. When I was copper, I healed.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Maadanei Melech (I am on Rabbeinu Asher, I am for Asher, I am by Tosfos Yom Tov, I am a delicacy.)

#2 Yosef (I was an orphan, I was a slave, I was in jail, I was a king.)

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