

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ב"ה

February 10 - 11, 2023 - 20 Shevat 5783 - Parshas Yisro

Light Candles by 5:21 - Havdalah 6:22

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **Delia Weiss** and family and **Miriam & Steve Friedman** and family in loving memory of Dr. George Weiss, Z"l, Gedalya Chaim Ben Avraham Moshe, on the occasion of his 6th Yahrzeit, and by **Vivian & Arnie Kirshenbaum** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Arnie's father, Dovid Ben Yecheil Hakohen, whose Yahrzeit is the 24th of Shevat.

Mazal Tov

- **Florence Binstock Avigan** on the engagement of her grandson, Dovid Binstock, to Rachel Zemel, daughter of Tali & David Zemel. Mazal Tov also to Dovid's parents, Marc Binstock and Vicki Pollack and to aunt & uncle **Karen & Howie Schulman** and the entire family.
- **Tzivia Bramson** on the marriage of her grandson, Noach Weinstein, son of Renee & Mayer Weinstein, to Henny Beer, daughter of Tzipora & Rabbi Moshe Beer. Mazal Tov to all of the siblings and the entire family.
- **Nancy Finkelstein** on the birth of a great-granddaughter, Miriam, to Esti & YY Green of Yerushalayim. Mazal Tov to proud grandparents Rachel & Jonathan Peikes of Kew Garden Hills, NY.
- **Susan & Rabbi Saul Koss** on the birth of a great-granddaughter, Malka Matel, to Devorah & Chezky Guttmann of New York (R' Simmy and Miriam, Z"TL, Guttmann of Milwaukee grandparents) and on the birth of a great-grandson to Chani & Akiva Koss of Ramat Shlomo (R' Reuven and Miri Koss of Netivot).
- **Arleeta & Rabbi Dr. Ivan Lerner** on the birth of a great-granddaughter, daughter of their grandchildren, Hadassah (Lerner) & Yossi Applebaum of Yerushalayim. Mazal Tov to grandparents, Tamar & Rabbi Michoel Lerner and Michal & Rabbi Yisroel Applebaum. Mazal Tov to great-grandmother Ilene Miller.
- **Marla & Marty Teichman** on the birth of a great-grandson. Mazal Tov to parents Shaynie & Rabbi Avigdor Goldberger and to grandparents Randee & Rabbi Menasha Goldberger.

Condolences

- **Cheryl Gabai** on the passing of her mother, Roselyn Rutta, Z"l, Rasha Bat Yehoshua HaLevi v'Yocheved. The funeral took place on Thursday. Shiva details will be sent by email when available.
- **Ivan Graff** on the passing of his mother, June Graff, Yehudit Bat Shimon. Shiva is being observed at 1628 East Jefferson Street, Apt. 209, Rockville, MD. Dial 025 at the front door call box for entry. Mincha/Maariv Sunday/Monday: 5:20 PM; Shacharis Sunday: 7:30 AM, Monday/Tuesday: 7:00 AM. The family requests no visitors 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM, 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM or after 9:30 PM.

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.

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.

GWCK Shabbos of Inspiration

Thank you to Rabbi Menachem Winter, the Rabbis and families of the GWCK, and Simcha Leiner for all the efforts they have put into a special Shabbos. *See flyer for full schedule.*

- Following dinner (reservations required), Oneg Shabbos open to all, 9:00 PM, with Shiurim, dessert and a Kumzitz.
- Shiurim throughout Shabbos
- Special guest Baal Tefillah Simcha Leiner

Shabbos Schedule

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

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 5:21
- Mincha: 5:25 (B), 5:20 (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), 5:05 (B), 5:00 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends: 6:22

Divrei Torah/Shiurim:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| • 8:45 Main Minyan | Rabbi Menachem Winter |
| • 9:15 Minyan | Rabbi Hillel Shaps |
| • Sephardi Minyan | Rabbi Yitzchak Mandel |
| • Teen Minyan | Rabbi Postelnek |
| • Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur | Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman |
| • Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura | Rabbi Postelnek |
| • Shiur before Mincha (4:15 PM) | Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman |

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 **Simi Franco** in honor of her wonderful husband's SPECIAL birthday!
- The Shalosh Seudos is sponsored by **Bob & Susan Levi** in commemoration of the 3rd Yahrzeit of Bob's father, Baruch Ben Meir HaLevi (Fred Levi), and by the Greater Washington Community Kollel.

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.

YISE Programs and Listings (continued)

Rabbi Menachem Bombach, the Rosh Yeshiva and CEO of Netzach Yisrael, will speak on Sunday, February 12, at 11:00 AM in the Social Hall. *See flyer for details.*

Practical Prayer for a Busy Life: A two-part series for women given by Rabbi Postelnek. Tuesday nights, February 14 and 28, at 8:15 PM, at the home of Blima & Alex Maged, 812 Kersey Road. *See flyer for details.*

Ask the Rabbi - Recording of this month's topic: Tovel and Kashering utensils, is available at <https://wp.yise.org/ask-the-rabbi>

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>

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.*

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.*

Shaimos - YISE is not accepting Shaimos for burial until further notice.

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, mshkarlin@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>

YISE Youth Announcements

Teen Minyan - The Teen Minyan, led by Rabbi Moshe Holzer, meets at 9:15 AM every Shabbos in The House next to the Shul. Kiddush is sponsored in honor of the 4th anniversary of Betzael Broth's Bar Mitzvah by **Uncle Aaron & Auntie Rona**.

Shabbos Groups this Shabbos, February 11, 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.

Dor L'Dor - The Family Chevrusah-style Learning in a fun environment! The next session will take place Motzei Shabbos, February 11, 7:45 PM in the Social Hall. This Dor L'Dor is sponsored by **Tuvia & Carol Lazar and family**. *See flyer for details.*

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.*

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.
- **Margie & Michael Hourwitz** in memory of Rabbi Hyatt, ZT"L, in honor of Rabbi Grossman & his Talmidim and in memory of Isaac Hourwitz and Rose Rogoff.

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.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Women's Mussar Shiur

- **Arleeta & Rabbi Dr. Ivan Lerner** for a Refuah for Leah Rut Bat Sarah.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tehillim/Parsha/Halacha Shiur

- **Debbie Rogal** in commemoration of the Yahrzeit of her cousin, Judy Licht, on 16 Shevat.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Women's Navi Shiur

- **Harriet Sheinson** in commemoration of her father's Yahrzeit, Dov Beir Ben Reb Tzvi Hersh, Z"L.
- **Debbie Rogal** in commemoration of the Yahrzeit of her cousin, Judy Licht, on 16 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**, *will not take place on Thursday, February 16.*
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday, 7:30 PM, **Zoom A**, *will not take place on Wednesday, February 15, or on Thursday, February 16.*
- **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**, *will not take place on Wednesday, February 15.*
- **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, 9:00 PM - 10:00 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 Metzia, 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

Purim - YISE and Beyond

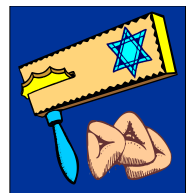
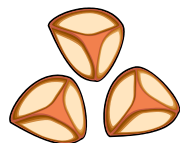
Purimfest 2023 at YISE! Sunday March 5 at 1:00 PM. We will have a chesed project, a show by Mad Science, and delicious Hamantaschen will be served! *See flyer for details.*

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 - Donations are being collected between now and Purim. 100% of the money collected will be distributed as Matanot L'Evyonim to local individuals and families in serious financial distress 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 – Purim is coming and Amit is selling beautiful Purim cards at \$3 each. Please call Esther Edeson at 301-593-1468 or 301-593-4465 Ext. 101.



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 Chevra Kadisha of Greater Washington is comprised of volunteers with representation from all the Orthodox communities in the Greater Washington area. In a typical year, we perform more than 400 Taharot under the Halachic guidance of the Vaad of Greater Washington. Our volunteer roster has been significantly depleted due to age, Aliyah, and at-risk health situations of many volunteers. Consequently, we need your help. Additional volunteers are needed to replenish the ranks of our team so that we can continue to provide Taharot to the Greater Washington 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 the "Join the Chevra Kadisha" option.

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 Siyumim:

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 - Wednesday, February 15, 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 president@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671

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. Hilchos 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. 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, 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 12	Monday February 13	Tuesday February 14	Wednesday February 15	Thursday February 16	Friday February 17
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	6:15, 6:55, 8:45
	Sephardi (LBM)	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
Mincha / Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)	5:30	5:30 / 7:30	5:30 / 7:30	5:30 / 7:30	5:30 / 7:30	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi (LBM)	5:25	5:25	5:25	5:25	5:25	
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 5:43 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 6:10 AM, Latest Netz: 7:04 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:39 AM, Earliest Mincha: 12:53 PM, Earliest Shkia: 5:41 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 6:29 PM							

Next Shabbos

February 17 - 18, 2023 - 27 Shevat 5783

Parshas Mishpatim/Shekalim/Mevorchim Hachodesh

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 5:29
- Mincha: 5:30 (B), 5:25 (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), 5:25 (B), 5:20 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 6:29

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, February 15, 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:

Monday - 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

**THIS
SHABBOS!**

GREATER WASHINGTON COMMUNITY KOLLEL



Shabbos of Inspiration

at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah
Shabbos Parshas Yisro, Feb. 10-11

Shabbaton Committee

Mickie & Josh
Breitstein
Simi & Sammy
Franco
Bayla & Jeremy
Goodman
Marilyn & Judah
Lifschitz
Barbara
Price

Inspiring
tefillas and
zemiros by special
guest baal tefillah
and singer

**SIMCHA
LEINER**



Full Schedule

Friday Night

5:25pm Mincha &
Kabbalas Shabbos
led by
Simcha Leiner
Followed by:

a delicious & elegant
**FRIDAY NIGHT
SEUDAH**
with inspiring Divrei
Torah and Zemiros
Reservations Required
BOOKED TO CAPACITY!!

Following the meal and
OPEN TO ALL!

ONEG SHABBOS!

approx. 9:00pm

Mini Learning Sessions

Price Protection:
Leeks, Dishes,
and Teslas

To Stand or Not to
Stand?
Do the Ten Commandments
Deserve Unique Status?

Muffled Messages:
Why Hear G-d Speak If
We Can't Understand?

Rabbi Y. Grossman
Belonofsky
Sanctuary

Rabbi Y. Mandel
Small
Beis Midrash

Rabbi H. Shaps
Large
Beis Midrash

Followed by: **a delicious dessert buffet, hot Oneg delights,
and an uplifting Kumtitz!**

Special
Children's
Program:
Storytime
with
Rabbi C. Biberfeld
Social Hall

Shabbos Day

Hashkama Minyan Shiur: Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

8:45am Main Minyan
Shacharis & Mussaf
led by **Simcha Leiner**
Dvar Torah: Rabbi Menachem
Winter, Rosh Kollel

Dueling Decalogues?
**Differences, Distinctions, and
Discrepancies**

Minyan Sefardi (8:10am)
Dvar Torah: Rabbi Yitzhak Mandel
9:15 Minyan
Dvar Torah: Rabbi Hillel Shaps

Shabbos Afternoon

3:45pm - Women's Class
Sight and Sound

Mrs. Sara Malka Winter
Home of Mrs. Carol Lazar: 708 Lamberton Dr.

4:15pm - Shiur before Mincha
From Golems and Goethe to Galactica and GPT:
Hashkafic and Halachic Perspectives
on Artificial Intelligence
Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman
Belonofsky Sanctuary

Shalosh Seudos following Mincha
Dvar Torah:
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Volume 29, Issue 17

Shabbat Parashat Yitro

5783 - B"H

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

The Universal and the Particular – The quintessential Jewish expression of thanks, gratitude and acknowledgment is Baruch Hashem, meaning “Thank God,” or “Praise be to the Lord.” Chassidim say of the Baal Shem Tov that he would travel around the little towns and villages of Eastern Europe, asking Jews how they were. However poor or troubled they were, invariably they would reply, Baruch Hashem. It was an instinctive expression of faith, and every Jew knew it. They might have lacked the learning of the great Talmudic scholar, or the wealth of the successful, but they believed they had much to thank God for, and they did so. When asked what he was doing and why, the Baal Shem Tov would reply by quoting the verse: “You are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel”. So every time a Jew says Baruch Hashem, he or she is helping to make a throne for the Shechinah, the Divine Presence.

The words Baruch Hashem appear in this week's parsha. But they are not spoken by a Jew. The person who says them is Yitro, Moshe's father-in-law. Rejoining Moshe after the Exodus, bringing with him Moshe's wife and children, and hearing from his son-in-law all that had happened in Egypt, he says, “Praise be to the Lord [Baruch Hashem], who rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and of Pharaoh, and who rescued the people from the hand of the Egyptians”.

Three people in the Torah use this expression – and all of them are non-Jews, people outside the Abrahamic covenant. The first is Noach: “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Shem”. The second is Avraham's servant, presumed to be Eliezer, whom he sends to find a wife for Yitzchak: “Praise be to the Lord, the God of my master Avraham, who has not abandoned His kindness and faithfulness to my master”. The third is Yitro in this week's parsha.

Is this significant? Why is it that this praise of God is attributed to Noach, Eliezer and Yitro, whereas from the Israelites, with the marked exception of the Song at the Sea, we seem to hear constant complaints? It may be simply that this is human nature: we see more clearly than others what is lacking in our lives, while others see more clearly than we do the blessings we have. We complain, while others wonder what we are complaining about when we have so much to be thankful for. That is one explanation.

It is, though, possible that a more fundamental point is being made. The Torah is signalling its most subtle and least understood idea: that the God of Israel is the God of all humankind, even though the religion of Israel is not the religion of all humankind. As Rabbi Akiva put it: “Beloved is humanity, for it was created in the image of God. Beloved is Israel, for they are called children of God.”

We believe that God is universal. He created the universe. He set in motion the processes that led to stars, planets, life, and humanity. His concern is not limited to Israel. As we say in the prayer of Ashrei, “His tender mercies are on all His works.” You do not need to be Jewish to have a sense of reverence for the Creator or recognise, as Yitro did, His hand in miraculous events. It would be hard to find another religious literature that confers such dignity on figures who stand outside its borders.

This is true not only of the three notable figures who said Baruch Hashem. The Torah calls Avraham's contemporary, Malkizedek, king of Shalem, a “Priest to God Most High.” He, too, blessed God: “Blessed be Avram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High who delivered your enemies into your hand”.

Consider also, the fact that the title of our own parsha this week, which contains the Ten Commandments as well as the most significant event in all of Jewish history, the covenant at Sinai, carries the name of a non-Jew. What is more, immediately prior to the revelation at Sinai, the Torah tells us how it was Yitro the Midianite Priest who taught Moshe how to organise the leadership of the people.

These are remarkable expressions of spiritual generosity to those outside the covenant.

Or consider Tishri, the holiest month of the Jewish year. On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, as well as reading about the birth of Yitzchak, we read of how an angel came to the aid of Hagar and Yishmael. “What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid. God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation”. Yishmael was not destined to be a carrier of the covenant, yet he was rescued and blessed.

On Yom Kippur, in the afternoon, after we have spent most of the day fasting and making confession, we read the book of Yonah, in which we discover that the Prophet uttered a mere five Hebrew words (“In forty days Nineveh will be destroyed”) and then the entire population – Assyrians, Israel's enemies – repented. Tradition takes this as the model of collective repentance.

On Succot we read Zechariah's prophecy that in days to come all the nations will come to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of rain.

These are three stunning examples of universalism. They do not imply that in the fullness of time everyone will convert to Judaism. Rather, that in the fullness of time everyone will recognise the one God, Creator and Sovereign of the universe. That is quite a different thing.

This idea that you can stand outside the faith and still be acknowledged by people within the faith as someone who recognises God, is very rare indeed. Far more common is the approach of one God, one truth, one way. Whoever stands outside that way is Godless, unsaved, the infidel, unredeemed, a lower class of humanity.

Why then does Judaism distinguish between the universality of God and the particularity of our relationship with Him? Answer: because this helps us solve the single greatest problem humanity has faced since earliest times. How can I recognise the dignity and integrity of the ‘other’? History and biology have written into the human mind a capacity for altruism toward the people like us, and aggression toward the people not like us. We are good, they are bad. We are innocent, they are guilty. We have truth, they have lies. We have God on our side, they do not. Many crimes of nation against nation are due to this propensity.

Which is why Tanach teaches otherwise. Noach, Eliezer and Yitro were people of God without being members of Israel. Even the people of Nineveh

became an example of how to heed a Prophet and repent. God blessed Yishmael as well as Yitzchak. These are powerful lessons.

It is hard to think of a more compelling principle for the 21st century. The great problems humanity faces – climate change, economic inequality, cyberwarfare, artificial intelligence – are global, but our most effective political agencies are at most national. There is a mismatch between our problems and the available solutions. We need to find a way of combining our universal humanity with our cultural and religious particularity.

That is what the Torah is doing when it tells us that Noach, Eliezer and Yitro said Baruch Hashem. They thanked God, just as we, today, thank God. God is universal. Therefore humanity, created in His image, is universal. But the revelation and covenant at Mount Sinai were particular. They belong to our story, not the universal story of humankind.

I believe this ability to be both particular in our identity and universal in our commitment to the human future is one of the most important messages we, as Jews, have to deliver in the 21st century. We are different, but we are human. Therefore let us work together to solve the problems that can only be solved together.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

“And now, if you will surely hearken to my voice and observe My Covenant, then you shall be for Me a chosen treasure (segulah) from amongst all the nations, because all of the earth is Mine And you shall be for Me a Kingdom of Priest-teachers and a holy nation...” In our Biblical portion of Yitro, we have the Religious Covenant between God and the Israelites, a Divine agreement that if this newly-formed emerging nation will accept the moral and ritual commandments, they will become God's treasured people, a holy nation of priest-teachers to all of humanity. Hence the prophetic fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, chosen because he was commanding his household after him to act with compassionate righteousness and moral justice, that through his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed.

From this perspective, the Covenant at Sinai may be seen as the Bar-Bat Mitzvah of the Jewish Nation at the very dawn of their history. Indeed, it is a commitment – consecration ceremony, which can be ratified only after the Israelites publicly accept the challenge – or the gift – which God is placing before them, “And (the Israelites) said, ‘all that the Lord has spoken we shall perform and internalize’ – and then Moses took the blood (of the earlier sacrifices) and sprinkled it upon the nation, and he said, ‘behold, the blood of the Covenant, which the Lord has cut with you on all these words.’” As should be expected, this ratification comes after the lengthy portion of Mishpatim, replete with a sampling of the moral and ritual commandments which have always been seen by our Sages as part and parcel of the Revelation at Sinai.

This ratification of the Covenant includes the youth of Israel who brought whole burnt offerings and

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peace offerings – and a celebratory meal for the leadership (Moses, Aaron, Nadav, Avihu and the Seventy Elders), at which they ate and drank in the presence of the Divine. Biblically, sacrifices of whole burnt offerings and peace offerings are generally identified with Festival celebrations.

As we have seen, there is also the sprinkling of blood upon the nation, which is reminiscent of the circumcision ceremony, by which every male baby enters into the Covenant of Abraham and must include the loss of some blood from the male sexual organ of propagation; so it is that every single birth, male and female, is accompanied with the significant loss of blood: our Talmud teaches that “women are considered to be naturally circumcised,” because with every birth they put their lives on the line and shed much blood!

The profound reason for this is difficult, but very true. Every worthwhile idea or ideal requires commitment (mesirut nefesh), even commitment unto death. It was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who said that anyone who has not found an ideal for which he would sacrifice his life is not living a worthwhile life! As the prophet Ezekiel taught, “And I see that you are rooted in your blood, and I say to you “by your blood shall you live, by your blood shall you live”.

The great paradox of the biblical story of the binding of Isaac was God’s telling Abraham that only if he was willing to risk his future through his son Isaac would he be worthy of having a future with covenantal seed. God Himself (as it were) is invested in Israel’s commitment, even commitment unto death, to the Covenant, because unless Israel succeeds in teaching the world ethical monotheism, our global village will have no future! That is why in picturing God’s participation in the celebratory meal at Sinai, what I believe the Bible is trying to express metaphorically is that God has chosen us as His partners, to be His witnesses to the world, to help Him save humanity from self-destruction.

The Talmud records (B.T. Tamid 32a) that “Alexander of Macedon asked the Elders of Tzfat: ‘What ought a person do if he wishes to die?’ They responded, ‘Let him attempt to keep on living,’ because he will surely die sooner or later; nobody has yet left this world alive! ‘And what ought a person do if he wishes to remain alive?’ They responded, ‘Let him slay himself’ for the sake of an eternal value, of a lofty ideal, and he will continue to live as long as the value or ideal remains alive in the world.”

To be a committed Jew means that although you may be engaged in a dangerous occupation, there is no more privileged way to live your life. Yes, it is a great joy to be Jewish. And even if you experience a temporal “oy,” that is certainly worth the eternal “joy” of participating in God’s vineyard dedicated to perfecting the world.

Rabbi Dr. Nachum Amsel **Encyclopedia of Jewish Values**

Proving God’s Existence *[Excerpt]*

In his very first Halacha-Jewish law of his Mishneh Torah (Hilchot Yesodai HaTorah 1:1), Maimonides states that it is foundational for a Jew to know that there is a God. But this command, to believe in God, is not found anywhere in the Torah. Most of the commentators subsume this commandment in the first words of the Ten Commandments in our Torah Portion, as part of “I am the God your Lord, who took you out of the Land of Egypt, from the house of slavery” (Exodus 20:1). But the Baal Halachot Gedolot specifically omits belief in God as one of the 613-Mitzvot-commandments. Logically, he seems to be correct: If a Jew does not believe in God, what is the purpose of commanding him or her to believe? And, if he or she already believes, there is no need for a commandment. Most people are not

sure if they believe in a God since He has not made His existence obvious as of late, and there seems to be no concrete proof. This essay will attempt to examine if God indeed can be “proved”, and why it is more logical to believe than not to believe.

Can God’s Existence Be Proven? - The short answer to this essential question of life is “no.” By its very definition, God’s absolute existence cannot be proven, and that is precisely how God and Judaism desire the situation to remain. Doubt is a necessary part of faith, and the entire structure of Judaism would be altered if God’s existence could be undeniably demonstrated. Why is this so?

First, the nature of “proof” itself needs to be examined. One definition of the concept of “proof” is “evidence that compels the mind to accept an assertion as true.” Normally, when we speak of evidence in the 21st century, it signifies physical evidence (like forensic evidence in a murder trial), based on accepted scientific methodology. And therein lies the first problem with proving God’s existence. Proving something physical using scientific proof is a valid approach in the physical world. But since God, by definition, is a non-physical, spiritual being, proving God’s existence scientifically is impossible. As a non-physical being, God cannot be seen, felt, touched, or measured, which are all qualities needed in using the scientific method to prove anything in the physical world. Therefore, utilizing physical evidence to prove the non-physical existence of God is, logically and practically, unachievable, and “proving” God’s existence in this manner is impossible.

In addition to this obstacle, there is a very “Jewish” reason that God’s existence cannot and should not be proven. One of the mainstays of Jewish belief is that every human being has complete free will to act as he or she pleases. Without this concept of true free will, there would be no morality or notion of reward and punishment. Not only is physical free will guaranteed for each human being, but in today’s world, psychological free will is also a must, in order not to “force” a human being to act one way or another, even due to non-physical pressure. Therefore, if God’s existence could be proven beyond the shadow of a doubt and every person in the world would be completely convinced 100% that there is a God, people would be afraid to act in an immoral fashion due to worry about punishment. This would compromise free will, and ethical behavior would take place everywhere, not because people believe it is the right way to act, but only because of their fear of punishment from God. This is not how God wishes us to run our lives. Therefore, there must always remain some small doubt about God’s existence and active involvement in the world, to allow people to make moral decisions of their own free will, and to be rewarded or punished for these decisions.

If God cannot be proven, what then is left to do? Although God’s existence cannot be ascertained as fact, many ideas seem to show that the existence of God is a much more logical supposition than concluding that God does not exist. Therefore, a few arguments are offered below in a condensed form, showing why it is more logical to assume that God exists and that He is actively involved in the world, rather than to harbor a belief in a world that is completely random, lacking the existence of the Divine.

The Cosmological Argument - Logically, there are three explanations for the existence of the universe and the world (earth): (1) it came into existence by itself, randomly, (2) someone (or some being) actually created it, or (3) it was always there. Since everything else that exists in the physical realm on earth has a cause or creator, then it is much more logical to say that the world itself was also created rather than that it just happened suddenly,

Likutei Divrei Torah

accidentally, or by itself. Today, most scientists, including those who do not necessarily believe in God, seem to agree that the universe came into existence in one instant, which is referred to as “The Big Bang.” However, scientists have not been able to explain how or why or who caused the Big Bang at that particular moment. This argument says that if there was a Big Bang, then it is logical to also believe that there had to be a Big Banger, God. The question, that logically follows is, “Then who created God?” This is discussed by Aristotle and Maimonides in the description of the Prime Mover, the one thing in the world that cannot be moved and was not created by something else, (i.e., God Himself).

The Teleological Argument - The design and perfection in nature and the world could indeed be accidental. But it is more logical to believe that a designer created it that way intentionally. But it seems to be far more logical that all the design in the world and nature was purposeful rather than accidental. A few concrete examples of this idea should elucidate this argument further.

The Earth’s size is perfect for life to exist as it does. The Earth’s dimensions and corresponding gravity hold a thin layer of mostly nitrogen and oxygen gases, extending only about 50 miles above the Earth’s surface. If Earth were smaller, an atmosphere would be impossible, like the situation of the planet Mercury. If Earth were larger, its atmosphere would contain free hydrogen, like Jupiter’s atmosphere does. Earth is the only known planet equipped with an atmosphere of the right mixture of gases to sustain plant, animal, and human life. The Earth is located in the right distance from the sun. It is far more logical to say that all this was created intentionally to allow life to thrive on this planet, rather than conclude that all these details are mere accidents of nature.

The chances that water, the universal life-giver, developed all its characteristics randomly rather than by design is less logical than saying God created water in this manner for life to be sustained.

The Moral Argument - Only if a God exists who establishes a morality for all humankind, greater than any one country’s or any one society’s laws, can there be universal moral standards..

The Beauty Argument - If all existence is truly an accident, then anything that we call beautiful (like a sunset, a butterfly, a flower, etc.) is only due to a random combination of colors, shapes, and forms. It is not “meant” to be truly beautiful, as it occurred randomly.

The Meaning of Life Argument - If God does not exist and the world just developed randomly, then there is no specific purpose to my life, your life, or any human being’s life. Only if one believes in a God who put each person in the world to achieve a specific objective, can life have true meaning.

The Argument of Jewish Eternity - The continued existence of the Jewish people defies logic. With the destruction of the central focus of their religion (the Temple), banned from their land (the Land of Israel), and as a hated minority in almost every country they lived in, which resulted in their expulsion from more than eighty countries, the Jewish people should have disappeared from history, certainly faster than the Greeks, Romans and every other culture that dominated the world at one point or another. Yet the Jewish people and their culture survive intact today, while these other great civilizations have disappeared. The survival of the Jews points to God’s invisible Hand in history and a covenant that would not let the Jews, as a people, disappear...

יִתְרוֹ

Our Parashah begins, "Yitro, the Priest of Midian, the father-in-law of Moshe, heard everything that G-d did for Moshe and for Yisrael, His people." R' Simcha Zissel Broide z"l (1912-2000; *Rosh Yeshiva* of the Chevron Yeshiva in Yerushalayim) wonders: Does it bring honor to Moshe Rabbeinu that the Torah pairs "father-in-law of Moshe" with "Priest of Midian"? Moreover, when Moshe Rabbeinu's genealogy is presented in *Parashat Va'era* (6:16-25), the Torah includes the fact that Moshe's nephew, Elazar, married a "daughter of Putiel." Putiel is identified by our Sages as Yitro, "who fattened ('*Pitaim*') calves for *Avodah Zarah* / idolatry." Again, why is that a point of distinction?

R' Broide explains: As noted, our Parashah begins, "Yitro heard," meaning that he heard about the Exodus, the Splitting of the Sea, and the attack by Amalek. But, didn't all of the nations hear about these things? Why was Yitro moved by them more than everyone else was? The answer, R' Broide writes, is that Yitro was a truth-seeker. He heard about G-d's miracles, and that information influenced him. Others heard, as well, but they were not affected, because they were not looking for the truth.

Our Sages say that Yitro's search for truth led him to experiment with every *Avodah Zarah* in existence. And, he did not do this half-heartedly; for example, he did not satisfy himself with buying animals for sacrifices. Rather, he was so committed to his search for truth that he personally raised calves and fattened them for the altar. Yitro's service as "Priest of Midian" and his fattening calves for idolatry can be seen as steps on his way to ultimately discovering the truth he sought. Viewed this way, this history most definitely brings honor to Yitro's son-in-law, Moshe, and to the extended family. (*Sam Derech: Ma'amar Gedulat Yitro*)

יִתְרוֹ

Shabbat

"Yom Shabbat im tishmoru / If you observe the Sabbath day you will be My Segulah / most beloved treasure."

(From the *Zemer - Mah Yedidut*)

We read in our *Parashah* (19:5), "And now, if you listen well to Me and observe My covenant, you shall be to Me the *Segulah* / most beloved treasure of all peoples, for the entire world is Mine." There is no mention in this verse that *Shabbat* observance, in particular, makes us *Hashem's Segulah*. Where, then, did the author of this *Zemer* derive a connection between the two?

R' David Falk *shlita* (Yerushalayim) explains: The Torah commentator Rabbeinu Bachya ben Asher z"l (Spain; 1255-1340) defines a *Segulah* as something so precious that its owner does not entrust it to any watchman. Instead, he keeps it nearby at all times so that he can guard it himself. Similarly, when we say that *Bnei Yisrael* are *Hashem's "Segulah,"* we are referring to the fact that all other nations have "guardian angels" and are affected by the zodiac, while we do not and are not. Instead, *Hashem* watches over us directly, as we read (*Devarim* 4:19-20), "*Hashem*, your *Elokim*, has apportioned [the stars and other heavenly bodies] to all the peoples under the entire heaven. But *Hashem* has taken you . . ."

Shabbat is the sign that we are His *Segulah*, for *Shabbat* belongs exclusively to the Jewish People. Thus we read (*Shmot* 31:17) and say in *Kiddush*, "Between Me and *Bnei Yisrael* it is a sign forever." In this light, as well, we can understand the *Midrash* which says that the covenant mentioned in the verse from our *Parashah* (19:5) quoted above is the covenant of *Shabbat*. (Kinor David p.92)

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“The seventh day is *Shabbat* to Hashem, your *Elokim*; you shall not do any work.” (20:10)

R' Shmuel Abohav z"l (1610-1694; rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Venice, Italy) writes: In common speech, “work” connotes exertion--in particular, carrying objects from one place to another. Yet, a person may carry furniture around his house to set places for guests, and he may carry large trays of food from the kitchen to the dining room, and he does not desecrate the *Shabbat*. How then do we define “work”?

R' Abohav explains: We read (*Devarim* 5:12), “Safeguard the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as Hashem, your *Elokim*, has commanded you.” This teaches us that what is permitted or forbidden on *Shabbat* is known to us only through the Oral Law--“as Hashem, your *Elokim*, has commanded you.” This is similar to how our Sages interpret the verse (*Devarim* 12:21), “You may slaughter from your cattle and your flocks . . . as I have commanded you.” Where does Hashem command us how to perform *Shechitah*? Only in the Oral Law.

(*Sefer Ha'zichronot* 10:6)

“For in six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth . . . , *Va'yanach* / and He rested on the seventh day.” (20:11)

R' Avigdor Tzarfati z"l (France; 13th century) writes: In *Bereishit* (2:3), the same idea is expressed in different words, “*Elokim* blessed the seventh day and sanctified it because on it *Shavat* / He abstained from all His work . . .” The word “*Shavat*” is related to the word “*Yeshiva*” / “sitting,” and alludes to the *Midrash* that Hashem sat the “angel of *Shabbat*” on a throne, and all of the other angels danced before it. Since *Shabbat* is called a “bride,” writes R' Avigdor, this verse and *Midrash* provide a source for the custom that a bride sits on a “throne” facing the groom, and people dance before them singing praises of the bride.

(*Peirushim U'pesakim Le'rabbeinu Avigdor Tzarfati*)

“In every place where I will mention My Name, I shall come to you and bless you.” (20:21)

R' Chaim of Volozhin z"l (Belarus; 1749-1821) asks: Should not the verse have said, “In every place where you will mention My Name . . .”?

He explains: We read in *Iyov* (41:3), “Who came before me, that I should pay him?” In reality, it is Hashem who gives us the ability to study Torah and perform *Mitzvot*. Therefore, He has no obligation to reward us! Nevertheless, in His kindness, He does pay us for our *Mitzvot*. Similarly, when we pray to Hashem at the site of the *Mizbe'ach* (the subject of our verse), it is possible only because He enables us to do so; it is as if He is the one mentioning His Name. Nevertheless, He will come to us and bless us.

(*Ruach Chaim* 3:6)

“When they have a matter, *Ba Elai* / one comes to me, and I judge between a man and his fellow, and I make known the decrees of G-d and His teachings.” (18:16)

R' Menachem Mendel Hager z"l (1768-1826; *Kosover Rebbe*) interprets Moshe Rabbeinu's words as follows: “Unfortunately, people come to me (Moshe) for the wrong reason. When they have a matter--i.e., when they have a personal, material matter--then they come to me and I judge for them. However, my real goal at such times is to make known the decrees of G-d and His teachings.”

R' Hager's descendant, R' Moshe Yehoshua Hager z"l (1916-2012; *Vizhnitzer Rebbe*) adds: Many people come to Torah scholars and *Chassidic Rebbes* to receive blessings for health or sustenance. For some reason, however, they do not feel any need to seek guidance about spiritual matters, such as the education of their children. They do not see that the *Gematria* of “*Ba Elai*” (“בא אלי”) / “one comes to me” equals the *gematria* of “*Yeled*” (“ילד”) / “child.”

(Quoted in *Otzrotaihem Shel Tzaddikim*)

“*Zachor* / Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it.” (20:8)

In the *Aseret Ha'dibrot* in *Devarim* (5:12), we read, “*Shamor* / Safeguard the Sabbath day to sanctify it.” The *Gemara* (*Shevuot* 20b) teaches that G-d uttered “*Zachor*” and “*Shamor*” simultaneously, something that no human mouth can utter and no human ear can comprehend [absent a miracle].

R' Yehuda Loewe z"l (the *Maharal* of Prague; died 1609) asks: What is the purpose of G-d's uttering “*Zachor*” and “*Shamor*” simultaneously? Some say, *Maharal* writes, that it is so that our Sages would equate the two phrases and derive the principle: “Whoever is obligated to safeguard *Shabbat*, i.e., whoever is prohibited to do *Melachah* / work on *Shabbat*, is obligated to remember *Shabbat*.” This teaches that women are obligated in *Kiddush*, which they otherwise would not be because *Kiddush* is a *Mitzvat Aseh She'hazman Gerama* / an affirmative commandment which is time-dependent. However, *Maharal* argues, we would have derived the same law if Hashem had just said, “*Zachor ve'shamor* / Remember and safeguard the Sabbath day to sanctify it.” Why was it necessary to utter the two phrases simultaneously?

Rather, *Maharal* writes, the two phrases were uttered simultaneously to teach us that they are equally essential to proper *Shabbat* observance. Had the Torah said only, “*Shamor* / Safeguard the Sabbath day,” we would have thought that the *Shabbat* is sanctified if we merely refrain from working; we do not need to do anything to imbue the day with sanctity. On the other hand, had the Torah said only, “*Zachor* / Remember the Sabbath day,” we would have thought that the *Shabbat* is sanctified if we just recite *Kiddush*, no matter what else we do on the Sabbath. Now, however, we know that only with both aspects--refraining from *Melachah* and actively sanctifying the day--do we properly observe *Shabbat*.

(*Gur Aryeh*)

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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'ISRAEL WILL SEE A RESPONSE': IRAN REVEALS UNDERGROUND AIR FORCE BASE (Israel Hayom 2/8/23)

Iran on Tuesday revealed an underground air force base, called "Eagle 44" and the first of its kind large enough to house fighter jets, the official IRNA news agency said.

The "Eagle 44" base is capable of storing and operating fighter jets and drones, IRNA said. The report did not elaborate on the location of the base.

IRNA said it was one of the country's most important air force bases, built deep underground, housing fighters with long-range cruise missiles.

In May, Iran's army gave details about another underground base, which houses drones, as the country seeks to protect military assets from potential air strikes by regional arch foe Israel.

"Any attack on Iran from our enemies, including Israel, will see a response from our many air force bases including Eagle 44," Iran's armed forces' Chief of Staff Mohammad Bagheri told state TV.

ISRAEL POLICE CHIEF RABBI CALLS ON WORSHIPERS TO CARRY GUNS IN SYNAGOGUES (j24News 2/9/23)

Chief Rabbi of the Israel Police, Rami Berachyahu, in a letter on Thursday called on rabbis and worshipers to carry licensed weapons in synagogues to ward off any possible terrorist attacks.

Gatherings of Israeli civilians in synagogues raise security concerns after the January 27 terrorist attack that killed seven outside a synagogue in Jerusalem's Neve Ya'akov neighborhood.

Berachyahu said the attack showed that the "religious neighborhoods and synagogues can serve as an extensive target for terrorist acts."

"This incident joins the terrorist attacks that took place in the cities of Bnei Brak and Elad last year," he wrote.

"In deliberation with prominent rabbis and on recommendation of relevant police authorities, I appeal to the Rabbis of Israel to instruct their communities that everyone who has a license to carry a firearm should carry that firearm with them on Shabbat, especially during prayer times in synagogues," he urged.

The rabbi added that every synagogue should have a kosher cell phone that can be used to call the police in case of emergency. He stressed that in any event that poses "risk to life" the police should be contacted even on Shabbat.

ISRAEL SAYS WILL PROVIDE EMERGENCY AID TO ENEMY STATE SYRIA AFTER RUSSIAN REQUEST (Ha'aretz 2/6/23)

Israel said it agreed to provide emergency aid to Syria following a Russian request in the wake of a massive earthquake that left at least 2,300 people dead across Turkey and northwest Syria on Monday.

Such a move would mark an unprecedented level of cooperation between the warring neighbors that have no diplomatic ties.

Several Syrian news sites and Lebanon's Al-Mayadeen vehemently denied the report.

While at least 45 other countries have offered to assist Turkey, relatively few have publicly committed to aiding Syria.

Israel has reportedly agreed to transfer basic equipment such as blankets and medicine, but is not ready to provide medical treatment to the injured, Israeli officials told Haaretz. However, Israel is willing to provide treatment on Turkish soil or by opening the border crossing in the Golan Heights and admitting Syrians to Israeli hospitals.

The two countries do not have diplomatic relations and are technically in a

state of war. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had vowed earlier on Monday to send aid to both Turkey and Syria following the devastating 7.8 magnitude quake, referring to an anonymous "request" to support Damascus. Netanyahu had announced earlier on Monday that he ordered medical aid and rescue teams to be sent to Turkey "at the request of the Turkish government."

Israel's President Yitzhak Herzog spoke with Turkish President Erdogan on Monday evening and discussed the aid mission. Erdogan also offered his condolences over the terror attack on a synagogue in East-Jerusalem in late January.

In addition, Israel's Foreign Ministry announced that a military delegation is preparing to leave for Turkey and that some representatives have already arrived in Turkey.

A second and larger delegation is expected to leave on Tuesday morning, which will include humanitarian aid in cooperation with other aid agencies, read the statement from the Ministry.

"We all share the sadness of the Turkish people following the tragedy that occurred tonight. I spoke earlier with my colleague, the Turkish Foreign Minister, and expressed our deepest condolences. On behalf of the State of Israel, we are sending two professional delegations with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to help the victims. Israel stands by Turkey in this difficult time," Foreign Minister Eli Cohen said.

IsraAID, Israel's leading non-governmental humanitarian aid group has launched an emergency response and said it will deliver urgently needed relief supplies in the affected area, while assessing further needs on the ground.

An Israeli volunteer EMS organization, United Hatzalah, has announced via Twitter that is also joining the aid effort.

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IDF RESCUE TEAM SAVES LOCAL WOMAN FROM RUINS IN QUAKE-HIT TURKEY (YNet 2/8/23)

Turkish media reported Wednesday that members of the IDF search and rescue mission in the city of Kahramanmaras saved a young woman overnight from the ruins of her house after two major earthquakes rocked the country earlier this week.

According to reports, the young woman's father thanked the Israeli rescue mission, which arrived in Turkey in an effort to save those trapped in collapsed buildings. The woman's medical condition was reported to be stable, and she was evacuated to a local hospital.

Major Matan Schneider, head of the Israeli rescue mission to Turkey, said the team was summoned after a sound was heard coming from one such ruin. "We began a complex rescue operation that lasted four and a half hours, which included a lot of engineering, medical attention, and paramedic assistance," he said.

"Eventually, the 23-year-old woman was rescued, suffering from a fracture in her hip, and was evacuated."

ISRAELI SETTLER POPULATION IN WEST BANK SURPASSES 500K (YNet 2/2/23)

Israel's West Bank settler population now makes up more than half a million people, a pro-settler group said Thursday, crossing a major threshold. Settler leaders predicted even faster population growth under Israel's new ultranationalist government.

The report, by WestBankJewishPopulationStats.com and based on official figures showed the settler population grew to 502,991 as of Jan. 1, rising more than 2.5% in 12 months and nearly 16% over the last five years.

"We've reached a huge hallmark," said Baruch Gordon, the director of the group and a resident of the Beit El settlement. "We're here to stay."

The milestone comes as Israel's new government, made up of ultranationalist parties who oppose Palestinian statehood, has placed expanding settlements at the top of its priority list. Already the government has pledged to legalize wildcat outposts that have long enjoyed tacit government support and to ramp up approval and construction of settler homes around the West Bank.

"I think that in the coming years of this government, there will be more building than there has been in the last 20 years," Gordon said.

Settlements have flourished under every Israeli government, including at the height of the peace process in the 1990s. Even Israel's short-lived previous government, which included parties supporting Palestinian statehood along with those opposing it, continued to build settlements.

The report also comes as a new spasm of violence is shaking the region and days after a visit by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who pledged support for an independent Palestinian state. The settler population has continued to grow under the Biden administration, despite renewed American appeals to rein in construction following years of President Donald Trump's hands-off approach.

The settler population report does not include annexed east Jerusalem, home to more than 200,000 settlers. The West Bank and east Jerusalem are together home to some 3 million Palestinians.

LEADERS OF PROTEST AGAINST JUDICIAL REFORM CALL FOR GENERAL STRIKE ON MONDAY (JPost 2/7/23)

Leaders of the protests against the government's planned reforms of the judicial system called on citizens to launch a general strike on Monday outside of the Knesset, where the coalition is expected to vote for the first time on a section of the reform.

Monday's strike, which a number of protest leaders announced together in a press conference on Tuesday afternoon, will come alongside protests nationwide – in addition to the weekly Saturday night protests in Tel Aviv and many other cities. The Movement for Quality Government in Israel said it would move its Saturday night protest to Monday.

The leaders who spoke at the conference included former defense minister and chief of staff Moshe "Bogie" Ya'alon, as well as leaders of groups of

lawyers, doctors, economists, women and students, each of whom explained the reform's negative effect on their respective field or group.

"Netanyahu's plan to fast-track his dictatorship laws will face the people of Israel, more determined than ever to maintain its independence. We call on citizens to announce already today to their employers that they will not work on Monday and will take to the streets. This is the most important struggle in the country's history – the struggle for Israel's independence as Jewish and democratic," the leaders said.

Ya'alon called the government "illegal," arguing that a "black flag" hung over its reforms due to the criminal cases against the prime minister and his "intention to turn Israel into a dictatorship."

Movement for Quality Government chairman Eliad Shraga said earlier on Tuesday, "We are calling on every citizen who is anxious about the fate and existence of the State of Israel to drop everything and come on Monday in order to stop the destruction and demolition of democracy with our bodies.

"As we warned, Netanyahu and his partners are starting to actually dismantle the Zionist vision. We will stand in front of the Knesset and show them that the Jewish people, who have dreamed of independence and freedom for 2,000 years, will not be silent when a bunch of corrupt people and criminals rob them of their freedom once again."

NETANYAHU REJECTS A-G'S ORDER BARRING HIM FROM JUDICIAL REFORM (Arutz-7 2/2/23)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu informed the Supreme Court that he rejects the opinion of Attorney-General Gali Baharav-Miara expressed in a letter she sent to him Thursday afternoon, in which she ordered him not to involve himself in any way in his government's proposed legal reforms due to "conflict of interest" resulting from his own criminal trials, which are still in process.

Netanyahu said that the attorney general's position is unacceptable to him and he requested that he be allowed to submit a detailed response in two weeks' time.

In her letter, Baharav-Miara wrote to Netanyahu: "In your role as prime minister, you must refrain from initiatives involving the legal system within the framework known as 'the legal reform.'"

"This is due to the reasonable suspicion of a conflict of interests between issues pertaining to the legal proceedings against you, and the array of legislative initiatives and their substantive components" that the government is advancing in its package of legal reforms, she added. "This includes any direct or indirect action or instruction through others, including the involvement of officials serving in your office as political appointees."

ISRAELI KNESSET LIBERTY BELL ENDED UP IN A PARK. NOW WE KNOW WHY (JPost 2/7/23)

A decades-old mystery has finally been solved surrounding just how a Liberty Bell replica at Israel's Knesset seemingly vanished and ended up in Jerusalem's Liberty Bell Park, thanks to an investigation of letters in the Knesset Archives.

The investigation was undertaken as part of the preparations for the Knesset's 74th birthday.

As a result of the information in these letters ringing of truth, the mystery behind one of Jerusalem's iconic landmarks has, at long last, been solved.

Back in 1955, Israel's second Knesset was given a replica of the Liberty Bell by representatives of the US city of Philadelphia, home to the original Liberty Bell. This was meant to be placed in the Knesset building, construction on which was set to start.

However, it somehow ended up in Liberty Bell Park in 1976, near the historic neighborhood of Yemin Moshe. And nobody can remember how or why.

But these letters discovered by the Knesset Archives team seem to finally reveal the truth.

In the lead-up to the Knesset's 74th birthday, staffers parsed through the many files in the Knesset archives for any exciting or nostalgic stories from the building's early days.

It was during this that a previously unknown series of letters was discovered, detailing an exchange between then-Knesset speaker Yisrael Yeshayahu and then-Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek.

Kollek is a mayor who is remembered for his influence and importance in the city's history, having served seven separate terms as mayor, from 1965 to 1993. It was under his municipal leadership that Jerusalem grew into the sprawling modern city it is today, earning him the epitaph "the greatest builder of Jerusalem since Herod."

One of the many things he helped build in the city was Liberty Bell Park, designed by architect Ulrik Plesner, which opened in 1976 to commemorate the US bicentennial.

While some might think that, given the name, the park was just named after the Liberty Bell replica statue. But as revealed in the letters between Kollek and Yeshayahu, that actually wasn't the case.

As the letters explain, it was Kollek who asked for the Liberty Bell statue to be moved from the Knesset to the park. The reason, he explained, is because they were already looking for a Liberty Bell replica for Liberty Bell Park but remembered that there already is one in Israel – but its location in the Knesset means that the general public doesn't get a chance to see it.

Yeshayahu replied one week later, agreeing to transfer the bell to the park.

However, he had one condition: There must be some sort of clear indication that the bell was placed there either at the discretion of the Knesset or with its permission, in order to meet the obligations given to them by the statue's donors. However, no such indicator was ever put in place. As a result, its sudden appearance in the park became a mystery.

Knesset Archives director Inda Novominsky was ecstatic at the discovery, explaining that they had been trying to solve this mystery for years, turning to experts, the Jerusalem City Archive and even reaching out to the public through social media and radio.

But it turns out the answer was within the Knesset all along.

However, this wasn't too surprising in retrospect, since not every letter in the archives has been properly cataloged or digitized.

Knesset events and ceremonies head Liat Shimoni-Konitzki remarked on the irony of the situation, having solved the mystery on the Knesset's birthday.

She noted: "It is customary to receive gifts on a birthday, but now we are learning how the Knesset gave one of the most important gifts to the city of Jerusalem."

ANCIENT GOLD BEAD FROM THE CITY OF DAVID FOUND IN JERUSALEM (Arutz-7 2/8/23)

A unique bead made from pure gold and dated to at least 1,600 years ago was uncovered at the sifting project at the Archaeological Experience in the Emek Tzurim National Park. At the park, visitors join in sifting through the dirt that originated in historic buildings in ancient Jerusalem, including that removed by the Islamic Wakf from the Temple Mount which included archeological remnants from the First and Second Temple periods.

The bead was found in dirt removed from a grandiose Roman structure discovered in the Pilgrimage Road Excavation. It was created using a unique technique that required delicate workmanship to affix tens of tiny balls together in the shape of a ring in order to create one small bead.

Hallel Feidman, age 18, from Bnei Ayish, found the gold bead. She is a National Service volunteer who is working at the sifting project.

"I poured the pail onto the sieve and began to wash the material that was brought from the excavations in the City of David," Feidman says as she describes the moment she made the discovery.

"And then I saw something shiny in the corner of the sieve, different, that I don't normally see. I immediately approached the archaeologist and he confirmed that I had found a gold bead. Everyone here was very excited."

According to Dr. Amir Golani, an ancient jewelry expert at the Israel Antiquities Authority: "Throughout all my years in archaeology, I have found gold perhaps once or twice, so to find gold jewelry, is something very very special". He points out that the bead, which survived unscathed, is probably only a small part of a necklace or bracelet that included additional beads.

"Whoever could afford a piece like this made from gold, was an affluent person, with means."

According to Shlomo Greenberg and Ari Levy, Excavation Directors on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority, "The bead originated in a grandiose structure which is at least 25 meters long. The structure was built on the Pilgrimage Road in the City of David, in a building style that characterizes upscale buildings. The wealth of the building's occupants is evidenced by additional finds that were discovered in it, like imported clay vessels and a decorated mosaic floor."

The researchers point out that it is possible that the bead was created in a period that precedes the period of the structure in which it was found, however, it is reasonable to assume that the people that lived in the structure used the bead which may have accidentally been lost when the necklace broke.

The find holds distinctive importance due to the lack of gold items found in archaeological excavations, and because beads of this style are not common, due to the unique and complex technique used to create them.

The technique most probably originates from the region of Mesopotamia, where it was known from approximately 4500 years ago.

"The most interesting aspect of the bead is its unique and complex production method", explains Dr. Golani.

"A good understanding of the materials and their properties is required, as well as control over the heat, in order to on the one hand, solder the tiny balls together to create a tiny ring, while also preventing overheating which may lead all the gold to melt."

According to him, "Only a professional craftsman could produce such a bead, which is another reason that this find holds great value."

The use of the unique technique which came from outside of Israel, coupled with the use of gold in creating this bead, speaks to the wealth of its owner.

It is possible that the bead was created in a different area and made its way to the City of David due to the extensive trade relations between Jerusalem and other regions at that time.

Another theory is that the bead was gifted to a Jerusalem resident, or, possibly due to its unique nature, the bead was passed within the family from one generation to another as an inheritance.

Similar beads have been discovered in burial caves from 2500 years ago (end of the First Temple period) in Ketef Hinnom near the City of David, during excavations carried out by Professor Gabriel Barkay, but even those beads were made from silver.

To this day, only a few dozen gold beads have been found in Israel.

According to Eli Escusido, Director of the Israel Antiquities Authority, "Although it is a tiny find, it is precisely the personal, day-to-day items that manage to touch and connect us more than anything else, directly, to a certain person. Even with today's advanced technology, creating something like this would be very complex."

"A close examination of this object fills one with a deep sense of admiration for the technical skill and ability of those who came before us many centuries ago."

ISRAEL'S RESPONSE TO TRAUMATIC EVENTS IS A SOURCE OF PRIDE (Editorial, JPost 2/9/23)

These are difficult days for Israel.

We are witnessing a deep split in the nation reminiscent of the days before the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin; a government deaf to the appeals of half the country and President Isaac Herzog to pause for two weeks the sprint to judicial reform and engage in dialogue; mass demonstrations; threats of strikes; hi-tech companies pulling their money out of the country; investors threatening to do the same – and all that is happening just among Jews.

On the Palestinian front, there are concerns of a ramping up of terror and violence. A car bomb – apparently in the process of being assembled – blew up Monday night in Jenin, feeding the fear that we are on the cusp of an explosion of violence the likes of which Israel has not seen since the Second Intifada some 20 years ago.

And, on top of everything else, Mother Nature is getting in her licks.

The ground literally shook Tuesday night as an earthquake that hit near Ariel was felt by tens of thousands of people around the country. In light of the horrific earthquakes that devastated parts of Syria and Turkey on Monday and the realization that Israel is woefully unprepared to deal with a quake of these proportions, this added to the nation's jitters and a sense of pervading gloom.

Amid all that, the Israelis dispatched to Turkey to help that country deal with the earthquake provided us all with a ray of sunshine, a silver lining and a reason to be proud.

No sooner did the earthquakes hit and the scope of the devastation become known than Israel announced it would send search-and-rescue teams and tons of humanitarian aid to Turkey.

By Tuesday, an IDF Home Command team of 150 search-and-rescue personnel was already on the ground and searching through the rubble for survivors. In addition, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that a request from Syria came for humanitarian aid – supplies, not personnel – and that Israel would also send assistance there. The Syrians, however, later denied that such a request was ever sent.

On Wednesday, Israel sent to Turkey some 230 doctors and medical specialists to operate a field hospital fully equipped with operating rooms, X-ray machines, trauma units and labs. More than two dozen other Israelis from groups like United Hatzalah and IsraAID have arrived on the scene as part of private, nongovernmental initiatives to help the Turks.

"Operation Olive Branch," as the government's mission has been dubbed, is the 30th humanitarian aid mission Israel has dispatched abroad in the last 41 years to help countries in the aftermath of everything from devastating earthquakes to typhoons, tsunamis and terrorist attacks. Israeli aid teams have assisted in times of need in locations as diverse as Japan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mexico, Haiti, Sri Lanka, Romania, Brazil, Albania and even the United States.

In the process, Israel has gained a reputation as a leader in search and rescue. While these missions might have only short-term diplomatic impact in improving ties with the countries affected, it has already had a long-term impact on promoting Israel's good name.

The head of the IDF Medical Corps, Brig.-Gen. Elon Glassberg, spoke of the decision to send the field hospital to Turkey.

"The ability to send a hospital to another country is a unique ability," he said in a video statement released by the IDF. "Few countries in the world are able to do such a thing, and we are proud to be the ones to come and help. We have done so in the past, we will do so this time, and we will do so like we always do: with professionalism, with a sense of responsibility and with a sense of great pride." Glassberg concluded, "We will bring pride to the State of Israel."

They already have.

These delegations represent the beautiful Israel. They do not represent the Israel getting lost in all the rhetoric surrounding the judicial reform debate. This is the Israel in which we all take pride and to which we must return.

ISRAEL IS AT CROSSROADS BETWEEN JUDICIAL REFORMS AND LOSS OF DEMOCRACY (Ben-Dror Yemini, YNet 2/8/23)

Israel is in the throes of one of the most serious internal disputes in its history.

In this dispute, no one has a monopoly on the truth or on justice, but both sides have positioned themselves in their corners and are not coming out.

Since the inception of the State of Israel, the country has boasted a glorious judicial system with a Supreme Court that knew how to protect basic rights. In 1950, two years after the foundation of the state, a teacher, Eldad Scheib was dismissed because the Ministry of Education didn't like his opinions. The teacher appealed to the Supreme Court which decided he should be reinstated to work.

When the state closed the communist "Kol Ha'Am" newspaper that published provocative articles at the instruction of the USSR, the Supreme Court ruled

that it constituted an infringement on the freedom of expression, and the paper carried on publishing.

There are dozens more examples. There was no need for a constitution and no need for Basic Laws to maintain basic rights. The change came in the 1990s when the Knesset passed two new Basic Laws: Human Dignity and Liberty and Freedom of Occupation. Aharon Barak, who was eventually appointed Chief Justice, himself determined that this was a "constitutional revolution."

The judicial activism only increased. Not just judicial criticism of laws, but primarily recurring and repeated interferences with government decisions, citing "Reasonability" and "proportionality." In a process that continued for years, Israel's Supreme Court became the world's strongest judicial tribunal. Under Barak's leadership, all too frequently, the judges ruled in accordance with their own values, which seems right to them, in direct contravention of the law.

The activism led by Barak evoked vehement criticism, from top legal experts including Prof. Menny Mautner, Prof. Ruth Ginsburg, Prof. Yoav Dotan and Prof. Daniel Friedman who also briefly served as Justice Minister.

The criticism fell on deaf ears. Supreme Court judges interfered with decisions pertaining to security and immigration. At times it seemed like there was no need for a government at all as the Supreme Court had taken its place. All suggestions for reform proposed over the past decades were met with the same response: "It's an infringement on democracy and the Rule of Law."

The dissatisfaction with the judicial system took a new turn with the opening of criminal investigations into alleged corruption by Benjamin Netanyahu who was serving as prime minister at the time. The allegations were that law enforcement: the police and the State Attorney's Office were politically motivated.

These were not completely lacking validity. Although there was no initiative to unseat Netanyahu, as his trial for bribery, fraud, and breach of trust was conducted in the Jerusalem District Court, more and more incidents have come to light that raised suspicion regarding some political motives. Netanyahu's claims that he was being hunted down - some exaggerated and some true, increased demands from the right, to restrain the judicial system.

Following the results of the November 2022 elections and the formation of the new right-wing, religious coalition, the new justice minister, Yariv Levine presented his proposal for judicial reforms, including controversial clauses.

Firstly, limiting the powers of the Supreme Court, with the option of overriding its rulings by a majority of 61 Knesset votes. Secondly, changing the makeup of the Judicial Selection Committee so that it would be completely controlled by the coalition. Thirdly, canceling the Reasonability Clause that has led to increased court interference with government decisions.

Most political players, as well as public opinion, support judicial reform, but not as it was presented by Levine. The concerns are the infringement on democracy and a slippery slope leading to the kind of steps taken over the last decade in Poland and Hungary. Another concern is that the only purpose behind the proposed reforms, in their next stage, was to rescue Netanyahu from his criminal trial which is in full swing.

That concern is what has prompted the mass demonstrations and the public outcry, as well as the early signs of damage to Israel's economy as the result of fears for Israel's democratic status.

There's also international pressure: American Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken as well as French President Emanuel Macron warned of the damage to democracy.

Netanyahu, on his part, promised that there would be changes made to Levine's proposed plan and that there will be no damage to Israel's democracy. But we are still in a fog. It is unclear what changes Netanyahu was referring to and much of the public does not believe his promises.

Until now, Israel's democracy has been stronger than politics. But for that to remain the case, the protests must continue. In the meantime, the debate itself is part of the democratic process but it is heating up. The coming weeks will prove critical. To be continued.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

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

In this week's Torah portion of Yisro, the Torah shares the thinking of Yisro (father-in-law of Moshe) that inspired him to become a religious convert. Yisro lived as the religious head of Midian, a man of great wealth and honor, who left all his fame and fortune to join the Jewish nation in a barren wilderness. The Torah in chapter 18 verse 11, addressing Yisro's mind-set and motivation, writes: "Now I know that Hashem is the greatest of all gods, for in the very matter in which [the Egyptians] had conspired against them..." The key phrase to understand is the following: "which [the Egyptians] had conspired against them..." Yisro understood, from the events at the Red Sea, the magnitude of the magnificence of the G-d of Israel. The Shira - the Song of the Sea - that the Jews sang in tribute to their salvation, records the three similes (in chapter 15 verses 5, 7, and 10) used to describe the demise of the Egyptians as stones, straw, and lead. Rashi says that the cruelest of the Egyptian taskmasters perished at sea as straw, cast about in a slow, agonizing death. Those not as cruel went down as a rock - a less tormenting death. The best of them sunk into the depths as lead, dying immediately.

Yisro observed the intimacy of G-d's involvement in the affairs of man that even the wicked and cruel people of Egypt were given "designer" deaths calibrated precisely to the measure of their cruelty. Yisro understood this was the G-d that he was always seeking. A G-d who does not reside above alone, rather One who is involved in the daily affairs of each of His creations in a very personal fashion. Yisro leaves all, for he beheld a G-d who did not atomize the Egyptians as one, but rather exacted judgment to the measure which the "Egyptians conspired against the Jews."

After a lifelong search to find the true G-d, Yisro comes home. How much more so we, born into the aristocracy of the Jewish nation, should feel the privilege, honor and responsibility bestowed upon us as a "kingdom of ministers and a holy nation."

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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Point to Ponder

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

"...they shall bring every major matter to you, and every minor matter they shall judge..." (18:22)

"The difficult thing they would bring to Moshe and the minor thing they themselves would judge..." (18:26)

Why does the Torah change the terminology from "major" to "difficult"?

What similarity is there between Shimshon Hagibor and Matan Torah?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

How many months have something special on the fifteenth of the month? What are they?

Answer: Five: Tishrei - Sukkos, Shevat - Tu B'Shevat, Adar - Purim katan, Nisan - Pesach, Av - Tu B'Av.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The last of the *Aseres ha-Dibros* ("Ten Commandments"), as formulated in *parashas Yisro* (20:14), is:

You shall not **covet** your fellow's house. You shall not **covet** your fellow's wife, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, nor anything that belongs to your fellow.

In *parashas Va'eschanan* (*Devarim* 5:18), the wording is somewhat different:

And you shall not **covet** your fellow's wife, you shall not **desire** your fellow's house, his field, his slave, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to your fellow.

While the *Semag* (*lav* 158) maintains that **covet** and **desire** are synonyms, the Rambam (*Gezeilah* 1:9-11) and other authorities understand that they denote two distinct prohibitions: the prohibition against **coveting** an item involves pressuring its owner "with friends and requests until he agrees to sell it to him," whereas the prohibition against **desiring** an item is violated when "he thinks in his heart, 'How is it possible to acquire this from him?'" and his heart is aroused by the matter."

Some understand that even the prohibition against **desiring** an item is only violated if one contemplates pressuring or persuading its owner to sell it to him, but not if he merely desires the item without considering how to obtain it (*Aruch ha-Shulchan* CM 359:8), or even if he desires it and intends to purchase it should the owner wish to sell it, but does not intend to induce him to do so (see *Rav Berachos* pp. 95-96 and R. Osher Weiss, *Lo Sachmod* 5776). The *Sefer ha-Chinuch* (416), however, seems to imply that even desire itself without any intention to acquire the desired item, violates the prohibition. (The Ibn Ezra [*Yisro* *ibid.*] implies that even the prohibition of **coveting** is violated by mere desire, but R. Osher Weiss explains that this is merely an instance of Ibn Ezra's exegetical approach of explaining the Biblical text according to its simple and overt meaning (*peshat*) without reference to the *halachic* tradition.)

The prohibitions against coveting and desiring apply only to items that are not for sale (*Minchas Pittim* CM 359:10). Some suggest that even if one is not sure whether a particular item is for sale, it may be permitted to ask its owner if he wishes to sell it (*Pischei Choshen Geneivah* p. 32).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was two yet I was four.
2. I am in the front of the Shul.
3. I was rock hard.
4. I am not just like an ipad.

#2 WHO AM I?

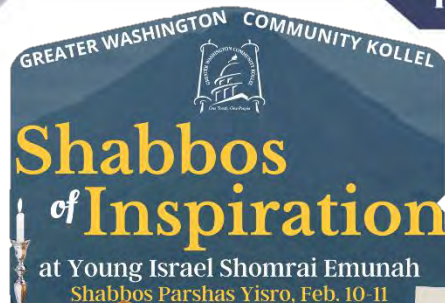
1. Smokey.
2. Quaking.
3. Lightning.
4. Noisy

Last Week's Answers

#1 Mon(Manna) (I was unknown, I was a test, I am remembered with Challah, Don't keep me around.)

#2 Az Yashir (I am said daily, I indicate resurrection, My prophecy was greater than the Prophets, I appear as a wall.)

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