

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ד"ר

July 14 - 15, 2023 - 26 Tammuz 5783 - Parashas Matos/Masei/Mevorchim Hachodesh
Light Candles by 8:15, not before 7:02 - Havdalah 9:21

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **Sara Silver** to commemorate the 35th Yahrzeit of Nat Kates, Z"l, and by **Marla & Marty Teichman** to commemorate the upcoming Yahrzeit of their dear son Jeffrey, Yosef Yonah Ben Avraham Menachem Mendel, Z"l, on the 29th of Tammuz.

The YISE Communications Committee hopes you are enjoying the shorter Shabbos Shorts! Have a comment or suggestion? Please send us your feedback at communications@yise.org

Shabbos Schedule

Minyan locations:

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

Friday Night:

- Mincha: 6:45 (Plag, S), 7:15 (B), 8:15 (B), 7:15 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (LBM/SBM), 8:30 (Sephardi, S)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:00 (B), 7:55 (B), 8:10 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shalosh Seudos: 8:20 (S)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 9:21

Divrei Torah/Shiurim

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| • 8:45 Main Minyan (B) | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • 9:15 Minyan (LBM/SBM) | Rabbi Postelnek |
| • Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur (H) | Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman |
| • Kedushas Levi Chabura - 8:55 (LBM/SBM) | Rabbi Postelnek |
| • Shiur before Mincha - 7:10 (B) | Rabbi Postelnek |

Mazal Tov

- Luna & Avi Perez on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Moshe. Mazal Tov also to grandparents, Terez Perez and Moshe Perez and Simi & Sammy Franco, great-grandmother Janet Rottenberg, Moshe's siblings, Sammy and Esty, and the entire Franco, Hayun, Perez and Rottenberg Families.
- Diana & Leonard Ruchelman on the birth of a great-granddaughter, Dalia Minna, to Sarah & Rabbi Dr. Ezra Cowan, grandparents Cindy & Charles Ruchelman of White Oak and Chaya & Rabbi Yirmiyahu Cowan of Jerusalem.
- Miriam & Yechiel Tzvi Weill and to Joan Weill on the engagement of their daughter, Margolit, to Eli Russ, from Washington, DC. Mazal Tov to grandmother Charlotte Weill and to the entire Weill family, and to grandfather Richard Sincoff, and to Eli's parents Eve & Dr. Moish Russ.

Condolences

- Roz Malin and Izzy Miller on the passing of their brother, Perry B. Miller, and to Zvi Malin on the passing of his uncle.

Shul Announcements

- **Seeing the Hand of Hashem in...Antisemitism?** Rabbi Rosenbaum will speak this Sunday, July 16, 11:00 AM in the Belonofsky Sanctuary, and on **Zoom A**. Presented by the Meaningful Tefilah Project. *See flyer for details.*
- **Follow YISE on WhatsApp** for important announcements and updates: <https://wp.yise.org/whatsapp>

Kiddush/Shalosh Seudos Sponsors

- The Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by the Hashkamah Minyan Group
- The Shul Kiddush is sponsored by **Avi & Luna Perez** in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son Moshe.
- The Shalosh Seudos is sponsored by **Kemp Mill Jewish War Veterans Post #360**, to welcome the three active-duty families arriving in Kemp Mill, and bid farewell to the two active-duty families leaving for new assignments.

YISE Youth Announcements

Shabbos Groups this Shabbos, July 15, from 10:00 AM until Shul ends.

- **Toddler Group** (under 3 with a parent) - in the Toddler Room in the Lower Lobby
- **Kinder Group** (3 to 5) - upstairs in the room behind the balcony
- **Boys ages 6 - 9 & Girls ages 6 - 9** - in The House.
- **5th and 6th grade girls** - In The House
- **Jr. Congregation** for 4th to 6th grade boys - in The House

Looking forward to seeing your children on Shabbos! For more information, contact Sharon Shimoff at sshimoff@yise.org

Popsicles in the Park - Shabbos afternoons, July 15, July 29, August 5 and August 19. Meet at 4:30 PM at the Kemp Mill Urban Park to hear a Dvar Torah geared towards our youngest members, socialize and enjoy a refreshing popsicle! *See flyer for details.*

Teen Minyan - The Teen Minyan, led by Rabbi Moshe Holzer, *will resume in the fall.*

Boys Shiur - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Shabbos afternoon shiur for 5th and 6th grade boys, *will resume in the fall.*

Shul Announcements (continued)

- **The Laws of Lashon Hara in the Modern World** - A new series given by Rabbi Rosenbaum and Rabbi Postelnek. Gain familiarity with the laws and Hashkofos of Lashon Hara through practical examples and cases from daily life! Topics include social media, venting to family, Shidduch inquiries and more! Mondays, July 17 - 31, one hour before Mincha in the Belonofsky Sanctuary and on **Zoom A**. First Shiur is online at <https://wp.yise.org/lashon-hara> See flyer for details.
- **Limud On Our Lawn** - a YISE monthly summer learning project on front lawns and backyards in our community. On the 2nd Shabbos of each month, a different YISE family will host a learning opportunity exploring a Torah luminary. The next program will take place on August 12, at 6:00 PM at the home of Rabbi Alex and Blima Maged, 812 Kersey Road. Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman will speak on "Rav Shmuel Ben Hofni Gaon: An Early Rationalist Talmudist."
- **The YISE Membership Directory** is being updated. An email was sent to all members for whom we have an email address. If you did not receive it, please check your Spam/Junk/Trash folder. If it is not there, send an email to directory@yise.org and a copy will be sent to you shortly. Thank you for your cooperation.
- **Garden of Remembrance** cemetery plots are now available through YISE. If you have any questions pertaining to YISE cemetery options, please contact Larry Korb at larrykorb7@gmail.com or 301-649-5714.
- **Eruv Appeal** - The Eruv urgently needs your financial support. You may recall that the Silver Spring Eruv Association did not conduct its annual appeal last year, so it has been 18 months since you were last asked to contribute. Please visit: <https://wp.yise.org/eruv-2023> for more information and to contribute. The recommended contribution is \$54 per family, but greater and lesser amounts are gratefully accepted. Please note that YISE generously hosts SSEA's website, but SSEA is an independent 501(c)(3) organization that does not receive financial support from any Shul or institution. Questions? Please email SilverSpringEruv@gmail.com
- **Mazal Tov on the Birth of Your Son or Daughter!** YISE can help organize meals. Contact Miriam Levson at 901-481-7133 or miriamlevson@gmail.com or Rose Blynn at 410-522-8624 or rab411@gmail.com Send announcement details to announce@yise.org
- **Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary!** Want to celebrate a Birthday or Anniversary? Please email office@yise.org for details. Thank you for your support.
- **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.
- **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. If you do not have a Helping Hands account, or if you have any questions, 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>

Thank you to the Shabbos Shiurim Sponsors for this Past Week:

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur - David Jaray in honor of Rabbi Grossman and all those who attend his Shiur.
Want to sponsor a Shabbos or weekday Shiur? Please email office@yise.org for details. Thank you for your support.

The Week Ahead		Sunday July 16	Monday July 17	Tuesday July 18	Wednesday, July 19 Rosh Chodesh	Thursday July 20	Friday July 21
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, 6:35, 8:45	6:15, 6:45, 8:45	6:15, 6:55, 8:45
	Sephardi (LBM)	8:00	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
Mincha / Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)	8:20	8:20	8:20	8:20	8:20	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi (LBM)	8:10	8:10	8:10	8:10	8:10	
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 4:23 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 4:58 AM, Latest Netz: 6:01 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:34 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:51 PM, Earliest Shkia: 8:28 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 9:20 PM							

Next Shabbos

July 21 - 22, 2023 - 4 Av 5783

Parashas Devarim/Shabbos Chazon

Light Candles by 8:11, not before 6:58 - Havdalah 9:15

Friday Night:

- Mincha: 6:40 (Plag, S), 7:15 (B), 8:15 (B), 7:15 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Mincha: 2:30 (B), 5:00 (B), 8:10 (B), 8:10 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 9:15

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline:

Wednesday, July 19, 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

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Rabbi Yosef Postelnek - Assistant Rabbi

Josh Seidemann - President

Simi Franco - Office Manager

Josh Breitstein - Facility Manager

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah

Weekday and Community Announcements

ד'תשפ"ג

July 14 - 15, 2023 - 26 Tammuz 5783 - Parashas Matos/Masei/Mevorchim Hachodesh

Upcoming Community Programs & Listings

Mazal Tov! Kollel Dirshu Silver Spring will be making a Siyum on Maseches Bava Metzia and Horayos, Sunday, July 16, at 6:00 PM at the YGW (Boys Division dining room). Rabbi Shlomo Weinberger Maggid Shiur, YGW, will be the guest speaker and Dr. Reuven Schore, will be making the Siyum.

The Capital Closet will be open to the community this Sunday, July 16, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM. Come peruse clothing for women, men, and children, as well as Torah School uniforms! Our address is 9601 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901. The entrance is in the back of the building up a full flight of stairs. There is no charge, but donations to Yad Yehuda are always appreciated. We are unable to accept clothing donations at this time. Contact us with any questions at: ncarmel@yadyehuda.org

Yad Yehuda's Annual School Supplies Drive is under way. Items needed include scotch tape, pencil sharpeners, mechanical pencils, markers, colored pencils, glue, paper, spiral notebooks, binders, rulers, scissors, highlighters and insulated lunch boxes. Donation boxes at 1212 North Belgrade Road and 9601 Colesville Road. Financial donations online at <https://yadyehuda.org/donate>

Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington presents, as part of an ongoing series on topics related to mental health and well-being, "Learning to Sleep Better" with Dr. Mark Rosenblum. Sunday, July 23, 10:00 AM on Zoom. Register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84461711711> For more info., go to www.bikurcholimgw.org

Nine Days Food Drive - Yad Yehuda's Capital Kosher Pantry needs your help to stock up with Pareve and dairy foods in preparation for The 9 Days. Drop-off at YISE and other area locations or ship to Capital Kosher Pantry. *See flyer for details.*

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, July 19, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM, in person in the YISE Social Hall. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator. Contact Manasseh Katz at vpe@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more information.

Lisa Landy Memorial Fund - Lisa devoted the better part of the last three decades teaching pre-schoolers in Jewish schools in the Washington, DC area. Lisa was a staunch advocate of the Reggio Emilia teaching approach, which encourages students to direct their own learning and fosters their independent thinking and self-confidence. The Lisa Landy Memorial Fund was established to train teachers in local Jewish schools in the Reggio method. To make a tax-deductible donation or for more information, contact Eli Landy at 301-401-9475 or eli_landy@hotmail.com

Please help our community complete these Siyumim:

- 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 - <https://hadranalach.com/2626>

Recurring Community Programs & Listings

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 10:00 AM at the home of Mrs. Aviva Werner, 815 Lambert Drive. For more information, email channahandjeff@gmail.com or call 773-219-5397.

Pirkei Avos: Ethics for Everyday Living - presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps on Zoom. Wednesdays, 12:15 PM - 1:00 PM. For Zoom info and registration go to <https://linksgw.org/classes>

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.

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 mblate@yeshiva.edu

Dirshu - Join Kollel Dirshu of Silver Spring as we begin Maseches Bava Basra on Monday, August 7, at YGW. Daily morning shiur by Rabbi Eli Reingold at 5:45 AM and evening shiur by Ranon Cortell and Pinchas Werner at 9:00 PM. Chavrusas also available during these times. For more info. and to join our program, contact Hirsh Komarow (301) 681-1646 or komarowh@gmail.com

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

This Shiur is on hiatus in June and July.

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 at the YGW Boys' Campus. Weekdays also online 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 8:45 PM. Shabbos 1-1/2 hours before the latest YISE Mincha.

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

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's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
- **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday, 6:30 PM, **Zoom A**.
- **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'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 Sefer Iyov, **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, starting the 3rd Perek of Kiddushin.
 - 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**, *will resume in the fall*.
- **SCP (Semichas Chaver Program)** - Tuesdays at 8:45 PM at YISE. Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps. New Semester began Tuesday, May 2. Register at <https://thegreaterwashingtoncommunitykollel.com/scp> For more information please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org
- **Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's** Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, Sunday 7:35 AM - 8:22 AM, Monday 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**. *This Shiur is on hiatus*.
- **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning the 7th Perek of Maseches Bava Metzia. Wednesday evenings, *summer schedule to be determined*, 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

Thank you to the Weekday Shiurim Sponsors for this Past Week:

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.

Want to sponsor a Shabbos or weekday Shiur? Please email office@yise.org for details. Thank you for your support.

BS"ד

Young Israel
Shomrai Emenah
youth committee
invites you to

Popcorn Park

SHABBOS AFTERNOONS

JULY 15TH & 29TH
AUGUST 5TH & 19TH

Come enjoy a
Dvar Torah & a
summer treat!

4:30PM



Kemp Mill
Urban Park

WILL BE RESCHEDULED IN THE EVENT OF RAIN

EMAIL SSHIMOFF@YISE.ORG FOR MORE INFO OR TO SPONSOR

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, July 16 at 11 a.m.

**"Seeing the Hand of Hashem
in...Antisemitism?"**

Visiting the topic through
the lens of the Torah

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





Capital Kasher Pantry
a project of *Yad Yehuda*

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Sponsored by Lily & Saadia Greenberg
on the occasion of the yahrzeit of Lily's father,
Salomon Nadel, a"h,
(Shlomo Zalman ben Pinchas HaKohen)

Volume 29, Issue 37

Shabbat Parashat Matot-Masei

5783 - B"H

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

Oaths and Vows - The parsha of Matot begins with a passage about vows and oaths and their annulment. It uses vocabulary that was later to be adopted and adapted for Kol Nidrei, the annulment of vows on the eve of Yom Kippur. Its position here, though – near the end of the book of Numbers – is strange.

The Torah has been describing the last stages in the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land. The command has been given to divide the land by lot between the tribes. Moses has been told by God to prepare for his death. He asks God to appoint a successor, which He does. The role goes to Joshua, Moses' apprentice for many years. The narrative then breaks off to make way for an extended account of the sacrifices to be brought on the various days of the year. Following that comes the section with which parashat Matot begins, about vows and oaths.

Why is it here? There is a superficial answer. There is a verbal link with the penultimate verse of the previous parsha: "These shall you offer to the Lord on your festivals, in addition to your vows and your freewill offerings."

Having mentioned vows, the Torah now states the laws that apply to them. That is one explanation. However there is another answer, one that goes to the very heart of the project on which the Israelites were about to embark once they had crossed the Jordan and conquered the land. One problem, perhaps the problem, to which the Torah is an answer is: Can freedom and order coexist in the human sphere? Can there be a society which is both free and just at the same time? The Torah sets out for us the other alternatives. There can be freedom and chaos. That was the world full of violence before the Flood. And there can be order without freedom. That was the Egypt from which the Israelites were liberated. Is there a third alternative? And if so, how is it created?

The answer the Torah gives has to do with language. Recall that it was with language that God created the world: "And God said, Let there be... and there was..." One of the first gifts God gave humanity was language. When the Torah says that "God formed man from the dust of the land and breathed the breath of life into his nostrils, and the man became a living being", the Targum translates the last phrase as "and man became a speaking being." For Judaism, speaking is life itself.

However, Judaism is particularly interested in one unusual use of language. The Oxford philosopher J. L. Austin called it "performative utterance." This happens when we use language not to describe something but to do something. So, for instance, when a groom says to his bride under the chupah, "Behold you are betrothed to me," he is not describing a marriage, he is getting married. When in ancient times the Beit Din declared the New Moon, they were not making a statement of fact. They were creating a fact, they were turning the day into the New Moon.

The key example of a performative utterance is a promise. When I promise you that I will do something, I am creating something that did not exist before, namely an obligation. This fact, small though it might seem, is the foundation of Judaism.

A mutual promise – X pledges himself to do certain things for Y, and Y commits himself to do other things for X – is called a covenant, and Judaism is based on covenant, specifically the covenant made

between God and the Israelites at Mount Sinai, which bound them and still to this day binds us. In human history, it is the supreme case of a performative utterance.

Two philosophers understood the significance of the act of promising to the moral life. One was Nietzsche. This is what he said: "To breed an animal with the prerogative to promise – is that not precisely the paradoxical task which nature has set herself with regard to humankind? Is it not the real problem of humankind?... Man himself will really have to become reliable, regular, necessary, even in his own self-image, so that he, as someone making a promise is, is answerable to his own future! That is precisely what constitutes the long history of the origins of responsibility."

The other was Hannah Arendt, who in essence explained what Nietzsche meant. Human affairs are fraught with unpredictability. That is because we are free. We do not know how other people will behave or how they will respond to an act of ours. So we can never be sure of the consequences of our own decisions. Freedom seems to rob the human world of order. We can tell how inanimate objects will behave under different conditions. We can be reasonably sure of how animals will behave. But we cannot tell in advance how humans will react. How then can we create an orderly society without taking away people's freedom?

The answer is the act of promising. When I promise to do something, I am freely placing myself under an obligation to do something in the future. If I am the kind of person who is known to keep his word, I have removed one element of unpredictability from the human world. You can rely on me, since I have given my word. When I promise, I voluntarily bind myself. It is this ability of humans to voluntarily commit themselves to do, or refrain from doing, certain acts that generates order in the relations between human beings without the use of coercive force.

"When a man makes a vow to the Lord or takes an oath binding himself to an obligation, he must not break his word; whatever he speaks, that he must fulfil". It is no accident that this, the second verse of parashat Matot, is stated shortly before the Israelites approach the Promised Land. The institution of promising, of which vows and oaths to God are a supreme example, is essential to the existence of a free society. Freedom depends upon people keeping their word.

One instance of how this plays out in real life appears later in the parsha. Two of the tribes, Reuben and Gad, decide that they would rather live to the east of the Jordan where the land is more suitable for their livestock. After a fraught conversation with Moses, who accuses them of shirking their responsibilities to the rest of the people, they agree to be on the front lines of the army until the conquest of the land is complete. Everything depends on their keeping their word.

All social institutions in a free society depend on trust, and trust means honouring our promises, doing what we say we will do. When this breaks down, the very future of freedom is at risk. There is a classic example of this in Tanach. It appears in the book of Jeremiah, where the Prophet is describing the society of his time, when people could no longer be trusted to keep their word:

They bend their tongues like bows; They are valorous in the land for treachery, not for honesty; They advance from evil to evil. They do not heed Me – declares the Lord. Beware of your friends; Trust not even a brother, For every one of them is a deceiver, and every friend a slanderer. Friend deceives friend, and no one speaks the truth. They have taught their tongues to lie; they weary themselves with sinning. You live in the midst of deceit; in their deceit they refuse to heed Me – declares the Lord.

That was the condition of a society that was about to lose its freedom to the Babylonians. It never fully recovered.

If trust breaks down, social relationships break down. Society will then depend on law enforcement agencies or some other use of force. When force is widely used, society is no longer free. The only way free human beings can form collaborative and cooperative relationships without recourse to force is by the use of verbal undertakings honoured by those who make them.

Freedom needs trust. Trust needs people to keep their word, and keeping your word means treating words as holy, vows and oaths as sacrosanct. Only under very special and precisely formulated circumstances can you be released from your undertakings. That is why, as the Israelites approached the Holy Land where they were to create a free society, they had to be reminded of the sacred character of vows and oaths.

The temptation to break your word when it is to your advantage to do so can sometimes be overwhelming. That is why belief in God – a God who oversees all we think, say, and do, and who holds us accountable to our commitments – is so fundamental. Although it sounds strange to us now, the father of toleration and liberalism, John Locke, held that citizenship should not be extended to atheists because, not believing in God, they could not be trusted to honour their word.

Understanding this, we can now appreciate that the appearance of laws about vows and oaths at the end of the book of Numbers, as the Israelites are approaching the land of Israel, is no accident, and the moral is still relevant today. A free society depends on trust. Trust depends on keeping your word. That is how humans imitate God – by using language to create. Words create moral obligations, and moral obligations, undertaken responsibly and honoured faithfully, create the possibility of a free society. So never break a promise. Always do what you say you are going to do. If we fail to keep our word, eventually we will lose our freedom.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

This week's double portion records how the Jews finally cross the Jordan River on their way to conquer the Promised Land. The tribes of Gad and Reuven and half the tribe of Menashe possess a great multitude of cattle, and "paradise" for cattle is good grazing land, which happens to be what these two and a half tribes find in their present location of Trans-Jordan. They then petition Moses with a special request. "If you would grant us a favor, let

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this land be given to us as our permanent property, and do not bring us across the Jordan.”

Moses’ response is sharp. “Why should your brothers go out and fight while you stay here? Why are you trying to discourage the Israelites from crossing over to the land that God has given them? This is the same thing your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh Barnea to see the land”. Moses’ reference is an especially damning one: just as the scouts decided to remain in the desert because they lacked the courage and will to fight for the Promised Land, you are acting similar to them by your desire to stay where you are, saving yourselves from the harrowing experience of war. And Moses makes this comparison even though Trans-Jordan is considered to be part of the holy land.

What moved these two and a half tribes to remain in Trans-Jordan? According to Rabbi Simcha Zissel of Kelm, they petitioned not to have to cross the Jordan because of their cattle, which expresses a certain degree of materialistic greed on their part; it doesn’t take a great flight of the imagination to see the correspondence between cattle and grazing lands in those days to economic opportunities in the work place today.

Why do Jews continue to live outside of Israel, further away than the other side of the Jordan – on the other side of the Atlantic? Because they’ve found good grazing lands for their cattle and it’s a shame to give that up, especially since our present-day descendants of Gad and Menashe rarely question a contemporary Rabbinic authority about their choice. If they did, he would more than likely repeat Moses’ message “Why should your brothers go out and fight while you stay here?”.

After all, world Jewry has certainly benefited from the State of Israel, ever since its inception and to this very day. After the Holocaust, which resulted in the tragic loss of 1/3 of our people and 4/5 of our religious, intellectual and cultural leadership, it seemed as if Judaism had finally faded from the world stage of viable “peoples”, nations and religions. The renowned historian Alfred Toynbee called the Jews a “fossil” in 1946. Conversion was rampant on every campus in America.

Not only did world Jewry experience a miraculous renaissance after the declaration of Israeli statehood – and then again with the liberation of Jerusalem after the Six Day War in 1967 – but Israel is now the greatest provider of religious and educational leadership for Jewish communities throughout the world as well as the most effective fount of inspiration for searching and struggling assimilated Jews whose lives become significantly transformed through programs like Birthright Israel. Successful diaspora Jewish communities today owe their development in no small measure to the Jewish State.

Rabbi Yitzchak Arama gives a slightly different interpretation. He describes the two and a half tribes as practical materialists who are planning to eventually join their siblings in Israel’s heartland – but only eventually, not right now. At present, the personal needs of the family and the tribe must come first – until the leader of the family can amass sufficient material goods to make the big move to the middle east a less risky venture. Their personal needs – and not historic Israel’s national needs – must come first. Therefore, Moses took them to task.

The Ohr Hachayim approaches the situation in its simplest, most “religious” terms: suggesting that the two and a half tribes built their argument around Divine intervention: “The land which God conquered on behalf of the congregation of Israel is a land for cattle, and your servants have cattle.”. In other words, this is the land that God conquered for us and therefore this is the land we wish to remain in. If God wants us somewhere else, let Him take us there, let Him conquer that land too. Until then, this

is where we’re going to stay and this is where our cattle will stay. It is good for our cattle and therefore it is good for us.

In many ways, the Ohr Hachayim’s reading sees the two and a half tribes as being the counterparts of the devotees of Natura Karta. They are waiting for God Himself to bring them to Israel – and if not God, then at least His Messiah! When God is good and ready to redeem Israel completely, He’ll do it in His own time. Everything depends on God, and we are more than happy to wait it out in our pleasant grazing land until then. ...

The truth is that Gad, Reuven and half of Menashe had forgotten their history. They cannot rest on their grazing laurels while the rest of the nation fights their wars for them. When the Israelites reached the Reed Sea chased by the Egyptian hordes they asked Moses to pray to God. “‘Why are you crying out to me?’ God says to Moses. ‘Speak to the Israelites and let them start moving.’” The sea does not split until Nachshon ben Aminadav and Caleb ben Yefuna jump in.

Similarly, when Moses tells the two and a half tribes that they have to bear arms and fight, he’s really pointing out that God’s promise to Israel is that everyone has to be partners – God with the nation, and the nation with one another, sharing in a mutual responsibility and privilege. At the end of the day, if our fledgling State proves to be even more vulnerable than we think by dint of less manpower in war and a smaller population than is required, Jews will have only themselves to blame for not rising to the challenge offered by the greatest Jewish adventure in 2000 years.

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersch Weinreb

“The Kiss of Hope” - Would you ever imagine that our holy Sages had a lot to say about a kiss? Would we not assume that kisses would be judged unworthy of their consideration?

But such is not the case. They had much to say about kisses. The significance of the kiss was brought home to me recently when I came across a street sign advertising a film. It read, “Is not a kiss the very signature of love?” Indeed it is, so much so that the kiss plays a role in the spiritual realm. Thus, the Song of Songs, the biblical book which is traditionally interpreted as a description of the passionate love affair between God and His people, begins with the phrase, “Let Him give me of the kisses of His mouth.”

The Midrash distinguishes between three significant types of kisses. One is the “kiss of greatness,” exemplified by the prophet Samuel’s kissing Saul when he anointed him king. Another is the “kiss of special occasions”—Aaron’s kissing Moses upon their reunion. The third kiss is the “kiss of separation,” the kiss given at the moment we take leave from one another. It is the “kiss of departure”.

This third kiss comes with mixed feelings. On the one hand, we are bidding farewell to a beloved friend and are saddened to say goodbye. On the other hand, we are leaving for a reason—to encounter a new friend or a new opportunity. This is a tearful kiss, but it is also a kiss of anticipation, a kiss of hope, a kiss which signifies the beginning of a new journey.

In Masei, we read of no less than fifty such journeys. The people of Israel as they left Egypt and marched toward the Promised Land stopped at fifty stations along the way. We can assume that after they settled in to one station, they had some reluctance to leave a familiar place, a place of shelter, and to plunge ahead into the unknown. But we can also imagine the joyous emotions they experienced, knowing that they were taking another step toward their desired destination.

This is the way of all journeys. Moreover, it is the very essence of life itself. We settle in to one place,

Likutei Divrei Torah

to one role, to one stage of life. It becomes familiar to us, and we feel comfortable there. Moving on to a new place, a new role, a new stage of life, feels threatening. Often we are tempted to remain in that place, to continue to live in the status quo. We don’t want to kiss this familiar station goodbye.

On the other hand, we often find this old place tiring, boring. We no longer feel the challenges we felt when we first came to this station, to this point in our lives. We relish the opportunity to move on, in spite of the uncertainty that lies ahead. We look forward to the novelty of a new place, a new role, a new stage of life.

There is a contemporary poet whose works I admire. Here is how he puts it: I envy those; who live in two places; New York, say, and London... ; There is always the anticipation; of the change, the chance that what is wrong; is the result of where you are. I have; always loved both the freshness of; arriving and the relief of leaving. With; two homes every move would be a homecoming. I am not even considering the weather, hot Or cold, dry or wet: I am talking about hope. (Gerald Locklin, Where We Are).

It is no secret that many of us find the first fifty or so verses of Masei repetitive and dry. “These were the marches of the Israelites who started out from the land of Egypt... Their marches, by starting points, were as follows: They set out from Rameses... And encamped at Succoth. They set out from Succoth and encamped at Etham... They set out from Etham and turned about toward Pi Hahiroth, which faces Baal Zephon, and they encamped before Migdol... They set out from the hills of Abarim and encamped at the steppes of Moab, at the Jordan near Jericho...”

Of what possible interest can this long list of stations in the wilderness be to the average reader? What can he possibly learn from these verses?

Commentators throughout the ages have struggled with these very questions and have offered various approaches to answering them. I would like to advance an original approach, a metaphorical one. We suggest that just as the Israelites embarked upon a journey when they left Egypt, so do we all embark upon a journey the moment we are born. This journey entails many stations along the way before it is completed. Each station is necessary for the individual’s development, but no one station can be permanent.

Psychologists discuss the concept of “developmental tasks.” Each stage of life has its developmental task. The infant must learn to crawl, but his failure to move on from the crawling stage to the walking stage is a symptom of pathology. The two- or three-year-old who has mastered the need to become attached to his parents must soon proceed to the next stage and learn to separate from them.

This is also true of intellectual development. The ten-year-old who is still reading the books he read when he was five has a stunted intellect. But so does the fifty-year-old who has not transcended the literary interests he had when he was twenty.

The need to progress from station to station is especially true when it comes to spirituality. It has been said, correctly, that children are naturally spiritual. But childlike spirituality cannot slake the spiritual thirst of the adolescent. And the adult whose spirituality has not progressed beyond adolescence is a spiritual cripple. The inner resources that serve the adolescent well are of no help in coping with the challenges of adulthood.

Fifty stations were necessary for the Israelites to reach the Promised Land. At least as many are required of all of us if we are to reach our God-given potential as mature human beings. As we journey from station to station in our lives, we need to learn to kiss the kiss of departure, which is also the kiss of hope. [Excerpt]

In this week's Torah reading, we find the *Mitzvah* to set aside *Arei Miklat* / Cities of Refuge for those who murder unintentionally. R' Avraham Yoffen z"l (1887-1970; *Rosh Yeshiva* of the Novardok Yeshiva in Bialystok, Poland; New York and Yerushalayim) observes:

The Torah surrounds a person with *Mitzvot* at every step of his life. We have *Tefilin*, *Tzitzit*, and *Mezuzah*, about which the *Gemara* (*Menachot* 43b) says, "One who is careful with them will not hurry to sin." Beyond that, we read (*Bemidbar* 23:10), "Who has counted the dust of Yaakov"--there is no limit to the *Mitzvot* one can perform with "dust," i.e., the agricultural laws that relate to the earth, the ashes of *Parah Adumah*, and the dirt in the *Sotah*-water. A businessperson, too, has many laws he must observe to ensure that his dealings are honest.

Sometimes, however, a person slips, or an avalanche of circumstances knocks him off of his regular spiritual level. At such times, his routine of Torah study and prayer is turned on its head, and the world becomes a dark place for him. Even then, however, the Torah does not abandon him, just as someone who kills accidentally is not abandoned to the hand of the avenger. Rather, he is given a place to run for safety, and not just any place. The Cities of Refuge were also the cities of the *Levi'im*, the servants of *Hashem*, where the murderer will be in an environment that will lift him back up.

R' Yoffen adds: Every person has such "at-risk" moments, particularly during vacation periods, when he is away from his usual positive influences. Precisely in such times, a person must find ways to strengthen himself. (*Ha'mussar Ve'ha'da'at*)

Shabbat

"Hear D'var / the word of Hashem, House of Yaakov and all the families of the House of Yisrael." (*Yirmiyah* 2:4--the first verse of this week's *Haftarah*)

Midrash Aggadat Bereishit comments on this verse: *Hashem* says, "You neglected all of the *Dibrot* / Ten Commandments. Keep one *Davar* / thing (literally, 'word') and I will forgive you. What is that one thing? It is *Shabbat*, about which it says (*Yeshayah* 58:13), 'Honor it . . . by refraining from *Dabber davar* / speaking words'." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Yitzchak Menachem Weinberg *shlita* (*Tolna Rebbe* in Yerushalayim) asks: The quoted verse from *Yeshayah* does not refer to observing *Shabbat* in general. Rather, it refers to the prohibition on discussing mundane matters on *Shabbat* (see *Shabbat* 113a: "Your *Dibbur* / speech on *Shabbat* should be different from your *Dibbur* / speech on weekdays."). Why is that one detail of *Shabbat* observance so important that observing it will bring about forgiveness for other sins?

This teaches, answers the *Tolna Rebbe*, that there is a special holiness to our speech on *Shabbat*. The *Zohar* refers to the mouth as "royalty." This means, explains the *Tolna Rebbe*, that when we sanctify our mouths and do not speak improperly--rather, we speak words of Torah and prayer in holiness and purity--we influence our entire bodies and cause *Hashem's* goodness to flow to them. This will cause us to observe all *Mitzvot* more fully, which allows us to be forgiven.

The foregoing idea, notes the *Tolna Rebbe*, connects this week's *Haftarah* to our *Parashah*, which begins with the subject of not profaning one's word. The concept of speech appears several other times in this *Parashah*, as well. This idea also is appropriate for this time of year, for we are taught that the *Bet Hamikdash* was destroyed because of the misuse of speech that resulted from senseless hatred, as in the well-known story of *Kamtza* and *Bar Kamtza* (*Gittin* 55b). In that incident, speech was misused several times--first when *Bar Kamtza* was expelled from the party, again when the other guests failed to intervene, and a third time when *Bar Kamtza* informed (falsely) on the Jewish People.

– Continued in box inside –

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"Why do you dissuade the heart of *Bnei Yisrael* from crossing to the Land that *Hashem* has given them? This is what your fathers did, when I sent them from Kadesh-Barne'a to see the Land." (32:7-8)

R' Shlomo Alkabetz z"l (1505-1584; author of the Friday night hymn *Lecha Dodi*, among other works) asks: Why did Moshe mention the Spies? That generation had already been punished! Why not let bygones be bygones?

He answers: Moshe did not mean to say, "You are evil like the Spies." Rather, he was telling the two tribes that wanted to remain on the East Bank of the Jordan, "Do not think that you will not influence others because you are a minority. Just ten men were able to influence the entire generation that preceded you to reject the Land." (*Perushei U'drushei R' Shlomo Alkabetz*)

"These are the journeys of *Bnei Yisrael* . . . Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys at the bidding of *Hashem*, and these are their journeys according to their goings forth." (33:1-2)

R' Moshe Shick z"l (1805-1879; a leading rabbi and *Rosh Yeshiva* in Hungary) writes: Commentaries offer several reasons for why the Torah lists all of the way stations where *Bnei Yisrael* camped over 40 years. Another reason may be to teach a person *Mussar* / the proper way to refine oneself.

R' Shick explains: Life is a journey. Every day and every year is another way station. At all times there are two paths that a person can choose: a good path and a bad path. In truth, though, a person is biased by his desires and temptations, and whichever path he chooses, he will tell himself that it is the good one. Therefore, *Pirkei Avot* (2:1) teaches: "Which is the proper path that person should choose for himself? Whatever is a credit to himself and earns him the esteem of fellow men." If a person wants to know if he really is on a good path, says R' Shick, he needs to acknowledge that he is biased and cannot decide for himself. Rather, he should look at whether he is earning the esteem of his fellow men.

R' Shick continues: It is not enough to consider this question in the moment. In addition, a person must look back and examine his past: was it good or bad?

In this light, R' Shick writes, we can understand a reversal in the wording of our verse: "Moshe wrote *Motza'aihem* / their goings forth *Le'mas'aihem* / according to their journeys at the bidding of *Hashem*"--first their "goings forth" and then their "journeys"--"and these are *Mas'aihem* / their journeys *Le'motza'aihem* / according to their goings forth"--first their "journeys" and then their "goings forth." When Moshe looked back, he could see that from the time he went forth into the world, all his journeys were at the bidding of *Hashem*. He could be very proud of his life's journey. Not so *Bnei Yisrael*, who tested and tried *Hashem* time-and-time-again over their 40 years in the desert. Their "journeys," the times when they did obey *Hashem*, needed to atone for their "goings forth," their many rebellions in the Nation's younger years.

(*Maharam Shick Al Ha'Torah*)

"This is the thing that *Hashem* has commanded: 'If a man takes a vow to *Hashem* or swears an oath to establish a prohibition upon himself, he shall not desecrate his word; according to whatever comes from his mouth he shall do'." (30:3)

R' Yosef Shalom z"l (1630-1694; rabbi in Moravia) writes: R' Eliyahu de Vidas (1518-1592; *Eretz Yisrael*) teaches in *Reishit Chochmah* that a thinking person should not make a vow to do or not do something for an extended period of time [for example, to *Daven* with a *Minyan* or learn a specific amount for an entire year], for the *Yetzer Ha'ra* will surely find ways to prevent him from fulfilling such a vow. Rather, if a person makes a vow, it should be for a short period of time--even a day or half a day. When he completes that vow, he can renew it for another short period.

R' Yosef Shalom continues: In this vein, commentaries explain the *Mishnah* (*Avot* ch.1), "Say little and do a lot." As soon as a person expresses a desire to do a good deed, the *Yetzer Ha'ra* hears and begins to scheme to stop him. But, if you say little, then you will be able to do a lot.

This, writes R' Yosef Shalom, is the meaning of our verses as well: "This is the thing that *Hashem* has commanded"--this is His advice to you. "If a man takes a vow to *Hashem* or swears an oath to establish a prohibition upon himself"--the listing of "vow," "oath," and "prohibition" teaches that a person should make multiple small commitments, not one large commitment. Then, "he will not desecrate his word." Why? Because "according to whatever comes from his mouth he shall do"--"he," the *Yetzer Ha'ra*, hears what comes from one's mouth and he, the *Yetzer Ha'ra*, begins "to do"--to scheme against your good intentions.

Alternatively, R' Yosef Shalom writes, the verse may be alluding to another teaching of the *Reishit Chochmah*--that when a person expresses an intent to do a good deed, he creates an angel. However, that angel is incomplete until the good deed is finished. Therefore, do not fail to follow through on your word, for your word has already begun "to do."

(*Yad Avi Shalom*)

- Continued from back page -

The *Tolna Rebbe* concludes: Speech is what distinguishes man from animals, as we read (*Bereishit* 2:7), "Man became a living being," which *Onkelos* translates: "Man became a speaking being." Our obligation to be careful with our speech is that much greater on *Shabbat*. The Torah says regarding *Shabbat* (*Shmot* 23:12), "So that your ox and donkey may rest"--which teaches that a person is obligated to influence all of the lower forms of existence that he controls, including the animal soul within himself. Then his mouth will truly be royalty.

(*Chedveta D'ze'air Anpin: Matot* 2)

ISRAEL REPORT

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ISRAEL'S KNESSET PASSES REASONABLENESS STANDARD BILL ON FIRST READING (JPost 7/10/23)

The first reading of the controversial Reasonableness Standard Bill passed in Knesset plenum by a vote of 64 to 56 with plans to move onto the Constitution Committee. If it passes, the bill's next stage will be a return to the Knesset Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, which already on Tuesday will begin to prepare it for its second and third reading.

The "reasonableness standard bill" is an amendment to Basic Law: The Judiciary, that would block Israel's courts from applying what is known as the "reasonableness standard" to decisions made by elected officials. The reasonableness standard is a common law doctrine that allows for judicial review against government administrative decisions that are deemed beyond the scope of what a responsible and reasonable authority would undertake.

Proponents of the law argue that it is a highly subjective tool for judicial activism that allows the court to subvert government policy with its own views. Critics, including the attorney general, argue that the tool is essential to counter corruption and to ensure the protection of individuals from arbitrary and capricious government decisions.

The court used the reasonableness standard, for example, when it ruled in January that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to appoint Shas chairman Aryeh Deri to two ministerial positions, despite three criminal convictions on white-collar crime committed while in power, suffered from "extreme unreasonableness." Netanyahu was forced to fire Deri. Should the reasonableness standard bill pass into law, the prime minister may attempt to reappoint Deri to his former positions of Health Minister and Interior Minister.

Knesset Constitution, Law and Justice Committee chairman MK Simcha Rothman introduced the bill, which he argued was "balanced, responsible, and significantly different from what perhaps should have been legislated." Opposition leader MK Yair Lapid responded, "At least tell the truth. This law enables the appointment of a convicted minister; a law that enables the sending out of arrest warrants to whoever protests against the government; this is a law that enables the firing of the attorney general, in order to arrange a plea-bargain for your boss [Netanyahu]."

The reasonableness standard bill was part of a package of bills introduced by the government in January that would have given the government and Knesset more power at the expense of the judicial system. One of the bills proposed to amend the makeup of the Judicial Selection Committee, such that the government would have a majority and thus the power to appoint Israel's judges at all levels. The bill stalled after Defense Minister Yoav Gallant warned that it would lead to discord in the IDF and large-scale refusals to fulfill reserve duty, which could harm Israel's national security.

President Isaac Herzog said in a speech earlier on Monday that the only way to end the political crisis was "to sit down and talk."

"In the midst of a deep and worrisome crisis, the responsible act of leadership must be to sit, talk, and put Israel's unity above all else. Public leaders – from the coalition and opposition – must talk and heal the schism. And this needs to happen now," Herzog said.

ISRAELIS BLOCK HIGHWAYS IN NATIONWIDE PROTESTS OVER JUDICIAL REFORM (Israel Hayom 7/11/23)

Israeli protesters blocked highways leading to Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel Aviv on Tuesday, at the start of a day of countrywide demonstrations against the government's planned judicial overhaul that has divided the nation.

The demonstrations came the morning after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's parliamentary coalition gave initial approval for a bill to limit the

Supreme Court's oversight powers, pressing forward with the contentious proposed changes to the judiciary despite widespread opposition. The bill, which passed its first out of three readings, would prevent the courts from undoing ministerial decisions even if they deem them unreasonable as long as they are otherwise legal.

The legislation is one of several bills aimed at reforming the judiciary. The plan has provoked months of sustained protests by opponents who say it is pushing the country toward authoritarian rule. Anti-overhaul activists have called for nationwide mass demonstrations throughout the day, including protests at Israel's main international airport that could disrupt travel.

Police cleared protesters who blocked a main artery leading to Jerusalem with a water cannon and officers arrested several others who had obstructed a highway next to the central city of Modiin. Demonstrators blocked a main highway in Haifa with a large banner reading "together we will be victorious," snarling traffic along the beachfront.

Critics of the plan say it will upset the country's fragile system of checks and balances and concentrate power in the hands of Netanyahu and his allies. They also say Netanyahu has a conflict of interest because he is on trial for charges of fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes, all of which he has denied.

A wide swath of Israeli society, including reserve military officers, business leaders, LGBTQ+ and other minority groups have joined the protests.

AIR FORCE RESERVISTS MEET TO DISCUSS REFUSAL OVER JUDICIAL OVERHAUL (YNet 7/11/23)

Defense Minister Yoav Gallant on Tuesday evening said in a speech to mark the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War that "the calls being heard these days to encourage military service refusal and to stop the volunteering of

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Moshe Anapolle and Tani Lichtman, Editors in Chief

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reservists threatens the unity of the ranks. They are dangerous and are a reward for our enemies."

The minister's words come against the backdrop of the growing calls for soldiers and reservists to refuse to serve and amid reports that at least 400 Air Force reservists, including many pilots and navigators, gathered Tuesday to discuss the further measures that they will take due to the government's continued legislative push on the judicial overhaul. Earlier on Tuesday, nearly 40 reservist pilots, navigators and additional military staff representing hundreds of others attended a meeting at Tel Nof Airbase at the invitation of Israeli Air Force Commander Maj. Gen. Tomer Bar to air concerns surrounding the legal plan and consequent threats by airmen.

"I call on public figures from the right and the left, leave politics out of the army," Gallant added. "Make no mistake – today it is one government, tomorrow there may be another government. The only thing that keeps us united is the army. The refusal harms the IDF and the security establishment, the refusal harms Israel's security. The IDF is the protective tool that gives life to the State of Israel. We have no other army to rely on, we must take care to keep it united and leave it out of any controversy."

At his meeting, Bar advised any reservist intending to make decisions relating to their service to first and foremost consult with their immediate commanding officer, and that comradery among the soldiers was and remains a "vital" aspect.

The conversation had been planned to take place about two weeks in earlier but was postponed and rescheduled for Tuesday. It was described by those present as "honest, deep and tense" and lasted for about three hours.

The pilots, according to sources familiar with the conversation, "raised a red flag," regarding the ongoing discussions in their units following the attempts to pass a unilateral judicial reform and the possibility of suspending volunteering as a result of the government actions.

Some of the attendees referred to the passing of the bill to end the reasonableness standard in its first reading early on Tuesday morning, and the overall legislative push, as a serious development that could significantly impact the Air Force's operational readiness and lead to the suspension of volunteering by a great number of reservists.

Air Force personnel representatives noted they weren't speaking on behalf of all reservists but rather sharing their personal opinions. In fact, each one presented "stages" of the judicial overhaul's passing in which it will become increasingly difficult for a significant number of reservists in the Air Force to continue serving, in their opinion.

According to the military, none of those present threatened to end their volunteer service immediately. Bar clarified that he's responsible for the soldiers' readiness and will update the IDF's chief of staff as necessary based on the reports provided by the units' various commanders.

THE ONLY FEMALE IDF SOLDIER WHO FOUGHT IN IDF OPERATION IN JENIN (YNet 7/10/23)

For 40 consecutive hours, Sgt. Eden Yadid, serving as an operational documentarian in the Israel Defense Forces, accompanied the soldiers of the Paratroopers Reconnaissance Battalion operating in the Jenin refugee camp as part of the counter-terrorism operation dubbed Operation Home and Garden.

Yadid racked up the longest operational stay by a documenting female soldier in hostile territory since the integration of women into the combat documentation unit.

Apart from her role as a medic, the 22-year-old was the only female soldier operating in the camp throughout the operation. She entered Jenin with the soldiers at 3 a.m., two hours after the aerial assault began. Within minutes, gunfire erupted toward the force she was with, providing cover for the commando soldiers as they conducted operations in the heart of the camp.

It was the final week of Yadid's service. The plane tickets for her discharge vacation in Greece had been booked a long time ago. Nevertheless, she didn't hesitate to join the dangerous mission.

"I went into it knowing that there was a good chance I would miss my flight,

and the entire vacation would be ruined," she told Ynet and Yedioth Ahronoth. "But in the end, I managed to make it home, pack my suitcase, and rush to the plane to Rhodes."

"I documented intense operations of breaching into buildings and targets where we found hundreds of different combat tools: weapons parts, knives, kneepads, vests and a lot of stolen IDF uniforms – quantities that would be enough for an army. Most of the terrorists fled from there, leaving everything behind. I thought to myself that there are soldiers who lack this equipment, and here it all was in front of me in large quantities," according to Yadid.

However, not everything went smoothly. After being promised that she would join the operation, Yadid suddenly received a message that there was a logistical problem and no place for her. She insisted, and her company commander spoke with a senior officer in the Paratroopers Brigade, who approved her participation. In the days leading up to the operation, she trained with the soldiers from the reconnaissance unit in various combat scenarios and encountered skepticism from some of the commanding officers.

"The commander of the reconnaissance unit believed in me at every stage, but there were those who hesitated to take responsibility for me during the operation," she explained. "They asked me what I was doing there and wondered how I could tolerate being with boys for such a long time in one place. But pretty quickly we connected. I explained to them the importance of operational documentation in strengthening the legitimacy of their actions, and at a certain point, they understood for themselves how crucial it was. They documented the fighting with their own equipment and offered me the photos. I told the soldiers that if we come under fire, I would first respond as a combatant and use my weapon, and only then use the camera."

They were together for almost two days inside a Palestinian house: 16 soldiers on the ground floor, along with one female soldier, and another 16 soldiers on the upper floor. They gathered the Palestinian family members in one of the rooms until the conflict subsided. She slept alongside the soldiers on the floor, in a half-sitting, half-lying position, without a mattress, and they all shared the facilities of the residential structure.

"If I had to protect the family members while they used the restroom, I did it," she recounted. "Since I didn't know how long the operation would last, I took a can of corned beef in my vest, 10 cucumbers, and some bread. That was my main food and the soldiers' as well."

Now she is on vacation, exchanging the scorching sun of the northern West Bank for the warm beaches. She describes her participation in the operation as a "unique experience," mainly due to the contrast between the dangers that were described to her during the preparation stages and the fact that most of the terrorists escaped from Jenin, as the refugee camp turned into a ghost town.

DUE TO A LACK OF DEMAND: IDF TO SHUTTER TWO HAREDI COMPANIES (Arutz-7 7/10/23)

The IDF is preparing to disband the Givati Brigade's haredi Tomer Company after not meeting enlistment goals and a continued decline of demand in the haredi community.

According to a report by Galei Tzahal, Ground Forces Commander Maj. Gen. Tamir Yadai recently ordered the company closed. The Ground Force Command recently discussed the future of the Tomer Company, which has not succeeded in reaching its enlistment objectives.

The Givati Battalion supports the disbandment of the company and is examining its future. Today, the company consists of only two squads, which are made up of Religious Zionist soldiers, possibly due to the army's forming haredi units that are for male soldiers only, and not haredi ones.

The IDF is also looking into closing the Paratroopers Brigade's haredi Hetz Company because it did not meet its enlistment goals.

The IDF Spokesperson commented that "in recent months, there were several discussions regarding the integration of haredi soldiers in the Ground Forces. During the discussions, many matters were discussed, among them, the way to utilize the enlistees and the variety of jobs and units, but no

decisions have been made yet."

WOMEN'S GROUPS BARRED FROM KNESSET PANEL ON 'RIGHT TO GENDER SEGREGATION' IN ISRAEL (Ha'aretz 7/11/23)

Two prominent women's groups in the Orthodox Jewish community were prevented on Monday from participating in a Knesset meeting discussing the "right to gender segregation."

The two organizations – Orthodox feminist group Koleh: Religious Women's Forum and the Center for Women's Justice, which represents women in rabbinical courts – said that they were denied entry to the Knesset event.

According to Israel's public broadcaster Kan, the two groups reportedly were told that there were already enough organizations representing Haredi women at the confab.

They added that the event was attended by Anat Gopstein of the far-right, anti-intermarriage group Lehava, who is one of the founders of the Knesset parliamentary lobby group on women's rights in the religious community.

The event's organizer – MK Limor Son Har-Melech of the far-right Otzma Yehudit Party – did not respond to Kan, though sources close to her said the event was only for invited groups and the parliamentary lobby group.

The ultra-Orthodox feminist group Nivcharot told Kan that "several requests from its activists to participate were rejected."

"We were disappointed to hear that this new lobby group, which claims to represent us instead of the non-existent female ultra-Orthodox members of Knesset, was unwilling to permit even one of us to join their ranks," the statement added.

Women make up just four of the 16 lawmakers from the lobby group, spanning from Netanyahu's Likud Party and both ultra-Orthodox parties to the far-right Otzma Yehudit.

OPERATION TZUR ISRAEL REACHES MILESTONE: 5,000 ETHIOPIAN OLIM REUNITED (JPost 7/12/23)

A wave of joyous reunions filled the air in Ben Gurion airport on Wednesday as 130 new immigrants from Ethiopia, known as Olim, landed on Israeli soil. This arrival marks the successful completion of the second phase of Operation Tzur Israel, a government-led initiative aimed at facilitating the Aliyah of relatives of Ethiopian Jews to Israel.

Launched in June 2022, the second phase of the operation has been successful in relocating 3,000 Olim from Ethiopia, following the 2,000 immigrants brought over in the operation's first phase that started in December 2020. A majority of the newcomers, 70% to be precise, are under the age of 35, signifying a robust young demographic boost. Half of these fresh arrivals are children and teenagers eager to start their new lives in the Jewish homeland.

Facilitated by The Jewish Agency for Israel, Operation Tzur Israel has now managed to reunite a total of 5,000 Ethiopian Jews with their families in Israel, many of whom had been separated for a long duration. The Agency, in collaboration with the Aliyah and Integration Ministry, the Interior Ministry, the Population Authority, and other organizations, coordinated 18 special flights for this mission. The support of Jewish Federations, Keren Hayesod, private donors, foundations, and friends of Israel from Korea and around the world was instrumental in realizing this feat.

Once in Israel, the new immigrants are settled into one of 18 absorption centers, run by the Aliyah and Integration Ministry and The Jewish Agency. These centers serve as transitional hubs where the Olim are provided with financial support, Hebrew language education, and resources for their integration into Israeli employment and educational systems. To accommodate the inflow, five new absorption centers have been opened, making a total of 25 operational centers throughout the country.

According to a statement by the Jewish Agency, during the course of Operation Tzur Israel, specialized programs were also developed to optimize the integration of the Olim into Israeli society. Notably, the Aliyah Tech program was launched to pave a path for young Ethiopian immigrants to join the high-tech industry in Israel.

Mark Wilf, Chairman of the Board of Governors of The Jewish Agency, reflected on the success of Operation Tzur Israel, stating, "By completing this milestone in Operation Tzur Israel, and continuing to facilitate the Aliyah and absorption of Ethiopians who have long yearned to arrive in the Jewish homeland, we have actualized the core value of the State of Israel and the Jewish people to advocate for the most vulnerable individuals among us."

It is important to note that the majority of Ethiopian immigrants in recent times are not recognized as Jews based on Jewish Law and may not qualify for aliyah under Israel's Law of Return. The overwhelming number of immigrants are relatives of Israeli citizens who are granted Israeli citizenship as a compassionate endeavor.

Advocates for the Gondar and Addis Ababa communities contend that individuals ineligible for aliyah are the offspring of Jews whose predecessors were compelled to embrace Christianity and hence should be permitted to undertake aliyah.

The Israeli government and the Jewish Agency have made multiple announcements declaring the official conclusion of aliyah from Ethiopia. Over the years, various special operations have been conducted since the 1980s to facilitate the immigration of the Beta Israel community. The positive outcomes of these efforts have prompted the government and the Jewish Agency to announce several times that the official aliyah from Ethiopia has come to an end. However, subsequent renewals have occurred on multiple occasions.

In 2015, the government made a commitment to continue the immigration of Ethiopians who have a first-degree relative in Israel. However, the implementation of this decision has been only partially realized in practice. Many past governments have procrastinated when it came to executing the decision fully. During the month of May, hundreds of Ethiopian olim protested outside of the weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem, demanding support for continued immigration from Ethiopia.

The protest also focused on the fact that the current budget, "does not include a budget for aliyah from Ethiopia."

NEW HEBRON BYPASS ROAD INAUGURATED IN GUSH ETZION (Arutz-7 7/10/23)

The Lev Yehuda-Levenger Road, or Hebron bypass road was inaugurated today (Monday), at a ceremony on HaGiva HaTzehuba (Yellow Hill) in Gush Etzion, whose development began in 2019. The road is expected to improve driving conditions from the Gush Etzion Junction southwards towards Kiryat Arba-Hebron and southern Mount Hebron.

Most of the route will be opened this Wednesday and will be fully accessible within the next few weeks with the completion of the final construction work.

Minister of Transport and Road Safety, Miri Regev said, "I am glad to have achieved closure today with this important project that was launched during my previous term in the ministry, and on my return I made sure that it would progress in full force. It is therefore a project that lies close to my heart. Today we were privileged to see the successful completion of a safe, state-of-the-art road that will offer safe passage to all residents in the area, both Jews and Palestinians. The safety of the residents of Judea and Samaria is as important to me as that of any Israeli citizen, as is our obligation to ensure convenient and safe transport to Jerusalem and between the communities. We have comprehensive development programs for the roads in Judea and Samaria, and together with Prime Minister Netanyahu and Finance Minister Smotrich, we have achieved the budgets required for their implementation."

Minister Regev stated that as early as this December, a tender will be issued for the construction of HaAvot Road, which is also a part of the massive five-year plan approved by the government. It will connect Hebron and Kiryat Arba with the Gush Etzion communities and Jerusalem. The minister added that she expects the work on the Hawara bypass road to be completed by the end of the year as well.

Engineer Gilad Naor, deputy head of the Projects and Transportation Wing at the Engineering and Development Center at Netivei Yisrael: "We have substantial news for the commuters who for many years have suffered from

stone-throwing on this road. Residents of the communities in Judea and Samaria who until now have had to travel in the vicinity of villages to get home, will now be able to travel safely on the new road. For every project we execute, we at Netivei Yisrael understand well how to optimize road safety for road users, and in this case the aim is twofold, since we have taken into account the issue of security, too, which is most essential for the residents.”

ISRAELI GAMERS COMPETE IN SAUDI ARABIA FOR FIFAE WORLD CUP (Israel Hayom 7/9/23)

A team of Israeli gamers landed in Saudi Arabia, where they will compete in the FIFAE Club World Cup, an international soccer video game competition held every year under the aegis of FIFA and EA Sports.

This year, the eSports event was organized for the first time in Riyadh. Despite an absence of official relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, Israeli presence in the kingdom has become more common.

The team of three players, a coach and an assistant manager entered Saudi territory via the United Arab Emirates on Israeli passports for the event scheduled for July 16-19. Zvika Kosman, the club's manager, worked with FIFA to obtain Saudi approval.

According to Kosman, Saudi Arabia provided a letter stipulating that all participants would be allowed into the country, without singling out Israel. He added that communications were via FIFA, with no direct contact between the Israeli and Saudi governments.

Although reportedly the team will not openly display their Israeli identity in public, they said their nationality will not be concealed during the tournament. Their security will be provided by the local authorities and a private company. The arrival of the Israeli team takes place against the backdrop of US effort to negotiate a normalization of relations between the Israel and Saudi Arabia. However, an agreement seems unlikely for the time being, given Saudi demands and political tensions linked to the Palestinians.

OVER 150B SHEKELS: JUDICIAL OVERHAUL'S COST TO ISRAEL'S ECONOMY SO FAR (Eytan Avriel and Sami Peretz, Ha'aretz 7/11/23)

How much money have Israelis lost since January 4, the day when Justice Minister Yariv Levin presented his plan for a “judicial reform” – something he himself later admitted is a recipe to destroy Israeli democracy?

The governing coalition is determined to complete significant parts of the Levin plan in their original form, only this time using the “salami method” (slice by slice) rather than all at once. Assuming the plan is implemented, how much money will Israelis lose in the coming six months?

It's hard to say precisely, because it requires separating the effect of the judicial overhaul from domestic and global developments unrelated to it. But we can venture a rough estimate.

On the stock market, for example, the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange ended the first half of 2023 unchanged, compared with the New York Stock Exchange rising more than 15 percent and the Nasdaq gaining more than 30 percent. In the past, the Israeli market more or less followed the U.S. market. This means that since January, Israelis forsook a 15 percent gain on their portfolio of Israeli shares due to the judicial overhaul.

The TASE's market value, including stock held by controlling shareholders, is currently 900 billion shekels (\$243 billion), which means forfeited profits of 135 billion shekels. And that's only the beginning.

The whole world is suffering from inflation, in many countries even more so than Israel. But the weakening of the shekel against the dollar and the euro due to the judicial overhaul made the increase in prices of imported goods even worse, hitting the public in the pocketbook.

According to Bank of Israel calculations, every weakening of the shekel by 1 percent brings an increase of 0.1-0.2 percentage points of inflation. That means a decline in households' standard of living due to higher prices of consumer goods, increased mortgage payments and higher interest rates on debts and other credit lines (including credit cards).

There's another way to provide a rough estimate of the extent of the loss to the economy. Because an increase of 1 percent in Israel's GDP is worth a

little less than 20 billion shekels, if the economy grows only 1 percent this year due to the political events – compared with forecasts at the start of the year for growth of 3.5 percent – that adds up to a loss of 50 billion shekels in 2023. Further losses will follow in the coming years as growth will start from a lower base.

From these calculations alone, the loss is already approaching 150 billion shekels – an average loss of over 50,000 shekels, or \$13,500, per household.

The story is even more worrisome in high-tech, which provides about a quarter of the country's revenues from taxes and accounts for about half of Israeli exports: Investment in the sector has declined more sharply than in other countries, according to Israel Innovation Authority calculations for the first half of the year.

And if that wasn't bad enough, Israel isn't participating in the global recovery of high-tech that has emerged in recent months (based on enthusiasm for new opportunities being created by the artificial intelligence boom).

According to the innovation authority and reports from venture capital fund managers, about 80 percent of new startups chose to register abroad this year. Investment in new companies is down 90 percent compared with the past two years. In effect, almost no startups are currently being created in Israel, and the entrepreneurs who are starting them are registering their companies abroad – and that's where they locate their management too.

How much money is the economy losing from that? Again, it's difficult to separate the decline in high-tech due to the bursting of the global technology bubble and that due to the judicial overhaul. We also have to be cautious about double counting when taking into consideration the decline in GDP and TASE's underperformance. Even so, it adds up to billions of shekels.

What will happen in the second half of the year? The answer depends on how quickly the government moves ahead with its judicial overhaul. If it is halted, and investors in Israel and worldwide get the impression that it has been shelved for good, the economy will gradually return to its pre-overhaul growth rate.

If the legislation isn't stopped, all the trends that emerged in the first half of the year will probably intensify. More and more investors and entrepreneurs will wash their hands of Israel and reduce their business presence in a country they see as undemocratic, fanatically religious, violent – and, most of all, unstable.

Foreign investors are willing to invest in countries that aren't democratic, as long as they understand the rules of the game and can rely on them. But they are fearful of investing money, time and effort in a place where the future isn't so clear, even to locals.

France, for example, recently suffered a debt rating downgrade because of the numerous demonstrations and general political instability. Does anyone doubt that if the judicial overhaul legislation continues, Israel's rating will be lowered sooner or later?

As a result of all these things, the risk premium of investment in Israel will continue to rise; the performance gap between the Israeli and other markets will widen; the shekel will weaken; and interest rates will increase and/or remain high for an extended period. Economic activity will shrink or stagnate, led by the rickety growth engine. The high-tech industry will either dry up or move abroad.

In such a situation, the ultra-Orthodox, the settlers and those close to the politicians from Shas and Likud will probably live better than in the past. However, the standard of living for the rest of the country will quickly decline, due to a shrinking economic pie and because government funds will be directed in favor of coalition voters.

The protesters on the streets and others at home think the judicial overhaul is about the essence of democracy, what human rights model Israel will adopt, the rule of law and the country's social-religious-national character – and they're right. But equally, the Levin plan has already caused the public losses of over 150 billion shekels, along with a decline in the standard of living and a huge value destruction.

And that's just the beginning.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Presented by Rabbi Menachem Winter, Rosh Kollel
From our archives

In an extraordinary departure from the Torah's usual concise style, the verses summarize the entire journey the nation traveled, beginning from the Exodus until the nation's arrival at the banks of the Jordan River. Many commentators question the need for the lengthy review of the nation's itinerary, with many answers offered. I would like to share with you an answer from the Alter of Kelm.

When someone sets out on a journey for business or pleasure, the trip itself serves no purpose other than as a means to reach the intended destination. If the destination is never reached, or the anticipated objective not achieved, the journey itself was a wasted effort. That is not true in the spiritual realm. Here, every step is precious and worthy. All of our efforts serve to bring us closer to our true mission, lovingly counted and measured by G-d Himself. As a result, each desert encampment is specified, referenced and eternalized for all time.

In our personal journey of spirituality, in our quest to become kinder, wiser, and more G-dly, we invariably encounter obstacles and difficulties. And on a national level, our journey is constantly beset by travail and tribulation. Yet, on this journey, even in the darkest of times, we carry in our hearts the knowledge that G-d is our constant companion, lovingly leading us to our ultimate destination.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Moshe sent them, a thousand from each tribe for the legion, them and Pinchas, son of Elazar, the Kohen, to the legion... (31, 6)

The tribe of Levi was separated from the ways of the world. They do not wage war, as the rest of Bnai Yisroel ... (Rambam Shemita V'Yovel 13, 12)

Since Kohanim are from the tribe of Levi, why was Pinchas sent to war?

Parsha Riddle

How could someone be forced to go to a City of Refuge without having accidentally killed someone?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What was the name of Levi's wife?

Answer: Osah (Daas Zekanim Pinchas 26:59)

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Masei* (35:22-23), the Torah describes an act of involuntary manslaughter as follows: "But if with suddenness, without enmity, did he push him, or he hurled any implement upon him without ambush ... **but he was not his enemy and did not seek his harm...**"

While the simple interpretation of the phrase "he was not his enemy and did not seek his harm" is a characterization of the **killer**, our Sages interpret it as referring to the witnesses to, or judges of, the homicide. The Mishnah (*Sanhedrin* 3:5) states:

[R. Yehuda says:] **One who loves or one who hates** one of the litigants is also disqualified [from testifying]. ... The Rabbis **said to** Rabbi Yehuda: **The Jewish people are not suspected of** bearing false witness due to love or hate.

The Talmud (*ibid.* 29a) explains that R. Yehuda derives his disqualifications from our verse:

One about whom it can be stated "**But he was not his enemy,**" can testify about him. And one who "**neither sought his harm**" can judge him. The Gemara asks: **We found** a source for the disqualification of one who **hates; from where do we derive that one who loves** is disqualified? ... [This] is based on **logical reasoning: What is the reason an enemy** is disqualified from bearing witness? It is **because he feels a sense of aversion** toward that individual and might testify falsely against him. A similar logic can be employed with regard to one who **loves, as well: He feels a sense of affinity** toward that individual, and might testify falsely on his behalf.

The Talmud proceeds to explain that even the Sages who disagree with R. Yehuda's disqualification of one who loves or hates one of the litigants from **testifying**, agree that he is disqualified from **judging**, since although he is not suspected of deliberately lying, his ability to judge fairly is still impaired (Rashi *ibid.*).

The *Birchei Yosef* (CM *siman* 9 s.k. 20) suggests that even one who loves or hates **both** litigants should not serve as a judge, for two reasons:

- Presumably, his feelings toward the litigants are not exactly equal in degree, and even the small differential between them can bias his judgment.
- His feelings may tempt him to compromise so that each litigant can both win and lose, even where the law is entirely on the side of one of them.

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I am travelling sticks.
2. I include vows and inheritance.
3. I am double.
4. I end with strength.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. No barber.
2. I stop "to this time."
3. I banned the band.
4. I am referred to by my time.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Bris Shalom (Covenant of Peace) (My opposite caused me, I am for peace, I am not for day eight, I am for Pinchas.)

#2 Rosh Chodesh (I come monthly, I am special for women, I am not a head, I can be 17,18, 19, 20 or 21 times per year.)

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