

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts בס"ד

February 17 - 18, 2023 - 27 Shevat 5783 - Parshas Mishpatim/Shekalim/Mevorchim Hachodesh
Light Candles by 5:29 - Havdalah 6:29

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **Esther Edeson** and the **Edeson & Stern Families** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of their dear friend, Mikhail Knizhnik, מאיר בן גדל גרש.

Mazal Tov

- **Rachel & Michael Harris** on the birth of a granddaughter, Leah Temima, daughter of Ayala & Isaac Pearl. Mazal Tov to the big brothers, great-grandparents, aunts, uncle and all of the extended family.
- **Judy & Sheldon Klein** on the birth of a granddaughter, born February 14 to their children Adina & David Navon of Eilav, Israel. Mazal Tov as well to big brothers Asif, Shilo and Sinai, great-grandmother Libby, and all of the extended family.

Condolences

- **Marion Miller** and the entire Miller/Parker family on the passing of her father, Ted Parker.
- **Aviva Symes** on the passing of her father, Arthur Symes. The funeral took place in London. Shiva is being observed in London through Sunday morning.

Shabbos Schedule

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

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 5:29
- Mincha: 5:30 (B), 5:20 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:25 (B), 5:25 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends: 6:29

Divrei Torah/Shiurim:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| • 8:45 Main Minyan | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • 9:15 Minyan | Rabbi Postelnek |
| • Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur | Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman |
| • Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura | Rabbi Postelnek |
| • Shiur after Mincha | Rabbi Postelnek |

Kiddush/Shalosh Seudos Sponsors:

- The Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by **Lew Sosnowik** in memory of his parents, Abraham & Sima Sosnowik, and his sister, Chana Sosnowik.
- The Shul Kiddush is sponsored by **Tamar Keder & Eti Roitman Bardack** in memory of their father, Noah Roitman, Z"L.
- The Sephardic Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by **Miri & Dror Shoshani** in honor of the birth of their new baby daughter.

Health Policy

- People experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or other transmissible illnesses should not attend prayer, learning, social or other events at the Shul.
- If you have tested positive for COVID-19, please follow CDC guidelines before returning to Shul.

YISE Gala Banquet

RSVP Now for the 2023 YISE Gala Banquet

Sunday, February 26, 6:00 PM at YISE

Honoring Stuart & Judy Rosenthal, Josh & Sara Katz, and the 2023 high school graduating seniors who have served our congregation's youth.

RSVP at www.yise.org/banquet

See flyer for details.

YISE Youth Announcements

Teen Minyan - The Teen Minyan will NOT meet this Shabbos, February 18. The Teen Minyan will resume next Shabbos, February 25, in The House.

Shabbos Groups this Shabbos, February 18, from 10:00 AM until Shul ends. 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 to the Yeshiva. For more information, contact Debbie Katz at dkatz@yise.org
Shabbos Group for 5th and 6th Grade Girls will meet inside The House promptly at 10:00 AM.

Junior Congregation for boys in grades 4 - 6 with Jay Marcus. Meet in the Lower Lobby at 9:55 and walk to the Yeshiva at 10:00.

Bat Mitzvah Club for 6th grade girls. Pizza Melaveh Malka on Motzei Shabbos, February 18, 8:30 PM - 10:00 PM at The House. \$10 per person. RSVP to batmitzvahprogram@yise.org *See flyer for details.*

Presidents' Day Learning and Pizza at YISE! For Boys in Grades 7-12 at 11:00 AM on Monday, February 20, in the Social Hall. Come join friends, learn with Rabbi Hillel Shaps of the Greater Washington Community Kollel, and eat delicious pizza! *See flyer for details.*

Purimfest 2023 at YISE! Sunday March 5 at 1:00 PM. We will have a chesed project and a show by Mad Science, and delicious Hamantaschen will be served! *See flyer for details.*

Dor L'Dor - The Family Chevrusah-style Learning in a fun environment! The next session will take place Motzei Shabbos, February 25, 8:00 PM in the Social Hall. Please email mshimoff@yise.org if you would like to sponsor. *See flyer for details.*

YISE Programs and Listings

Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura - A weekly Chabura on the Parsha, now learning the Kedushas Levi. Delve into the deeper dimensions of the Parsha and Holidays by learning the Kedushas Levi's weekly insights. Begins at 8:55 AM Shabbos morning. This week's Shiur will be led by Rabbi Postelnek.

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur - Following the Hashkamah Minyan, learning Maseches Sanhedrin, in the Small Beis Medrash. This week's Shiur will be led by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman.

The Unveiling for Rabbi David Hyatt will take place on Sunday, February 26, at 11:00 AM at Rosedale Cemetery, 6300 Hamilton Avenue, Rosedale, MD 21237.

Practical Prayer for a Busy Life: A two-part series for women given by Rabbi Postelnek. Part 2, Tuesday night, February 28, at 8:15 PM, at the home of Blima & Alex Maged, 812 Kersey Road. *See flyer for details.*

Seeing the Bigger Picture: A pre-Purim Melava Malka & Shiur for men with Rabbi Postelnek. Motzei Shabbos, March 4, 8:45 PM, at the home of Rami & Arly Mandelbaum, 1008 Kersey Road. *See flyer for details.*

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, March 6, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on **Zoom A**. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at mfriedman2@yahoo.com

Coat Room Cleanup - If you left anything in the coat room (coats, Seforim, Taleisim, etc.), please claim the item by the end of February 2023.

All remaining items will be donated or disposed of.

Seeing the Hand of Hashem in Modern History - Rabbi Rosenbaum will speak on Sunday, March 5, at 8:00 PM in the Belonofsky Sanctuary.

Presented by the Meaningful Tefilah Project. Co-sponsored by KMS. Recordings available at <https://wp.yise.org/hand-of-hashem> *See flyer for details.*

Thank you to the Shiurim Sponsors for this Past Week:

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur

- **David Jaray** in honor of Rabbi Grossman and all those who attend his Shiur.

Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur

- **David Jaray** in memory of Rabbi Hyatt, Z"l, and in honor of Rabbi Grauman and all those who attend his Shiur and in memory of parents, Avraham Ben Tzvi HaLevi & Ada Bas Menachem Aryeh, Z"l, and Rabbi Hillel & Mrs. Myrna Klavan, Z"l.
- **Margie & Michael Hourwitz** in honor of Rabbi Grauman and his Talmidim, in memory of Rabbi Hyatt, ZT"l, in memory of Noach Roitman, Z"l, in memory of Katie Rogoff, Z"l, and in memory of Meir Rudner, Z"l.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tehillim/Parsha/Halacha Shiur

- **Judy & Rabbi Roy Rosenbaum** in memory of Rabbi Roy Rosenbaum's father, Rabbi Irving Rosenbaum, HaRav Tzvi Yosef Ben Dovid, ZT"l, whose Yahrzeit was on 19 Shevat.

Dvar Torah Dedications/ Sponsor a Shiur

YISE continues to offer a number of different in-person and virtual 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.

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
- Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur, Shabbos 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.

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.

Weekday Shiurim

Options for in-person and 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 breakfast, 9:45 AM. Shiurim:
 - Illuminating Inquiries in Halacha - Rabbi Yitzchak Mandel
 - Judaism 102: Fundamentals for the Experienced Jew - Rabbi Hillel Shaps
 - Navigating Navi: Sefer Yehoshua - Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman
 - Parsha Perspectives: An Exploration of Engaging Parsha Topics - Rabbi Menachem Winter
- **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.
 - Wednesdays: Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman - Reading Responsa - **Zoom E**.
 - Thursdays: Rabbi Avraham Sussman - Yesodei Hatorah Gemara Skills Building - **Zoom F**.
 - For Women:
 - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Parsha Journeys - **Zoom D**.
- **SCP (Semichas Chaver Program)** - Tuesdays at 8:45 PM at YISE. Join the fastest growing Halacha learning program in the world! Register online at <https://thegreaterwashingtoncommunitykollel.com/scp>
- **Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's** Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, Sunday through Friday, 6:35 AM - 7:22 AM, in the Franco Beit Midrash.
- **Chavrusa Learning** - Monday nights in the Social Hall, 8:30 PM - 9:30 PM. For more information, contact Rabbi Levy at 240-423-8810.
- **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiurim for men & women, Mondays at 8:45 AM, studying Parashas Hashavua, **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", in-person in the Small Beis Medrash and on **Zoom G**.
- **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Bava Metziah, Daf 3a. Wednesday evenings at 8:00 PM on **Zoom H**.

Connection Details: Go to <https://zoom.us/join/> and enter the meeting ID, or call 301-715-8592 or 929-205-6099 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: 833 3477 1595, password RabbiHyatt

Zoom D: ID: 601 853 4021, passcode Winter (phone 667362)

Zoom E: ID: 746 455 2195, password Learn

Zoom F: ID: 803 356 4156, password Learn

Zoom G: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079

Zoom H: ID: 849 3898 4989, passcode 161699

YISE Programs and Listings (continued)

Chevra Kadisha Community Dinner - The Men's and Women's Chevra Kadisha of Greater Washington invites the entire community to the Zayin Adar dinner on Monday, February 27, recognizing the work of the Chevra. Cost is \$18 per person for the catered dinner. For more information and to make reservations, go to: <https://www.chevrakadishagw.org/zayin-adar>

Monthly Shalosh Seudos - To sponsor, contact Simi Franco at 301-593-4465, ext. 103, or office@yise.org. Volunteers are needed to set up and clean up. Contact Ethan Cohen at ecohen@yise.org to be part of the rotation. See flyer for details.

Online YISE Cholim List - Go to <https://wp.yise.org/cholim> to add a name to the list. The list is used at the 8:45 Minyan on Monday, Thursday, and Shabbos. For questions about Mi Sheberach guidelines, contact Rabbi Rosenbaum. For other questions, contact Seth Katz at sethkatz@yise.org

Helping Hands Across Kemp Mill, a part of YISE's Chesed Committee, provides assistance to families undergoing medical crises. For information, please 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 <https://audio.yise.org>

Purim - YISE and Beyond

Purim Night at YISE - Monday, March 6, Maariv/Megilla at 6:35 PM will be followed by a Break-Fast Dinner (dairy) and Purim Mesiba in the Social Hall. DJ, crafts, drinks, photo booth and more! To sponsor, go to www.yise.org/purimsponsor or email office@yise.org See flyer for details.

Yad Yehuda Matanot L'Evyonim - Donate now, distribution on Purim to those in need across Greater Washington. To donate, please visit www.yadyehuda.org/matanot-levyonim

Yad Yehuda of Greater Washington is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Tizku L'mitzvot!

Annual Purim Shiur on the occasion of the 22nd Yahrzeit of Jane Axelrod, Raizel Bas Simcha, will take place on Purim, Tuesday, March 7, promptly at 10:30 AM on Zoom, Meeting ID 684 6828 415, Password: 613613 The shiur ends by 11:00 AM.

Amit Purim Cards - Amit is selling beautiful Purim cards at \$3 each. Please call Esther Edeson at 301-593-1468 or 301-593-4465 Ext. 101.

Rose & Bernard Singer Megilla Reading Program - If you can read the Megilla for others or if you need someone to read for you, contact Saul Singer at saulljsing@gmail.com or 301-593-1193 as soon as possible. Please do not wait for the last minute!

Community Programs & Listings

Kidney Donation Needed - Mr. Gerry Segelman, father of Micah Segelman, is in need of a kidney transplant. If you would consider being a kidney donor, please contact Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz at Renewal for more information at csteinmetz@renewal.org or 718-431-9831 ext 209.

The Real Kosher Cheeseburger? Exploring the Halachos of Lab-Grown Meat Federal Holiday Learning Program with Kollel Zichron Amram, Monday, February 20, 9:30 AM, with Rabbi Moshe Holzer. In person at YGW Boys' campus and on Zoom, Meeting ID: 892 627 552, Passcode: 1216613. For more information, contact Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate at mblate@yeshiva.edu or 240-858-2041.

The Chevra Kadisha of Greater Washington is comprised of volunteers from all the Orthodox communities in the area. In a typical year, we perform more than 400. Our volunteer roster has been depleted due to age, Aliyah, and at-risk health situations. Volunteers are needed so that we can continue to provide Taharot to the Jewish community. To join the Men's Chevra, call Dean Grayson at (301) 908-2645. To join the Women's Chevra, call Devorah Grayson at (202) 438-7060. You may also visit our website at: www.chevrakadishagw.org and select "Join the Chevra Kadisha"

TGN Lunch and Learn - Wednesday, February 22, 12:00 Noon - 1:00 PM at YISE. For more information or to RSVP by February 15, contact Rabbi Shmuel Leigh: 301-732-1773 or director@goldennetwork.org

Israeli Folk Dancing for Women - Wednesday at KMS. Beginners - 7:45 PM - 8:45 PM, Advanced Beginners/Intermediate - 9:00 PM - 10:00 PM. Fee: \$5. For more information, contact womendance613@gmail.com

Rays of Wisdom - Life Lessons From Pirkei Avos - Greater Washington Community Kollel invites women of the community to a weekday morning text-based Chaburah led by Mrs. Channah Cohen. Mondays at 9:30 AM in Kemp Mill. To be added to a list for information and weekly location, email channahandjeff@gmail.com or call 773-219-5397.

Please help our community complete these Siyumin:

Mishnayos for the 1st Yahrzeit of **Noah Roitman**, Noach Ben Shalom Yaakov, January 4, 23 Tevet - <https://www.lzechernishmas.com/signup.php?id=11081>

Mishnayos for the 1st Yahrzeit of **Natalie Gabai**, Nechama Naomi Bat Leib, December 21, 9 Tevet - <https://www.lzechernishmas.com/signup.php?id=11044>

Mishnayos for the 1st Yahrzeit of **Jerry Snyder**, Yehoshua Ben Binyamin, December 21, 9 Tevet - <https://hadranalach.com/2612>

Tanach for the 1st Yahrzeit of **Marion Baras**, Miriam Bas Menachem, January 1, 20 Tevet - <http://hadranalach.com/2626>

Kemp Mill Toastmasters Speech Contest - Wednesday, February 22, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM, in the YISE Small Social Hall. Winner will compete in the next level of the Toastmasters International Speech Contest. Contact Manasseh Katz at president@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more information.

Alshich on the Parsha with Rabbi Levy - Shabbat afternoon between Mincha and Maariv in the Franco Beit Midrash.

Zoom Shiurim with Rabbi Levy - Monday through Friday on Zoom, Meeting ID: 636 563 5989. Alshich - 9:20 AM - 10:15 AM. Gemara Ribit 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM. Hilchot Lashon Hara 12:45 PM - 1:45 PM.

In G-d We Trust - Exploring the relationship and balance between Relying on G-d/Bitachon & Human Endeavor/Hishtadlus, based on the teachings of 11th century scholar, Rabbeinu Bachya's Treatise on Trust - Shaar Habitachon. Wednesdays, 12:15 PM - 1:00 PM on Zoom, Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps. To register, visit <https://linksgw.org/classes>

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, currently learning Bava Metzia. 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.

TGN Program: Siddur Class - In-Depth Analysis of the Siddur 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

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. 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, 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 February 19	Monday, Feb. 20 Washington's Birthday	Tuesday, Feb. 21 Rosh Chodesh	Wednesday, Feb. 22 Rosh Chodesh	Thursday February 23	Friday February 24
Shacharis	Ashkenazi (S, B, B)	6:30, 7:30, 8:45	6:30, 7:30, 8:45	6:15, 6:35, 8:45	6:15, 6:35, 8:45	6:15, 6:45, 8:45	6:15, 6:55, 8:45
	Sephardi (LBM)	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
Mincha / Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)	5:35	5:35	5:35 / 7:30	5:35 / 7:30	5:35 / 7:30	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi (LBM)	5:30	5:30	5:30	5:30	5:30	

Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 5:35 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 6:02 AM, Latest Netz: 6:55 AM,
Latest Krias Shema: 9:34 AM, Earliest Mincha: 12:53 PM, Earliest Shkia: 5:49 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 6:37 PM

Next Shabbos

February 24 - 25, 2023 - 4 Adar 5783
Parshas Terumah

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 5:37
- Mincha: 5:40 (B), 5:35 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM), 9:15 (Teen, H)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:35 (B), 5:30 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 6:37

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, February 22, 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 Email: office@yise.org

Website: www.yise.org

Office Hours: Closed Monday

Tuesday - Thursday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM,

Friday: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum Yale Ginsburg - President

Rabbi Yosef Postelnek - Asst. Rabbi Simi Franco - Office Manager

YISE

For 6th grade girls

71322



Bat

Mitzvah

CLUB

Hear inspiring words from Rebbetzin Aliza Postelnek!

Pizza Melaveh Malka!

Enjoy crafting name bracelets!

Spend fun time with friends!

MOTZEI SHABBAS, FEB 18TH

YISE "THE HOUSE"

1128 ARCOLA AVE

8:30PM-10PM

RSVP to

BATMITZVAHPROGRAM@YISE.ORG

COST: \$10 per person

Made with PosterMyWall.com

YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH
ANNUAL BANQUET

GUESTS OF HONOR

Judy & Stuart
Rosenthal

YOUNG LEADERSHIP AWARD

Sara & Josh Katz

YOUTH HONOREES

Yosef Drang
Leora Goldfeiz
Devorah Hershenson
Rafi Moses
Zev Ravin
Eli Shimoff
Shayna Towler

February 26, 2023
6 Adar, 5783
6:00 PM

YISE Social Hall
1132 Arcola Ave

For dinner reservations and
journal advertising, please visit:
www.yise.org/banquet



YISE YOUTH PRESENTS

Dor L'Dor

**FAMILY
LEARNING
2022-23**

Made with PosterMyWall.com

SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2022
7:00 PM

SATURDAY 3 DECEMBER 2022
7:00 PM

SATURDAY 10 DECEMBER 2022
7:00 PM

SATURDAY 31 DECEMBER 2022
7:00 PM

SATURDAY 14 JANUARY 2023
7:15 PM

SATURDAY 28 JANUARY 2023
7:30 PM

SATURDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2023
7:45 PM

SATURDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2023
8:00 PM

SATURDAY 11 MARCH 2023
8:00 PM



Please email mshimoff@yise.org
if you would like to sponsor

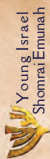


YISE Youth Presents
**PRESIDENT'S DAY
LEARNING AND PIZZA!**

For Boys in Grades 7-12
Monday, February 20 11:00 AM
YISE Social Hall
with
Rabbi Hillel Shaps of
The Greater Washington Community Kollel

★ ★




 Young Israel
Shomrai Eimuna

A Pre-Purim
Melava Malka & Shiur
 — ♦ — For Men ♦ —
 With Rabbi Postelnek

**Seeing the
Bigger Picture**
 Mordechai's fight against Haman's evil words
 as it relates to our own personal lives

♦ — ♦
 Motzai Shabbos
 March 4th • 8:45 PM
 At the home of Rami & Arly Mandelbaum
 1008 Kersey Road




 YOUNG ISRAEL
SHOMRAI EIMUNAH

A New Mini-Series for Women!
 by Rabbi Postelnek

**Practical
Prayer**
 for a Busy Life

□ **Tues. Feb. 14 at 8:15 pm**
Guilt & Stress free: Understanding and
 Connecting to the Basic Obligation of Tefillah

□ **Tues. Feb. 28 at 8:15 pm**
The Busiest Day of the Year:
 Applying the Paradigm of Purim to Our
 Everyday Life

At the Home of Blima and Alex Maged
812 Kersey Road

Seeing the Hand of Hashem... In Nature In History In Our Own Lives

A lecture series presented by the Meaningful Tefilah Project
at Young Israel Shomrai Emenah.
Co-sponsored by Kemp Mill Synagogue



Sunday, March 5 at 8 p.m.
**"Seeing the Hand of Hashem
in Modern History"**

Belonofsky Sanctuary, Young Israel

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum, Young Israel Shomrai Emenah.
Live presentation followed by refreshments in the social hall.

**All lectures on Seeing the Hand of Hashem
in Nature and History are now available at
wp.yise.org/hand-of-hashem**

***This presentation will also be
available shortly after the event.***



To support this year-long series as a sponsor, send your check (\$36, \$72, \$180) made out to YISE
(memo: Meaningful Tefilah) to: YISE, 1132 Arcola Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20902



YISE YOUTH PRESENTS PURIMFEST

• 2023

SUNDAY, MARCH 5

YISE SOCIAL HALL

CHESED PROJECT!

SHOW BY MAD SCIENCE!

DELICIOUS HAMENTASCHEN!

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

DOORS OPEN/CHESED PROJECT 1 PM

ENTERTAINMENT BEGINS 1:30 PM

QUESTIONS? EMAIL [JMARCUS@YISE.ORG](mailto:jmarcus@yise.org)



Young Israel Shomrai Emunah of Greater Washington

Shalosh Seudos / Seudah Shlishit Program

Upcoming Dates:

February 4, 2023
February 11, 2023
March 4, 2023
March 25, 2023
May 6, 2023
June 3, 2023

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Shabbat Shalom

Volume 29, Issue 18

Shabbat Shekalim - Parashat Mishpatim

5783 - B"H

Covenant Conversation: R. Jonathan Sacks, z"l

Healing the Heart of Darkness - Jobbik, otherwise known as the Movement for a Better Hungary, is an ultra-nationalist Hungarian political party that has been described as fascist, neo-Nazi, racist, and antisemitic. It has accused Jews of being part of a "cabal of western economic interests" attempting to control the world: the libel otherwise known as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a fiction created by members of the Czarist secret service in Paris in the late 1890s and revealed as a forgery by The Times in 1921. On one occasion the Jobbik party asked for a list of all the Jews in the Hungarian government. Disturbingly, in the Hungarian parliamentary elections in April 2014 it secured over 20 per cent of the votes, making it the third largest party.

Until 2012, one of its leading members was a politician in his late 20s, Csanad Szegedi. Szegedi was a rising star in the movement, widely regarded as its future leader. Until one day in 2012. That was the day Szegedi discovered he was a Jew.

Some of Jobbik's members had wanted to stop his progress and spent time investigating his background to see whether they could find anything that would do him damage. What they found was that his maternal grandmother was a Jewish survivor of Auschwitz. So was his maternal grandfather. Half of Szegedi's family were killed during the Holocaust.

Szegedi's opponents started sharing information about Jewish ancestry online. Soon Szegedi himself discovered what was being said and decided to check whether the claims were true. They were. After Auschwitz, his grandparents, once Orthodox Jews, had decided to hide their identity completely. When his mother was 14, her father had told her the secret but ordered her not to reveal it to anyone. Szegedi now knew the truth about himself.

Szegedi decided to resign from the party and find out more about Judaism. He went to a local Chabad Rabbi, Slomó Köves, who at first thought he was joking. Nonetheless he arranged for Szegedi to attend classes on Judaism and to come to the synagogue. At first, Szegedi says, people were shocked. He was treated by some as "a leper." But he persisted. Today he attends synagogue, keeps Shabbat, has learned Hebrew, calls himself Dovid, and in 2013 underwent circumcision (with an ultra-Orthodox mohel).

When he first admitted the truth about his Jewish ancestry, one of his friends in the Jobbik party said, "The best thing would be if we shoot you, so you can be buried as a pure Hungarian." Another urged him to make a public apology. It was this comment, he says, that made him leave the party. "I thought, wait a minute, I am supposed to apologise for the fact that my family was killed at Auschwitz?"

As the realisation that he was a Jew began to change his life, it also transformed his understanding of the world. Today, he says, his focus as a politician is to defend human rights for everyone. "I am aware of my responsibility, and I know I will have to make it right in the future."

Szegedi's story is not just a curiosity. It takes us to the very heart of the strange, fraught nature of our existence as moral beings. What makes us human is the fact that we are rational, reflective, capable of thinking things through. We feel empathy and sympathy, and this begins early. Even newborn babies cry when they hear another child cry. We have mirror neurons in the brain that make us wince when

we see someone else in pain. Homo sapiens is the moral animal.

Yet much of human history has been a story of violence, oppression, injustice, corruption, aggression and war. Nor, historically, has it made a significant difference whether the actors in this story have been barbarians or citizens of a high civilisation.

The Greeks of antiquity, masters of art, architecture, drama, poetry, philosophy and science, wasted themselves on the internecine Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta in the last quarter of the fifth century BCE. They never fully recovered. It was the end of the golden age of Greece. Fin de siècle Paris and Vienna in the 1890s were the leading centres of European civilisation. Yet they were also the world's leaders in antisemitism, Paris with the Dreyfus Affair, Vienna with its antisemitic mayor, Karl Lueger, whom Hitler later cited as his inspiration.

When we are good we are little lower than the angels. When we are bad we are lower than the beasts. What makes us moral? And what, despite it all, makes humanity capable of being so inhumane?

Plato thought that virtue was knowledge. If we know something is wrong, we will not do it. All vice is the result of ignorance. Teach people the true, the good, and the beautiful and they will behave well. Aristotle held that virtue was habit, learned in childhood till it becomes part of our character.

David Hume and Adam Smith, two intellectual giants of the Scottish Enlightenment, thought that morality came from emotion, fellow feeling. Hume said the most remarkable feature of human nature is the "propensity we have to sympathise with others." Adam Smith began his Theory of Moral Sentiments with the words, "How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it." Immanuel Kant, the supreme rationalist, believed that rationality itself was the source of morality. A moral principle is one you are willing to prescribe for everyone. Therefore, for example, lying cannot be moral because you do not wish others to lie to you.

All five views have some truth to them, and we can find similar sentiments in the rabbinic literature. In the spirit of Plato, the Sages spoke of the tinok shenishba, someone who does wrong because he or she was not educated to know what is right. Maimonides, like Aristotle, thought virtue came from repeated practice. Halachah creates habits of the heart. The Rabbis said that the angels of kindness and charity argued for the creation of man because we naturally feel for others, as Hume and Smith argued. Kant's principle is similar to what the Sages called *sevarah*, "reason."

But these insights only serve to deepen the question. If knowledge, emotion, and reason lead us to be moral, why is it that humans hate, harm and kill? A full answer would take longer than a lifetime, but the short answer is simple. We are tribal animals. We form ourselves into groups. Morality is both cause and consequence of this fact. Toward people with whom we are or feel ourselves to be related we are capable of altruism. But toward strangers we feel fear, and that fear is capable of turning us into monsters.

Morality, in Jonathan Haidt's phrase, binds and blinds. It binds us to others in a bond of reciprocal altruism. But it also blinds us to the humanity of those who stand outside that bond. It unites and divides. It divides because it unites. Morality turns the "I" of self interest into the "We" of the common good. But the very act of creating an "Us" simultaneously creates a "Them," the people not like us. Even the most universalistic of religions, founded on principles of love and compassion, have often viewed those outside the faith as Satan, the infidel, the antichrist, the child of darkness, the unredeemed. Large groups of their followers have committed unspeakable acts of brutality in the name of God.

Neither Platonic knowledge nor Adam Smith's moral sense nor Kantian reason has cured the heart of darkness in the human condition. That is why two sentences blaze through today's parsha like the sun emerging from behind thick clouds:

You must not mistreat or oppress the stranger in any way. Remember, you yourselves were once strangers in the land of Egypt.

You must not oppress strangers. You know what it feels like to be a stranger, for you yourselves were once strangers in the land of Egypt.

The great crimes of humanity have been committed against the stranger, the outsider, the one-not-like-us. Recognising the humanity of the stranger has been the historic weak point in most cultures. The Greeks saw non-Greeks as barbarians. Germans called Jews vermin, lice, a cancer in the body of the nation. In Rwanda, Hutus called Tutsis *inyenzi*, cockroaches. Dehumanise the other and all the moral forces in the world will not save us from evil. Knowledge is silenced, emotion anaesthetised and reason perverted. The Nazis convinced themselves (and others) that in exterminating the Jews they were performing a moral service for the Aryan race. Suicide bombers are convinced that they are acting for the greater glory of God. There is such a thing as altruistic evil.

That is what makes these two commands so significant. The Torah emphasises the point time and again: the Rabbis said that the command to love the stranger appears thirty-six times in the Torah. Jewish law is here confronting directly the fact that care for the stranger is not something for which we can rely on our normal moral resources of knowledge, empathy and rationality. Usually we can, but under situations of high stress, when we feel our group threatened, we cannot. The very inclinations that bring out the best in us – our genetic inclination to make sacrifices for the sake of kith and kin – can also bring out the worst in us when we fear the stranger. We are tribal animals and we are easily threatened by the members of another tribe.

Note that these commands are given shortly after the Exodus. Implicit in them is a very radical idea indeed. Care for the stranger is why the Israelites had to experience exile and slavery before they could enter the Promised Land and build their own society and state. You will not succeed in caring for the stranger, implies God, until you yourselves know in your very bones and sinews what it feels like to be a stranger. And lest you forget, I have already commanded you to remind yourselves and your

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children of the taste of affliction and bitterness every year on Pesach. Those who forget what it feels like to be a stranger, eventually come to oppress strangers, and if the children of Abraham oppress strangers, why did I make them My covenantal partners?

Empathy, sympathy, knowledge, and rationality are usually enough to let us live at peace with others. But not in hard times. Serbs, Croats and Muslims lived peaceably together in Bosnia for years. So did Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda. The problem arises at times of change and disruption when people are anxious and afraid. That is why exceptional defenses are necessary, which is why the Torah speaks of memory and history – things that go to the very heart of our identity. We have to remember that we were once on the other side of the equation. We were once strangers: the oppressed, the victims. Remembering the Jewish past forces us to undergo role reversal. In the midst of freedom we have to remind ourselves of what it feels like to be a slave.

What happened to Csanad, now Dovid, Szegeedi, was exactly that: role reversal. He was a hater who discovered that he belonged among the hated. What cured him of antisemitism was his role-reversing discovery that he was a Jew. That, for him, was a life-changing discovery. The Torah tells us that the experience of our ancestors in Egypt was meant to be life-changing as well. Having lived and suffered as strangers, we became the people commanded to care for strangers.

The best way of curing antisemitism is to get people to experience what it feels like to be a Jew. The best way of curing hostility to strangers is to remember that we too – from someone else's perspective – are strangers. Memory and role-reversal are the most powerful resources we have to cure the darkness that can sometimes occlude the human soul.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"You must help repeatedly with him" And these are the mishpatim [laws of moral justice] which you [Moses] shall set before Israel." These opening words of our portion join together our civil law with the Ten Commandments of last week's portion of Yitro, creating one unit of Divine demands for moral justice emanating from Sinai. Additionally, it is the concept of "mishpatim" that directly links Moses to our first patriarch, Abraham.

You will remember that God "chose [and loved] Abraham because he commands... his household after Him to keep the way of the Lord, doing righteousness and justice". These twin ideals of our nation come up again and again; the prophet Isaiah insists that "Israel will be redeemed through justice, and those who return to her [after the exiles] through righteousness," and the prophet Jeremiah exhorts us to understand that neither wisdom nor power nor wealth ought be sought after and praised, but praise is only deserved by people who do the following: "Contemplate and know Me, for I am the Lord who does loving-kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these is My desire". And it is important to note that this teaching of Jeremiah is in the Prophetic portion chanted on Tisha Be'av, the memorial day for the destruction of our Temples and our loss of sovereignty over our land.

It is easy to understand the meaning and significance of moral justice; everyone realizes that without law and order it would be impossible for a just society and a free world to endure. But precisely what is the meaning of righteousness (tzedaka)? The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Bible) translates the word as *kharitas*, as in the Hebrew *hen* – graciousness, undeserved gifts; this is obviously the origin of our English word and concept, charity. But is that really a proper understanding of the Hebrew

tzedaka, an undeserved handout? Is that what the Bible expects the Jews to teach the world to do?

As is necessary when attempting to understand the meaning of an ambiguous "key word," let us examine its usage in another central biblical passage.

We are commanded to demonstrate human sensitivity in all our interpersonal dealings. Therefore, we find in the Book of Deuteronomy: "When you make your fellow a loan of any amount, you may not enter his home to take a security pledge for it. You must stand outside and the man to whom you gave the loan shall bring to you the security pledge outside. And if the [borrower] is poor, you may not sleep with his security pledge [which would usually be a cloak]. He [the lender] must return the security pledge to the [borrower] as soon as the sun sets, so that the borrower will sleep in his garment and bless you. For you [the lender] it will be an act of tzedaka before the Lord your God."

The Hebrew word tzedek is usually translated as justice, precise and exact treatment of each side. Tzedaka is apparently a different noun, although certainly related to tzedek. The Talmud logically rules that the lender acquires ownership over the security pledge until the loan is repaid; hence, there is no legal obligation on the part of the lender to return the pledge to enable the borrower to cover himself with it on a cold night.

Tzedaka is therefore the amalgamation of loving-kindness with justice; it is compassionate righteousness.

The Bible does not believe in dealing with poverty by giving undeserved handouts. Yes, those who have more than they require are responsible to help the poor; but the poor are likewise responsible to help themselves. Hence, although there is a tithe for the poor twice in the seven-year sabbatical cycle, that is only a comparatively small amount; every landowner must put away a portion of land for the poor to plow and seed and nurture and reap, so that the poor in Israel can rise each morning to go to work and earn their daily bread. Witness the magnificent picture presented in the Scroll of Ruth, and how the landless and poverty-stricken returnee immigrant mother-in-law and Moabite convert daughter-in-law respectfully worked in gainful employment every day in the fields of Boaz.

This week's portion teaches: "If you see the donkey of your enemy crouching under its burden, would you refrain from helping him? You must help again and again with him." Yes, stipulates the Talmud, you must help even your enemy, but only if he works together with you; you are responsible for him – he, too, is your brother – but no more than he is responsible for himself. Only if he is physically unable to help himself must you lift up the animal without his input.

The Mishna teaches that "One who says that 'mine is mine and yours is yours' travels the middle of the road, perhaps even the golden mean; 'mine is yours and yours is mine' is an ignoramus; 'mine is yours and yours is yours' goes beyond the requirement of the law; 'yours is mine and mine is mine' is wicked."

I would argue that a society in which the poor do not assume responsibility but only demand entitlement is destined to fail.

The only answer is compassionate righteousness, whereby the wealthy are entitled to the fruits of their grains and labor while at the same time encouraged – sometimes even mandated – to share their bounty; a society where everyone who wishes to help improve their lot is given the wherewithal to do so.

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersch Weinreb

Careers - "What do you want to be when you grow up?" That was once the standard question to ask an eight- or nine-year-old when trying to make conversation with him or her. Somehow, every child

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had an answer, which ranged from "fireman" to "football player" to "nurse."

It seems to me that we don't ask that question of children these days, at least not as frequently as we used to. Perhaps we are afraid to put pressure upon them. Or perhaps ambition is no longer viewed as a positive value, as it once was.

The fact is that our tradition does value ambition, if it leads to some positive goal. A career which helps a person support himself and his family is one such goal. A career which serves the community is another.

Which careers are especially valued by the Torah? This week's Torah portion, Parshat Mishpatim, provides us with an occasion to reflect upon one highly valued career, serving on a court of law as a judge.

Our parsha begins with the verse, "These are the rules that you shall set before them." Rashi understands the phrase "before them" to mean that questions regarding these rules must be adjudicated by Jewish judges familiar with the rules which are outlined in the ensuing several chapters of the parsha. Already in last week's parsha, Yitro, we learned that Moses saw the role of judge as being one of his leadership responsibilities. Only at the advice of his father-in-law did he assign the role of judge to a hierarchy of others. Judgeship is thus one of the first careers prescribed by the Torah.

The Talmud has something to say about just how noble a career judgeship is and in the process recommends several other excellent career paths for "nice Jewish boys." I am referring to the following passage in the tractate Bava Batra 8b, which in turn interprets two biblical verses: "The knowledgeable will be radiant like the bright expanse of sky, and those who lead the many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever".

'The knowledgeable' are the judges who adjudicate the law with absolute truthfulness, as well as those who serve the community as trustees who distribute charity (*gabba'ei tzedakah*). 'Those who lead the many' are the schoolteachers of young children...

And as for Torah scholars? To them, the following verse applies: "May His beloved be as the sun rising in might!"

There we have it. Four admirable careers are set forth by the Talmud: the judiciary, involvement in the distribution of charity, primary education, and Torah scholarship...

Truth to tell, each one of us individually must strive to incorporate into our behavior all four of these career roles. We are all "judges," even if not clothed in judicial robes or sitting in judicial chambers. We are constantly called upon to judge others in all sorts of ways, and we must always attempt to honestly judge ourselves.

We all must decide how to distribute our charitable resources: the time we give to the community and the money we contribute to the needy.

We are all teachers; if not in the classroom, then in the family and synagogue and shopping mall.

And we certainly must all, according to our intellectual limitations and the restrictions that time places upon us, be diligent in our Torah study and become as knowledgeable in Torah as we possibly can.

From this perspective, each and every one of us is called upon to discharge the duties of our "careers:" judge others without bias; distribute our resources compassionately and fairly; teach little children in some appropriate manner; and, above all, study Torah.

If we do, then we are all worthy of being called luminaries as bright as the bright expanse of the sky, shining like the stars at night, and lighting up the world like the sun by day. [Excerpted]

This week, the *Shabbat* preceding *Rosh Chodesh Adar*, we will read *Parashat Shekalim* in addition to the weekly *Parashah*, commemorating the bringing of the annual half-*Shekel* tax that funded the public *Korbanot* in the *Bet Hamikdash*. Since the Temple's fiscal year began on the first of *Nissan*, the collection of the half-*Shekel* would begin a month earlier.

Parashat Shekalim begins (*Shmot* 30:12-13), "When you take a census of (literally, 'When you uplift') *Bnei Yisrael* . . . This shall they give--everyone who passes through the census-- a half *Shekel* of the sacred *Shekel*." In connection with this verse, the *Midrash Tanchuma* relates that Moshe said to *Hashem*, "When I die, I will be forgotten." *Hashem* replied, "Just as you are here now teaching *Parashat Shekalim* and uplifting *Bnei Yisrael*, so every year, when they read *Parashat Shekalim*, it will be as if you are standing before Me and uplifting them." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

What was Moshe's concern, and what was *Hashem's* answer? R' Shlomo Yehuda Tabak z"l (1832-1907; *Av Bet Din* of Sighet, Hungary, and a prominent *Halachic* authority) explains:

Earlier works say that once the Jewish People have angered *Hashem* completely, a *Tzaddik* cannot save them from harm unless he is in danger as well. This is why, at the time of the Golden Calf, *Hashem* told Moshe (32:7), "Go, descend, for your People that you brought up from Egypt has become corrupt." Moshe had to be among the Jewish People in order to pray for them. Thus, he was concerned that he would lose the ability to pray for the Jewish People--he would be "forgotten"--when he died. No, said *Hashem*, because the *Mitzvah* of giving a half-*Shekel* will "uplift" them, so they will be on a higher level and you can pray for them from afar, i.e., even after your death. (*Likkutei Erech Shai*)

Shabbat

We saw in a prior issue that there is a *Mitzvah* of "Oneg Shabbat" / making the *Shabbat* a "delight," and that that *Mitzvah* is fulfilled specifically through physical pleasures, such as eating and drinking. Why is this so?

The *Midrash Tanna D'vei Eliyahu* (ch.26) states: If one makes the *Shabbat* an "Oneg," it is as if he honors G-d, as it is written (*Yeshayah* 58:13), "If you proclaim the *Shabbat* 'Oneg,' the Holy One, *Hashem*, 'Honored One' . . ." This teaches that "If you proclaim the *Shabbat* 'Oneg,'" then you are proclaiming "the Holy One, *Hashem*, 'Honored One'." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Eliyahu E. Dessler *shlita* (*Mashgiach Ruchani* of the Ponovezh Yeshiva in Bnei Brak; not to be confused with his cousin and namesake, the *Michtav M'Eliyahu*) asks: By sitting and eating, we honor *Hashem*?!

He explains: Though they seem to be two separate *Mitzvot*, the *Mitzvah* of *Oneg Shabbat* and the *Mitzvah* of *Kavod* / honor of *Shabbat* serve the same purpose--to highlight that *Shabbat* is different from all other days. In particular, having special *Shabbat* delicacies is meant to raise the stature of *Shabbat* in our eyes. (*Sha'arei Ha'zemanim: Shabbat Kodesh* ch.3)

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"I shall not drive them away from you in a single year, lest the Land become desolate and the wildlife of the field multiply against you. Little by little shall I drive them away from you, until you become fruitful and make the Land your heritage." (23:29-30)

Midrash Tanchuma mentions our verse when it describes the reward *Hashem* promised Avraham Avinu for hosting the three angels. Specifically, commenting on Avraham's words (*Bereishit* 18:4), "Let a little water be taken," the *Midrash* relates that *Hashem* said to Avraham: "Because you said, 'Let [there] be taken,' I will give your descendants the *Mitzvah* of *Korban Pesach*, about which it says (*Shmot* 12:3), 'They shall take for themselves -- each man -- a lamb or kid...' Because you said, 'A little,' I will drive out your descendants' enemies little-by-little [so that *Bnei Yisrael* can settle the Land as they conquer it and wild animals will not take it over, as promised in our verse]. Because you said, 'Water,' I will give your descendants water in the desert." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

Why is Avraham rewarded for saying that he will bring "a little" water? R' Uri Weisblum *shlita* (*Mashgiach Ruchani* of Yeshivat Nachalat Ha'levi'im in Haifa, Israel) explains:

The *Gemara* (*Bava Metzia* 87a) derives from Avraham's interactions with the angels that "The righteous say little and do a lot." Avraham offered the angels bread, but he brought them an entire meal. In contrast, "The wicked say a lot and do not do even a little"--like Efron, who first offered to give away the *Me'arat Ha'machpelah* for free, and then demanded an exorbitant price for it. R' Weisblum writes: The above *Midrash* is teaching us that "*Tzadikim* say little" does not mean only that they say few words; it also means that they downplay their own words. He explains: If Avraham had said, "Let water be taken" (without "a little"), it would have meant "unlimited water." And, certainly, Avraham would have given his guests as much water as they wanted. However, by saying "a little" water, Avraham was modestly downplaying his kindness. For that proper use of speech, he certainly deserved a reward! (*He'arat Ha'derech* p.319)

- Continued from facing page -

The *Vizhnitzer Rebbe* continues: R' Yeshayah Halevi Horowitz z"l (the *Shelah Hakadosh*; Prague and Yerushalayim; died 1630) writes that the ox is forbidden because any object that was a source of harm should be despised and we should be prohibited to benefit from it. Indeed, the *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 149b) teaches that if Person A was punished because of Person B, Person B is not admitted to *Hashem's* "inner sanctum." (This is a reason to promptly forgive those who wrong us.) The lesson for us, concludes the *Vizhnitzer Rebbe*, is that one should take extreme care never to be the source of harm to another. (*Torat Mordechai*)

"And these are the civil laws that you shall place before them." (21:1)

R' Yehoshua Heschel (Harry) Kaufman *shlita* (rabbi in Washington, D.C., and Montreal) asks: Why doesn't our *Parashah* open with, "And *Hashem* spoke to Moshe, to say," as do most legal sections of the Torah?

He answers: The *Gemara* (*Sanhedrin* 6b) records a three-way dispute whether a *Bet Din* / rabbinical court should set aside the letter of the law and make a *Pesharah* / mutually agreeable settlement between the parties. One Sage says that *Pesharah* is prohibited, a second says that it is permitted, and a third says that it is a *Mitzvah*. The *Shulchan Aruch* rules in accordance with the third opinion, i.e., that *Pesharah* is a *Mitzvah*. In this vein, R' Yaakov ben Asher z"l (the "*Ba'al Ha'turim*"; Germany and Spain; 1269-1343) notes that the Hebrew word "*Ha'mishpatim*" / "the civil laws" is an acronym of a Hebrew sentence that means: "A judge is obligated to make a *Pesharah* before he judges in accordance with the letter of the law" (*"הַדִּיין מְצוּהָ שִׁיעֵשָׁה פְּשָׁרָה טָרָם יַעֲשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט"*).

Therefore, concludes Rabbi Kaufman, the Torah did not open our *Parashah*, which presents the laws of monetary dealings between individuals, with, "And *Hashem* spoke to Moshe, to say." Had the Torah done so, one might have thought, incorrectly, that these laws are absolute commands, leaving no room for judges to reach compromises or promote settlements. (*Ohr Yehoshua*)

"If an ox shall gore a man or woman and he shall die, the ox shall surely be stoned; its flesh may not be eaten..." (21:28)

Rashi explains: Of course the ox may not be eaten after it was stoned, as it was not *Schechted* / slaughtered properly! The verse is teaching that even if one did slaughter the animal according to *Halachah* after the sentence of stoning had been pronounced, but before it was carried out, the meat may not be eaten. [Until here paraphrased from *Rashi*.]

R' Mordechai Hager z"l (1922-2018; *Vizhnitz-Monsey Rebbe*) explains: One could ask, "Why should an ox be stoned for goring a person? Oxen do not have free will!" In fact, even when one human harms another person or his property, one could argue that the aggressor should not be liable, because he could not have done harm if it had not been G-d's will. Nevertheless, one who does harm does deserve to be punished, because he chose with his free will to do harm or, at least, to be careless. Also, there is a principle: "*Megalgin chovah al yedei chayav*"--if *Hashem* chooses someone to be His agent to carry out a decree against someone else, it is a sign that the agent is himself lacking in some way, so he must repent. But, this reasoning does not apply to oxen, which have no free will!

- Continued in box on facing page -

ISRAEL REPORT

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

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ROCKETS SHOT INTO SOUTHERN ISRAEL; IDF STRIKES HAMAS ROCKET PRODUCTION ASSETS (Ynet 2/13/23)

Israel's military said it had struck Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip early Monday in retaliation for a rocket shot at Israel from the Palestinian enclave over the weekend.

Shortly after the announcement, rocket sirens woke residents of Israeli communities near Gaza as they ran to safety in shelters.

Out of the four rockets shot into southern Israel, the IDF downed three.

At 4:11 a.m. Israeli time, rocket sirens went off in Sderot and nearby areas, followed by another siren in Ruhama several miles east at 4:38 a.m.

The Israel Defense Forces said fighter jets targeted an underground complex used to make rockets, responding to an earlier rocket over the weekend. A rocket was shot down by Israel's Iron Dome missile defense on Saturday, as residents in communities near Gaza fled to bomb shelters for safety.

After the barrage, Israeli tanks targeted another facility used to make rockets. The military said it "holds Hamas responsible for all terrorist activity emanating from Gaza and it will face the consequences of the security violations against Israel."

This comes amid a wave of terrorist attacks that have led to rockets launched from Gazan terrorist groups. A Palestinian rammed a bus stop on Friday in deadly Jerusalem attack that killed three, including children.

In response to the continuing terrorism, Israel's security cabinet on Sunday evening voted to legalize nine settlements built without the state's permission in the West Bank.

ISRAEL PASSES LAW TO STRIP CITIZENSHIP FROM CLAIMANTS OF PAY-FOR-SLAY TERROR STIPENDS (i24NEWS 2/15/23)

The Israeli parliament (Knesset) on Wednesday passed a law to strip the citizenship from claimants of the Palestinian Authority's (PA) "pay-for-slay" terror stipends.

Ramallah has a longstanding — and widely condemned — policy of compensating terrorists and their families. It extends to Palestinians jailed by Israel for acts of or links to terrorism, as well as those wounded or killed while committing violent terror attacks. Even those Palestinians who hold Israeli citizenship were eligible for the compensation, until now.

Israel has sought to clamp down on the policy by deducting money from tax revenues it collects on behalf of the West Bank's PA. Under a 2018 law, Israel calculates each year how much it believes the PA paid in stipends to terrorists and deducts that amount from the tax revenues.

"Our answer to terrorism is to hit it hard," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wrote on Twitter following the parliamentary vote, tagging the bill's author Ofir Katz, a lawmaker from Netanyahu's Likud party.

The final of the bill's three readings in parliament saw it pass 94-10, in a show of cooperation between the government and the opposition.

Parliamentarians approved "the revocation of citizenship or residency of a terrorist operative who receives compensation (from the PA) for committing an act of terrorism," according to an official statement.

FOLLOWING TERROR WAVE, ISRAELI FIREARM LICENSE REQUESTS SPIKE BY 400% (JPost 2/14/23)

In the wake of the recent terrorist attacks, requests to get firearms licenses have spiked by 400%, as revealed Tuesday in a National Security Committee discussion on the National Security Ministry's Firearm Licensing Division.

The head of the division stated that "Until 2021, there were approximately 10,000 requests submitted annually. But in 2021, 20,000 applications were

submitted following Operation Guardian of the Walls."

In addition: "42,000 applications were submitted following the March 2022 wave of terrorist attacks."

In response, committee chairman MK Zvika Fogel (Otzma Yehudit) said: "Give guns to those who live where the risk and danger are high. Don't give guns to anyone who asks."

NEW POLL: MAJORITY OF ISRAELI PUBLIC WANTS TO STOP JUDICIAL LEGISLATION (Arutz-7 2/12/23)

A survey conducted by the Kantar Institute and published Sunday by Kan News found that about half of Israelis oppose Justice Minister Yariv Levin's planned judicial reform, as opposed to just a third who support it.

According to the survey, 50% said they opposed the judicial reform, only 28% said they supported it, and 23% were uncertain. Among those who had voted for coalition parties, 63% stated they were for it, and 15% against it.

The survey also found that a large majority supports holding dialogue before the coalition proceeds with the legislation. According to the results, 59% stated that the government should halt the legislation and have dialogue, and only 22% said to continue the reform as planned.

In addition, more than a third of those who voted for coalition parties said they support stopping the process to hold a dialogue between the sides. Less than half of the coalition voters (47%) said to continue as planned.

ISRAEL'S FORMER SUPREME COURT CHIEF CRITICIZES JUDICIAL OVERHAUL (i24NEWS 2/14/23)

Israel's former Supreme Court president Dorit Beinisch, the high court's first female chief justice, has been one of the most influential figures in the Israeli judicial system — a system that the Jewish state's new government is

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Natan Horowitz, Aaron Sisser, Editors-in-Chief

Moshe Anapolle, Avi Cohn, Ezra Halpert, Tani Lichtman, Yisrael Dovid Rosenberg, editors

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proposing to radically change.

In a special interview with i24news on Tuesday, Beinisch fiercely defended the court and criticized the proposed reforms, outlining where she sees possible compromise and where there can be no concessions. She also warned of the impact in Israel as well as abroad if the judicial overhaul goes ahead as planned.

"This reform has nothing to do with the judiciary. By my view, this is a regime reform," she told i24news, adding that any legislation must be frozen before any negotiations begin discussing a compromise between the two sides.

"The government wants to rule the court, and this is a dictatorship – when the government makes the decision, who will review them, and how they will be reviewed," she urged.

Last month, Israel's Justice Minister Yariv Levin announced a reform program including a "derogation clause" – allowing parliamentary members a vote to override decisions of the Supreme Court.

The key reform proposed would allow parliament to annul a decision of the Supreme Court with a simple majority vote. In Israel, which does not have a constitution, the Supreme Court currently has the authority to repeal laws it considers discriminatory. But some within the new government say the judiciary has accumulated too much authority, and seek to implement an "override clause" – allowing parliament to reinstate overturned laws.

"I'm really worried. There are certain components we can't accept, such as the override clause, which is undemocratic," she said.

"But let's say we accept it. It depends on how many parliament members can override the decision of the court. I think we can have an override clause on certain conditions, it's something we can compromise on."

ISRAEL PASSES 2 CLAUSES OF JUDICIAL REFORM IN FIRST READING (Ynet 2/13/23)

The Knesset's Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee on Monday approved in first reading two of the bills proposed in the judicial reform, with nine lawmakers voting in support of the legislation and seven opposing it.

The two clauses will change the composition of the judge selection committee, and restrict the Supreme Court from reviewing and changing Israel's basic laws.

This legislation acts as the basis of the government's plan to virtually eliminate the High Court's ability to impose checks and balances on Israel's parliament.

The approval represents the first steps in seeing through the controversial judicial reforms, which have been the source of multiple protests across the country for several weeks.

While the coalition and opposition members sparred over the two pieces of legislation, the committee was engulfed by intense shouting matches, singing, and dramatic exits.

Lawmaker Simcha Rothman removed opposition members that began singing. Chants of "Shame!" could be heard from protesters gathering outside the parliament.

One of the bills, written by Rothman himself, will prevent Israel's High Court from blocking legislation that contradicts one of Israel's basic laws, which acts as the country's de facto constitution.

"I welcome the initiative of the president to hold a real dialogue that will deal with ways to correct the judicial system, and to restore the relationship between it and the various government authorities," said Rothman.

"You will burn the country!" Idan Roll of the centrist Yesh Atid party told Rothman, the panel chairman from the hard-right Religious Zionism bloc before being ushered out.

Rothman's bill - called the "override clause" - would allow the Knesset to pass laws that go against the 12 Basic Laws without intervention from the court. The bill requires the court to agree unanimously that legislation is unconstitutional, and if even one of the 15 judges disagrees, the Knesset could repass the law with a majority.

Disruptions continued for over half an hour, preventing the committee from moving forward.

COALITION CANCELS VOTE ON KEY BILL IN JUDICIAL REFORM PACKAGE (Arutz-7 2/15/23)

The Coalition announced Wednesday afternoon that a planned vote on a key element of the Netanyahu government's judicial reform plan has been cancelled.

Following a debate earlier this week by the Knesset's Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, the Knesset plenum had been scheduled to vote Wednesday on the Override Clause, an amendment to the country's Basic Laws which would explicitly empower the Knesset to veto Supreme Court rulings overturning Knesset laws.

The bill, one of the most controversial in the judicial reform package, is aimed at curbing judicial activism by the high court – though some critics on the Right, such as attorney Yoram Sheftel have argued that without a constitution, the Supreme Court has no right to overturn Knesset laws. The Override Clause, they argue, effectively grants the Supreme Court a right to judicial review of Knesset laws.

In addition to the Override Clause bill, the Coalition also cancelled a vote planned for Wednesday on legislation aimed at allowing former Interior Minister Aryeh Deri to be appointed back to the government, after the Supreme Court overturned his appointment last month.

Coalition chairman Ofir Katz (Likud) said the decision to nix the planned votes was made in response to the request by President Isaac Herzog, in order to foster goodwill between the Coalition and the Opposition and in the hopes of facilitating talks towards a compromise.

However, the architects of the judicial reform plan – Constitution, Law and Justice Committee chairman MK Simcha Rothman (Religious Zionist Party) and Justice Minister Yariv Levin (Likud) denied the cancelling of Wednesday's votes constituted a concession to Opposition MKs on the judicial reform plan.

But Opposition Leader Yair Lapid quickly touted the cancellation of the votes as a victory.

"Every person who left their home to demonstrate with a flag and a sign can tell themselves that we fought together and we succeeded in delaying this bill which would crush democracy, which will not be brought for a vote today in the Knesset plenum."

SMOTRICH VOWS UNRESTRAINED BUILDING IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA DESPITE US OPPOSITION (Israel Hayom 2/15/23)

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich vowed on Tuesday to promote unrestrained construction in Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria, despite opposition from the Biden administration.

"The real answer to [Palestinian] terror is to continue to build, to continue to set roots in the Land of Israel," said Smotrich at a meeting of his Religious Zionist Party in Givat Harel, one of the nine outposts the Diplomatic-Security Cabinet on Sunday unanimously decided to legalize. "That is what we as a government, as a state, as a nation, must do. The settlement enterprise thrives thanks to the pioneers who have sustained it for many years, with great love and determination."

"The American response is entirely understandable," he continued, but the Biden "administration knows that this government is committed to the settlements. There's nothing wrong with two friends having disputes. They understand, and that's the way things will continue."

Smotrich further said that the government needed to remove all restrictions on fully developing Judea and Samaria, stressing, "This area must be treated exactly as any other part of the State of Israel, and that is what will happen." Smotrich, who also holds the post of minister in the Defense Ministry and has been tasked by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with overseeing the Civil Administration, said that he would soon advance plans to construct some additional 10,000 homes in Judea and Samaria.

In response, the US said it was "deeply troubled" by the prospective move to "advance reportedly nearly 10,000 settlement units and to begin a process to retroactively legalize nine outposts in the West Bank that were previously

illegal under Israeli law," according to a statement by Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Monday.

ISRAELI FUTURE LASERS CAN SHOOT DOWN IRANIAN DRONES, LIKE IN UKRAINE - TOP DEFENSE OFFICIAL (JPost 2/14/23)

Senior Defense Ministry official Brig.-Gen. (res.) Danny Gold on Tuesday said Israel's air defense lasers, when fully deployed in the future, could shoot down the drones Iran has been sending against Ukraine.

Speaking at the Artificial Intelligence (AI) conference at Tel Aviv University, the Director of MAFAT [Directorate of Defense Research & Development] said his ministry is working on developing "the next generation of using lasers."

He talked about multiple successful tests destroying rockets "with a very sophisticated laser weapons system... We have done the same for mortars, rockets and UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles), like the Iranian UAVs they are sending to Ukraine. The same concept of UAV, we can shoot them down."

In February 2022, then prime minister Naftali Bennett proclaimed that Israel's ability to use lasers had jumped forward and could be operational much sooner than people had expected.

Last month, Aviv Kohavi told The Jerusalem Post in an outgoing interview as IDF chief, "The laser defense system is truly great news. It will be both land- and air-based. I do want to be cautious regarding timeframes. In another two years, we expect to deploy systems along the Gaza Strip border to test this tool's effectiveness."

"It has worked very well in field tests. If this experiment works, and we continue to integrate and enhance the laser defense system over two years, we will move as fast as possible to deploy it across the entire North. I cannot commit to a specific number of years. I don't want to be optimistic and I also don't want to be pessimistic," he said.

Kohavi added, "I know that there has been great progress over the last three years and we invested a lot of money in this. We defined the laser defense system as having multiple benefits that we would need to invest a lot in. I am happy that it has progressed so much."

Next, he said that his ministry has designed an app "which is very fast and we change the operator [situation so] the operator doesn't need to be an expert in the field."

Moreover, he said, "We want to take the DNA revolution... and synthetic biology – we want to engineer things like viruses or germs to detect explosives in the field and then radiate some light and we can get the light withdrawn," in the process of destroying the explosives.

"This can also have medical uses, in engineering and with sensors. It's another emerging technology that is booming," he added.

ISRAEL BANS YOUNG PALESTINIANS FROM ENTERING THE COUNTRY FOR 'PEACE-BUILDING' MEETUPS (Ha'aretz 2/12/23)

The Israeli institution that oversees the West Bank is prohibiting Palestinians under the age of 22 from entering Israel to participate in organized peace-building activities. The new policy is expected to hamper the efforts of organizations which, among other goals, seek to foster encounters between Palestinian and Israeli youth.

A new directive by the Civil Administration states that entry to Israel will be limited to married individuals over the age of 22 and singles over 27, despite the fact that the programs run by some of the organizations are intended for teens and children.

Until now, Palestinians were allowed to enter at any age, provided there was no specific security reason to ban them. The organizations were informed of the new policy by text message several weeks ago, and the new procedure has yet to be posted on the Administration's website.

At a meeting this week between representatives of the organizations and Civil Administration officials, the latter said that the reason for the change in policy is that some organizations used the entry permits for other means, such as to allow Palestinians to work in Israel or to visit the Temple

Mount/Al-Aqsa compound.

Representatives of the administration said that the organizations may request special entry permits for young activists despite the new criteria, and such requests may be granted, but they noted that the policy is not expected to change.

Under the permit policy, the administration allocates entry permits to dozens of Israeli organizations for Palestinians to participate in meetings and workshops with Israeli peace activists. The administration had ruled that 500 entry permits would be allocated for that purpose, to be divided among the organizations.

"This is a very significant change," says Dr. Yael Broudo-Bahat, co-director of Women Wage Peace. "It directly harms our activities. Over the past year, we've been working with a Palestinian women's movement called Women of the Sun, and they routinely attend meetings with us."

Among the Palestinian activists are women in their 20s. "This is the future generation of peace. The policy is problematic, and sends a harsh message to Palestinian peace organizations and activists," she adds.

Broudo-Bahat says that her organization discovered that the policy had changed when she tried to obtain entry permits for a meeting to be held in late February, and the requests for the teens and young women were rejected. Later on, they managed to exempt these activists and arrange for entry permits for them, but the new policy remained in effect.

Doubi Schwartz, who runs a network of coexistence groups on behalf of umbrella organization Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP), told Haaretz that they need the permits to hold the organizations' regular activities, which seek to facilitate meetings between Israelis and Palestinians.

"The policy was changed now of all times, when there's more need than ever to expand our joint Israeli-Palestinian activities. We're very concerned that the new policy will compromise our ability to operate," he said.

The Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories said in response: "Israeli organization permits are designed to allow the activity of organizations who work to promote peace and joint activities. Insofar as the permits are long-term, they will be approved subject to the criteria. It should be noted that exceptional cases are regularly examined by the relevant professionals and receive the proper response."

ENDING THE RULE OF THE JUDICIAL OLIGARCHY (Dror Eydar, Israel Hayom 2/15/23)

The protesters taking to the streets are concerned that the proposed judicial reforms will result in unchecked powers. This is a valid concern: The checks and balances between the three branches of government are the foundation of democratic life.

But what if the judiciary is stronger than the other two branches and lacks proper restraints?

Currently, there is nothing that checks its powers except the justices' own free will and values. The anti-reform demonstrators have faith in those sitting on the highest court of the land – perhaps because they share their values. But many others do not have such confidence in them, having seen how they let their personal worldviews shape their rulings, especially on issues of religion and state, security, and nationhood.

The proponents of the reforms have for years seen how their freedom to decide on hot-button issues was time and again taken from them. Other than protest, they couldn't do anything because the court disagreed with them: It gave Israel's Basic Laws a special status even though the Knesset never gave it the right to do so. For a certain segment in Israeli society, it has been very convenient to have the courts "do its bidding" whenever there are insufficient votes in the parliament; among the justices, this camp has enjoyed a permanent majority on the bench.

Yes, Basic Laws are de facto chapters of a constitution and even the Supreme Court itself can make rulings based on Basic Law: The Judiciary. But it cannot rule on them because the court is not above the basic laws. But what stops the court from ruling on Basic Laws? Nothing, currently. It could decide to strike down Basic Law, and then the government would have to

accept the ruling in order to avoid a constitutional crisis. This is how, in the name of "substantial democracy", the court is undermining the very tenets of democracy. Why do we even bother electing members of Knesset if ultimately it is the court that decides what government laws and decisions are reasonable based on the justices' own views?

By granting itself the authority to rule on basic laws, the court's strength has become unparalleled compared with any other judicial branch in the world. Such power corrupts even the most righteous. This week's weekly Torah portion includes the verse, "You shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of those who have sight and perverts the words of the righteous" (Exodus 23:8). We normally see this prohibition as something that is directed at public officials, but it was originally about the judges in biblical times. The Talmud tells us that bribes can also take the form of one of the parties trying to cozy up to the judge in order to get a favorable ruling. If this was a danger in private cases, this is all the more relevant when issues of national importance reach the court.

A situation where justices enjoy unlimited power and are assumed to have better judgment than elected officials could result in blinding their eyes to the point that they don't see their fellow compatriots; it could also pervert their rulings so that they are slanted toward the social circle they belong to.

Israel is a Jewish democracy. The Law of Return is an existential part. Would there be anything that could stop the court from striking down that law if it decided that it is discriminatory and violates Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty? Are you, the protesters who have resisted any type of reform to the judiciary, certain that such a situation would never see the light of day? I am not; and neither are many others like me.

Human rights are first and foremost about the right of an individual to determine their own fate through the ballot box. Israelis have never placed their independent thinking and values in the hands of a judicial oligarchy, however smart it may be; we elected this government for this purpose – to win back our freedom.

WHY RELIGIOUS ZIONISTS ARE JOINING THE PROTESTS IN ISRAEL (Anton Goodman, Ha'aretz 2/15/23)

With poetic irony, the Torah portions read in synagogues in the last two weeks chronicle the early attempts of the Children of Israel to create and institutionalize a justice system.

Judging by the uncomfortable reactions of fellow synagogue-goers when Moses' father-in-law and a Midianite priest Jethro instructs him to establish a multi-leveled court system, I wasn't the only one feeling the incongruence between our ancient innovations and our current judicial backsliding.

Since the November elections, the tectonic plates under Israel's Religious Zionist community have been unsettled. There is a sense of friction and change in the air; as a visible left-wing, religious Jew, I have been bombarded by messages and whispered synagogue chatter from unlikely allies who feel that a political red line has been crossed. A senior rabbi from the Gush Etzion settlement bloc wrote to me that if this is religious Zionism, then he no longer feels like part of the community.

It is important to take stock and understand what has changed. There have always been specific political parties, such as the Mafdal, who catered to the religious Zionist community. But the last election was a watershed moment, with an extreme-right party claiming the exclusive rights to religious Zionism – a group which has developed into a heterogeneous spectrum of ideologies and identities.

The reaction was quick to come, with religious and social leaders voicing their dismay as ultra-nationalists Itamar Ben Gvir and Betzalel Smotrich stepped into senior ministerial roles.

While these responses were significant, they only represented the political periphery of religious Zionism. Hundreds attended the launch of a new movement entitled "The Faithful Left," but even so, it can hardly be defined as mainstream. Indeed, a 2016 Pew Research Study found that only 2 percent of religious Zionists self-identified as left-wing. But with 41 percent self-identifying as politically centrist it was only a matter of time before this

larger group would break their silence.

The coalition agreements of this new government provide a plethora of divisive issues that serve as a potential moment of truth for religious Zionists. These included changing the Basic Law of the Knesset, so that incitement of racism no longer disqualifies Knesset candidates – thereby enabling Ben Gvir's Kahanist cronies to run for office. Later, the coalition proposed legislation to fine and even imprison "immodestly" dressed women at the Western Wall, which sparked a woman from the religious Zionist community to protest by stripping down to her underwear at the site.

But the coalition legislation that has moved the fastest is the judicial overhaul – the conceptual baby of Religious Zionism MK Simcha Rothman and the influential Kohelet Policy Forum. The proposed reforms are pushing Israeli society to its breaking point, with hundreds of thousands taking to the streets in protest, and are also revealing the depth of the political fissure within the religious Zionist community.

Just days after the protest movement against the judicial reforms emerged, the religious Zionist presence within it began to grow. A WhatsApp group entitled "Religious. Zionist. Democrats" was formed last month, and within days over 1,000 people had joined it. Other social media groups of community members opposing the judicial plan sprouted, with membership growing to over 3,000.

These groups quickly organized into a physical presence at the demonstrations, making protest signs and providing transportation from Ra'anana and Modi'in to the Tel Aviv protests.

At the third weekly Tel Aviv demonstration, the group marched together and were received with spontaneous applause. A secular friend told me that she was deeply moved to see religious Jews at the demonstration, and that the crowd parted to make way for them to reach the front of the protest. This did not go unnoticed by the protest organizers.

At the following demonstration, one of the leaders of the group, Hagai Stadler, was invited to speak from the main stage. His speech provided insight into the sentiments of centrist religious Zionists: "I came here this evening to refute two conceptions," he said in his opening remarks, "the first – that Judaism and Democracy do not live in peace with each other; and the second – that democracy belongs only to the left."

This presence at protests, as Stadler's statement suggests, should not be mistaken for a religious Zionist embrace of leftism. Centrist Israel is aggressively protecting the status quo, whether that be by rejecting the anti-democratic judicial reforms, or refusing to consider broader social change to tackle existing democratic failures in our society. In line with this, Stadler was speaking to the hearts of the crowd, and also lowering the barrier for religious Zionists to join the protests.

This conscious distancing of the protests from left-wing ideology is prevalent throughout much of the protest movement. It is as much a strategy to provide a welcoming space for the right as it is an opportunity to further entrench the delegitimization of left-wing values.

It should be mentioned that this is not the case across the whole protest movement, which is remarkably diverse, and on a local level exhibits much more tolerance for anti-occupation and pro-Palestinian activism, which have met with resistance – and even violence – at some of the major protests.

The impact of religious Zionists participating in the protest movement cannot be overstated or taken for granted. We should remember that religious Zionists were notably absent from the 2011 social protest movement, with some suggesting that the call to more fairly reallocate resources was seen as a threat to settlement funding.

As a political outlier in the religious Zionist community, often at odds with the mainstream, I am hoping that this involvement in the protest movement can be leveraged for broader change. This might even be the inflection point that makes religious Zionists rethink their political interests and challenge the hegemony of ultra-nationalism and the spiritual leadership.

Perhaps it will even drive my community to openly and honestly face other democratic values which desperately need re-addressing, such as the injustices of the occupation and the inequality of Arab citizens of Israel.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

The Truth About Falsehood

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Kollel Scholar and Director of Special Projects

"Keep far from a falsehood" (23:7)

In this week's Parsha, the Torah enjoins us to "*keep far* from falsehood." When we contrast this with the more direct command found in Parshas Kedoshim (Vayikra 19:11) "you shall not lie, one person to another," we are left to wonder, what is being added by the instruction to *keep far* from falsehood?

Rabbi Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg (Haksav V'Hakabbalah) explains that the Torah is relating that speaking falsehood is a common and frequent activity that people fall into and therefore we have to take particular care in not allowing ourselves to even come close to any falsehoods.

Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin (Ozaim LaTorah) suggests a different approach. The verse in our Parsha is coming to teach us that even in a situation where it becomes necessary to speak falsely, such as to maintain peace (see Yevamos 65b), one should at least try to speak in way that could possibly be interpreted as truthful. As an example, he cites the episode where Yaakov impersonates Esav in order to receive Yitzchak's blessings. There (Bereishis 27:18-19), Yitzchak asks, "Who are you?" and Yaakov responds, "I am Esav, your firstborn." Rashi explains that Yaakov was saying, "I am the one delivering to you; Esav is your firstborn." Even though it was absolutely necessary and permissible for Yaakov to deceive Yitzchak, he still spoke in a way that could possibly be interpreted as true, thereby *distancing* himself from falsehood.

What is the purpose of this? If the listener is being deceived either way, what benefit is there in saying something in a way that could be twisted and reinterpreted in a way that could be true? Rabbi Chaim Friedlander explains that the purpose is so that *the speaker* does not become accustomed to speaking falsehood. Even though there are certain situations where a departure from the truth is permitted (see Bava Metzieh 23b), one has to be careful not to become desensitized to falsehood, as is stated in Tehillim (119:163), "I hate and abhor falsehood." The antidote is to speak carefully and choose words that could also be interpreted as truth. This ensures that the speaker maintains an awareness that falsehood is something they must distance themselves from.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

And he shall provide for healing (21:19).

Heal me Hashem, and I will be healed (Yirmiyahu 17:11).

In this week's parasha, when referring to healing performed by a doctor, the Torah uses the phrase "v'rapoh yirapei," with the letter "pay." In Yirmiyahu, however, when referring to Hashem's healing, the Navi uses the phrase "rephoeini ... v'neirophei," with the letter "phay." Why does it change from the hard letter "pay" to the soft letter "phay"?

Parsha Riddle

What is the connection between Moshe's going alone to Hashem to receive the Torah, and Moshe's appearance to Pharaoh in Egypt?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What similarity is there between Shimshon Hagibor and Matan Torah?
Answer: Answer: 1) Shimshon uprooted a mountain and Har Sinai was uprooted during Matan Torah. 2) Shimshon was healed from his physical blemishes, and B'nei Yisrael were healed during Matan Torah from their physical blemishes.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Parashas Mishpatim contains many of the Torah's laws of torts, particularly those categorized as *nizkei mammon* – damage caused by one's property. Rambam introduces his treatise on *Nizkei Mammon* as follows:

[This text] contains four positive commandments; they are: the laws regarding damage caused by [the goring of] an ox, the laws regarding damage caused by the grazing [of an animal], the laws regarding damage caused by a pit, the laws regarding damage caused by fire. ...

Whenever a living animal owned by a person causes damages, the owner is required to pay, for the damage was caused by his property. [This is implied by *Shemos* 21:35:] "When a person's ox will gore an ox belonging to a colleague ..." These laws apply equally to an ox and to any other animal, beast or fowl. The verse mentions an ox only because that is a common instance.

Children, however, are not property, and thus parents generally have no liability for damage caused by their children (*Mishnah Bava Kama* 8:4). There are, however, a couple of arguments proposed by contemporary authorities for holding parents liable for such damage, at least in certain cases:

- The *Nachalas Eliyahu* (108) rules that one who brings a child into an environment in which he is able to damage property is liable under the law that "**one who stands another's animal near a third person's standing grain**, and the animal eats the grain, he is **liable**," (*Bava Kama* 56b) despite the fact that it is not the tortfeasor's animal. The *Pischei Choshen* (*Nezikin* p. 198), however, limits this to where the child was placed directly atop the property that he eventually damaged, as opposed to merely brought into the vicinity of the property.

- R. Zalman Nechemia Goldberg (*Techumin* 18) rules that if the child caused damage by utilizing the unsecured property of his father, then the father is liable for the damage, since he has the responsibility to secure his property and prevent it from causing damage. Subsequent scholars point out, however, that this is limited to where the utilization of the property by the child to cause damage is considered likely and foreseeable (R. Akiva Kahana, *Chovas Katan she-Hizik be-Tashlumin*; *Din Online* – Ask the Rabbi, *Katan she-He'if Tzror ve-Shiber Shimoshah shel Rechev*).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I come after 6 days.
2. I come after 6 years.
3. I am for the ox and donkey.
4. I am for the field.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I must be covered.
2. Fill me up.
3. I am not a bore yet I am one.
4. I am not for humans or vessels.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Luchos (Tablets) (I was two yet I was four, I am in the front of the Shul, I was rock hard, I am not just like an iPad.)

#2 Har Sinai (Smokey, Quaking, Lightning, Noisy)

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