

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ד"ר

August 18 - 19, 2023 - 2 Elul 5783 - Parashas Shoftim

Light Candles by 7:41, not before 6:34 - Havdalah 8:41

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **Yale Ginsburg** in honor of his Aishes Chayil, **Sahra**, for 38 (and counting) wonderful years of marriage.

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: 6:15 (Plag, S), 6:45 (B), 7:45 (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), 7:40 (B), 7:35 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 8:41

Divrei Torah/Shiurim

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • 8:45 Main Minyan (B) | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • 9:15 Minyan (S) | Rabbi Postelnek |
| • Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur (SBM) | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • Kedushas Levi Chabura - 8:55 (S) | Rabbi Postelnek |
| • Shiur before Mincha - 6:55 (B) | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • Shiur between Mincha and Maariv (B) | Rabbi Beinisch Ginsburg |

Mazal Tov

- **Bernice & Eddie Cohen** on the recent wedding of their son Coby to Enya Menasse of Monsey, NY.
- **Naomi & Nechemia Mond** and family on the engagement of their son Ezra to Yocheved Rosenfeld, daughter of Rochelle & Ari Rosenfeld of Passaic, NJ.

Kiddush Sponsors

- The Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by **Yale Ginsburg** in honor of his Aishes Chayil, **Sahra**, for 38 (and counting) wonderful years of marriage.
- The Shul Kiddush is sponsored by the Shul Kiddush Group.
- The Sephardic Kiddush sponsored by **Bernice & Eddie Cohen** on the recent wedding of their son Coby to Enya Menasse of Monsey, NY, and by **Cheryl & Michael Gabai** to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Cheryl's father, Samuel Rutta, Shmuel Ben David, and to celebrate the birth of their newest grandchild, Roselyn Natalie Neiman, Roz Nechama Bat Eliyahu.

Shul Announcements

- **Kedushas Levi Chabura** - A 20-minute Chabura on the Parasha, now with special focus on Elul and Yamim Noraim! Find deeper meaning in the Parsha and Chagim by learning the Kedushas Levi's weekly insights. 8:55 AM Shabbos morning in the Social Hall. *See flyer for details.*
- **High Holiday Information** - Information and forms for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur at YISE, including seats, Yizkor Guide and more, are online at <https://wp.yise.org/high-holidays-5784> Packets are also available at Shul. Preferences will be accommodated on a first-come, first-served basis.
- **Dreams & Expectations: The Month of Elul and Reimagining Marriage** - A shiur and discussion with Rabbi Postelnek exploring the balance of dreams and expectations in marriage and personal growth from a Torah perspective. Monday, August 28, 8:15PM, at the home of Leah & Yoni Levine, 1111 University Blvd. W. (University Towers), Apartment 206. Ring the front desk or text (718) 685 8077 to enter. *See flyer for details.*

YISE Youth Announcements

Shabbos Groups this Shabbos, August 19, 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

For more information, contact Sharon Shimoff at sshimoff@yise.org

Popsicles in the Park - August 19 and 26, 4:30 PM at the Kemp Mill Urban Park. Dvar Torah for kids and refreshing popsicles! *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 on September 2.*

Shul Announcements

- **Come Join Rabbi Koss's Monthly Jewish History class on Zoom!** Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and the YISE Chesed Committee. Rabbi Koss will be speaking on a topic in Jewish history, Monday, September 4, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on **Zoom A**.
- **Ask the Rabbi** - Come join our virtual, interactive monthly program featuring different Halachic topics! This month's topic, Building and "Living" in a Sukkah, will take place on Tuesday, September 5, from 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM on **Zoom A**. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at mfriedman2@yahoo.com or 301-754-1517. To sponsor the program, contact the YISE office. *See flyer for details.*
- **Limud On Our Lawn** - a YISE monthly summer learning project on front lawns and backyards in our community. The next program will take place on September 9, at 6:00 PM at the home of Debbie Rogal, 11419 Heather Crest Lane. Mrs. Sharon Freundel will speak on "Rashi: The Wisdom of Shlomo & the Humility of Yitzchak." *See flyer for details.*
- **Pre-Selichos Kumzitz** - Motzei Shabbos, September 9, 11:30 PM - 12:45 AM in the Social Hall. Live music by Naaleh and Divrei Torah from Rabbi Rosenbaum, Rabbi Postelnek and Rabbi Yonatan Gorin. *See flyer for details.*
- **Lulavim & Esrogim** - YISE is working with Josh Breistein to bring you the finest quality Arba Minim sets. Complete details and order form online at www.yise.org/lulav. Orders must be placed by Tuesday, September 19. Pickup at YISE on Wednesday, September 27. *See flyer for details.*
- **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.
- **Seeking Shalosh Seudos Sponsors** - The Shalosh Seudos Committee is looking for sponsors for the next few months, including August, September, and October. Sponsorships start at \$375. To sponsor, contact Simi Franco at 301-593-4465, ext. 103, or office@yise.org or Ethan Cohen at ecohen@yise.org. Volunteers are needed to set up and clean up - contact Ethan Cohen to be part of the rotation. The following dates are not available due to the fall holidays: 9/16, 9/23, 9/30, and 10/7.
- **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 August 20	Monday August 21	Tuesday August 22	Wednesday August 23	Thursday August 24	Friday August 25
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)	8:00	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30
Mincha / Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)	7:40	7:40	7:40	7:40	7:40	See Shabbos schedule
	Sephardi (LBM)	7:35	7:35	7:35	7:35	7:35	
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 5:06 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 5:36 AM, Latest Netz: 6:32 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:48 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:46 PM, Earliest Shkia: 7:47 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 8:39 PM							

Next Shabbos

August 25 - 26, 2023 - 9 Elul 5783

Parashas Ki Seitzei

Light Candles by 7:31, not before 6:26 - Havdalah 8:30

Friday Night:

- Mincha: 6:10 (Plag, S), 6:35 (B), 7:35 (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), 7:30 (B), 7:25 (Sephardi, LBM)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 8:30

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline:

Wednesday, August 23, 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 Breistein - Facility Manager

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah

Weekday and Community Announcements

August 18 - 19, 2023 - 2 Elul 5783 - Parashas Shoftim

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Upcoming Community Programs & Listings

Combine Science and Torah with a Solar Eclipse - A total eclipse will be visible in parts of the US on April 8, 2024, including Cleveland, OH. Stuart Cohen is trying to organize a trip combining this event with Torah. When: April 7 - 8. How: a chartered bus, a hotel, and the Telshe Yeshiva. Cost: unknown prior to planning, but hotel + meals + bus will likely exceed \$400/person. Email Stuart at szcohen@aol.com by Monday, August 14, if there is a reasonable chance that you might go. Tentatively men only.

The Good Book is the annual local Orthodox Jewish directory published since 1995 by Dr. Bert & Rachelle Miller. They mail the book for free to all interested Orthodox-affiliated households. Interested households should email their new or updated listing info to goodbook3@gmail.com by August 25. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Active Threat Security Training for the Community - Join Federation for one of two opportunities to learn how to manage active security threats, featuring Interim Regional Security Advisor, Eddy Azcarate, with an intro. by Federation CEO, Gil Preuss. This webinar will enhance your situational awareness, empower you to help during a medical emergency, and leave you more confident about your options in the event of an active threat. Monday, August 28 - 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM and Tuesday, August 29 - 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM. Register at: <https://www.shalomdc.org/event/active-threat-security-training-for-the-community>

Support The Golden Network's Annual Campaign - TGN provides retirees and seniors with inspirational lectures, musical performances, one-on-one Torah study, and companionship. Serving private homes, hospitals, and adult facilities in the Greater Washington and Baltimore communities. Contribute at <https://goldennetwork.org>

Erev Yom Tom Mikvah for Men - The Mikvah Emunah Society of Greater Washington (MES) is pleased to offer use of the Wallerstein Mikvah in Kemp Mill to men, on Erev Rosh Hashanah and Erev Yom Kippur. Volunteers are needed as well. Please see <https://mikvahemunah.com/men> for all the info. Thank you!

At Home Shofar Blowing - Are you, or someone you know, unable to attend shul on Rosh Hashanah? We can arrange to have someone blow Shofar at your home in Kemp Mill. Details on how to arrange for someone to blow Shofar at your home will be posted in early September.

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>

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, August 23, 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.

Dirshu - Join Kollel Dirshu of Silver Spring, now studying Maseches Bava Basra, 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 301-633-6262 or komarowh@gmail.com

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

Recurring Community Programs & Listings

Join the Buddy Network - Do you live alone and want a buddy? Do you want to volunteer to be a buddy? Have a buddy check in during extreme weather or power outages. Make sure you have the basic necessities when you can't get out. Register at <https://goldennetwork.org/buddynetwork> For more info. call 301-732-1773 or email director@goldennetwork.org

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 Lamberton 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.

TGN Program: Siddur Class - In-Depth Analysis of the Siddur with Mrs. Esther Dziadek, Wednesday mornings, 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM, on Zoom B. For more information, call 301-732-1773 or email director@goldennetwork.org

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

Recurring Community Programs & Listings (continued)

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**, *will not meet on Monday, August 21*.
- **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. Grand breakfast buffet kickoff this Sunday, August 20. *See flyer for details*.
- **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 after Sukkos*.
- **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.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Mussar Shiur - Diana & Leonard Ruchelman on the Yahrzeit of her mother, Essia Bas Chaim HaLevi, Z"L, whose Yahrzeit was the 21st of Av.

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

Young Israel
Shomrai Emenah
Youth Committee
invites you to

Young Israel
Shomrai Emenah
Youth Committee
invites you to

Pop Culture Park

SHABBOS AFTERNOONS

JULY 15TH & 29TH

AUGUST 5TH & 19TH

NOW ALSO ON AUGUST 26TH!

Come enjoy a
Dvar Torah & a
summer treat!

Kemp Mill
Urban Park



WILL BE RESCHEDULED IN THE EVENT OF RAIN
EMAIL [SSHIMOFF@YISE.ORG](mailto:sshimoff@yise.org) FOR MORE INFO OR TO SPONSOR

Ongoing! Join this Elul!

Pre-9:15 Minyan Chaburah

KEDUSHAS LEVI

on the Weekly Parsha and Chagim
Now with special focus on
Eiul and the Yamim Noraim!

8:55am Shabbos Mornings

YISE Social Hall

Given by Rabbi Postelnek
& Rabbi Rosenbaum



YISE Adult Education
Committee Presents

Limud on Our Lawn

A Monthly Outdoor Exploration
of Different Torah Luminaries
Through the Ages at YISE
Members' Homes

Mrs. Sharon Freundel:

Rashi: The Wisdom of Shlomo
and the Humility of Yitzchak.

September 9 at 6:00 PM

Hosted by:
Debbie Rogal

11419 Heather Crest Lane



Dreams & Expectations: The Month of Elul and Reimagining Marriage

A shiur and discussion exploring the balance
of dreams and expectations in marriage and
personal growth from a Torah perspective.

given by Rabbi Postelnek



Monday, Aug. 28 at 8:15 PM



At the home of Leah & Yoni Levine
1111 University Blvd. W

(University Towers), Apt. 206

Ring the front desk or text
(718) 685 8077 to enter



YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH
1132 ARCOLA AVE, SILVER SPRING, MD 20902 • (301) 593-4465

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LIVE MUSIC BY LOCAL BAND **NAAIEH**

WITH INSPIRING DIVREI TORAH

From Rabbi Rosenbaum, Rabbi Postelnek
& Rabbi Yonatan Gorin

PIZZA AND REFRESHMENTS TO BE SERVED

Sponsors welcome

Visit yise.org/kumzitz
or email office@yise.org

MOTZEI
SHABBOS

September 9

YISE SOCIAL Hall 11:30PM-12:45AM

Selichos to follow in the Belonofsky Sanctuary

In partnership with the YISE Meaningful Tefilah Project

YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH - 1132 ARCOLA AVE, SILVER SPRING, MD 20902 - (301) 593-4465

ASK the RABBI

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

Topic: Building and "Living" in a Sukkah



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

- | |
|--|
| ▪ What is the correct way to build a canvas sukkah? |
| ▪ What if a tree covers part or all of your sukkah? |
| ▪ How does the meal on the first night of Sukkos differ from the others? |

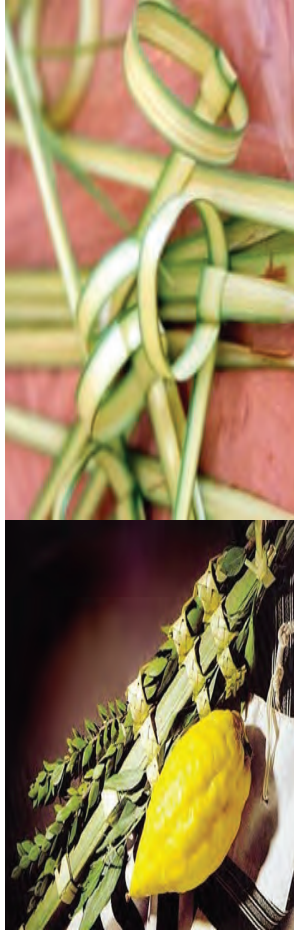
Send in your questions about Building and "Living" in a Sukkah to:
AskTheRabbi@yise.org by Sunday, September 3.

When: Tuesday, September 5, 8:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Where: Go to <https://zoom.us/join/> or call 301-715-8592 and enter the meeting ID & password: Meeting ID: 416 963 9000 & Password: 492019

For more information and to submit questions by phone or anonymously, contact Miriam Friedman at 301-754-1517 or mfriedman2@yahoo.com

To sponsor the program, please contact the YISE office.



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

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

Aleph \$ 85
Beis \$ 70
Gimmel \$ 55
Chinuch \$ 36

Order deadline: Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Pickup will be on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 4 PM – 9 PM
YISE Social Hall

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

Please advise if you want yours to be preselected.



SUNDAY BRUNCH & LEARN

GRAND BREAKFAST BUFFET KICKOFF!!

Bagels - Lox & Spreads - French Toast - Coffee & more!

Sunday, Aug. 20 - 9:30am

at Young Israel Shomrai Emonah, 1132 Arcola Ave.

Men's programming - Free of charge

FOUR GREAT LEARNING OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM!

**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

For more info please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org or 347-869-9361

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Shabbat Shalom

Avoid Disappointment! Reserve Dedications Early!

Volume 29, Issue 42

Shabbat Parashat Shoftim

5783 - B"H

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

Environmental Responsibility - Some commands in the Torah were understood so narrowly by the Sages that they were rendered almost inapplicable. One example is the *ir ha-nidachat*, the city led astray into idolatry, about which the Torah states that "you shall put the inhabitants of that town to the sword." Another is the ben sorer umoreh, the stubborn and rebellious child, brought by his parents to the court and, if found guilty, put to death.

In both of these cases some Sages then interpreted the law so restrictively that they said "there never was and never will be" a case in which the law was applied. As for the condemned city, Rabbi Eliezer said that if it contained a single *mezuzah*, the law was not enforced. In the case of the rebellious child, R. Yehuda taught that if the mother and father did not sound or look alike, the law did not apply. According to these interpretations, the two laws were never meant to be put into practice, but were written solely "so that we should expound them and receive reward." They had only an educational – not a legal – function.

In the opposite direction, some laws were held to be far more extensive than they seemed at first sight. One striking example occurs in this week's parsha. It refers to the conduct of a siege during wartime. The Torah states: When you lay siege to a town and wage war against it for a long time to capture it, do not destroy its trees; do not wield an axe against them. You may eat from them; you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human beings, that you should besiege them too? Only trees that you know do not produce food may you cut down for use building siege works until the town that has made war against you falls.

This prohibition against destroying fruit-bearing trees was known as the rule of *bal tashchit*, "do not destroy". On the face of it, it is highly limited in scope. It does no more than forbid a "scorched earth" policy in the conduct of war. It seems to have no peacetime application. However, the Sages understood it very broadly to include any act of needless destruction. Maimonides states the law thus: "Not only does this apply to trees, but also whoever breaks vessels or tears garments, destroys a building, blocks a wellspring of water, or destructively wastes food transgresses the command of *bal tashchit*."

This is the halachic basis of an ethic of environmental responsibility.

Why did the Oral Tradition, or at least some of its exponents, narrow the scope of the law in some cases, and broaden it in others? The short answer is: we do not know. The rabbinic literature does not tell us. But we can speculate. A posek, seeking to interpret Divine law in specific cases, will endeavour to do so in a way consistent with the total structure of biblical teaching. If a text seems to conflict with a basic principle of Jewish law, it will be understood restrictively, at least by some. If it exemplifies such a principle, it will be understood broadly.

The law of the condemned city, where all the inhabitants were sentenced to death, seems to conflict with the principle of individual justice. When Sodom was threatened with such a fate, Abraham argued that if there were only ten innocent people, the destruction of the entire population would be manifestly unfair: "Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justice?"

The law of the stubborn and rebellious son was explained in the Talmud by R. Jose the Galilean on the grounds that: "The Torah foresaw his ultimate destiny." He had begun with theft. The likelihood was that he would go on to violence and then to murder. "Therefore the Torah ordained: Let him die innocent rather than die guilty."

This is pre-emptive punishment. The child is punished less for what he has done than for what he may go on to do. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who said the law never was or would be applied, may have believed that in Judaism there is a contrary principle, that people are only judged for what they have done, not for what they will do. Retributive punishment is justice; pre-emptive punishment is not.

To repeat: this is speculative. There may have been other reasons at work. But it makes sense to suppose that the Sages sought as far as possible to make their individual rulings consistent with the value-structure of Jewish law as they understood it. On this view, the law of the condemned city exists to teach us that idolatry, once accepted in public, is contagious, as we see from the history of Israel's kings. The law of the stubborn and rebellious child is there to teach us how steep is the downward slope from juvenile delinquency to adult crime. Law exists not just to regulate but also to educate.

In the case of *bal tashchit*, however, there is an obvious fit with much else in Jewish law and thought. The Torah is concerned with what we would nowadays call 'sustainability.' This is particularly true of the three commands ordaining periodic rest: the Sabbath, the Sabbatical year, and the Jubilee year.

On the Sabbath all agricultural work is forbidden, "so that your ox and your donkey may rest." It sets a limit to our intervention in nature and the pursuit of economic growth. We become conscious that we are creations, not just creators. The earth is not ours but God's. For six days it is handed over to us, but on the seventh we symbolically abdicate that power. We may perform no 'work', which is to say, an act that alters the state of something for human purposes. The Sabbath is a weekly reminder of the integrity of nature and the boundaries of human striving.

What the Sabbath does for humans and animals, the Sabbatical and Jubilee years do for the land. The earth, too, is entitled to its periodic rest. The Torah warns that if the Israelites do not respect this, they will suffer exile, "then shall the land make appeasement for its Sabbaths, for as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemies' lands. Then the land will rest and make appeasement for its Sabbaths."

Behind this are two concerns. One is environmental. As Maimonides points out, land which is overexploited eventually erodes and loses its fertility. The Israelites were therefore commanded to conserve the soil by giving it periodic fallow years, not pursuing short-term gain at the cost of long-term desolation. The second, no less significant, is theological. "The land," says God, "is Mine; you are merely migrants and visitors to Me." We are guests on earth.

There is another group of commands which directs us against over-interference with nature. The Torah forbids crossbreeding livestock, planting a field with mixed seeds, and wearing a garment of mixed wool and linen. These rules are called *chukim* or

'statutes'. Nahmanides understood this term to mean laws that respect the integrity of nature. To mix different species, he argued, was to presume to be able to improve on creation, and is thus an affront to the Creator. Each species has its own internal laws of development and reproduction, and these must not be tampered with: "One who combines two different species thereby changes and defies the work of creation, as if he believes that the Holy One, blessed be He, has not completely perfected the world and he now wishes to improve it by adding new kinds of creatures."

Deuteronomy also contains a law forbidding taking a young bird together with its mother. Nahmanides sees this as having the same underlying concern, namely of protecting species. Though the Bible permits us to use some animals for food, we must not cull them to extinction.

Samson Raphael Hirsch in the nineteenth century gave the most forcible interpretation of biblical law. The statutes relating to environmental protection, he said, represent the principle that "the same regard which you show to humanity you must also demonstrate to every lower creature, to the earth which bears and sustains all, and to the world of plants and animals." They are a kind of social justice applied to the natural world: "They ask you to regard all living things as God's property. Destroy none; abuse none; waste nothing; employ all things wisely ... Look upon all creatures as servants in the household of creation."

Hirsch also gave a novel interpretation to the phrase in Genesis 1, "Let Us make man in Our image after Our own likeness." (Gen. 1:26) The passage is puzzling, for at that stage, prior to the creation of man, God was alone. The 'Us', says Hirsch, refers to the rest of creation. Because man alone would develop the capacity to change and possibly endanger the natural world, nature itself was consulted as to whether it approved of such a being. The implied condition is that humans may use nature only in such a way as to enhance it, not put it at risk. Anything else is *ultra vires*, outside the remit of our stewardship of the planet.

In this context, a phrase in Genesis 2 is decisive. Man was set in the Garden of Eden "to work it and safeguard it." The two Hebrew verbs are significant. The first – *le'ovdah* – literally means 'to serve it'. Man is not just a master but also a servant of nature. The second – *leshomrah* – means 'to guard it'. This is the verb used in later Torah legislation to describe the responsibilities of a guardian of property that does not belong to him. He must exercise vigilance in its protection and is liable for loss through negligence. This is perhaps the best short definition of humanity's responsibility for nature as the Bible conceives it.

Man's dominion over nature is thus limited by the requirement to serve and conserve. The famous story of Genesis 2-3 – eating the forbidden fruit, and the subsequent exile from Eden – makes just this point. Not everything we can do, may we do. Transgress the limits, and disaster follows. All of this is summed up by a simple Midrash: "When God made man, He showed him the panoply of creation and said to him: 'See all My works, how beautiful they are. All I have

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made, I have made for you. Take care, therefore, that you do not destroy My world, for if you do, there will be no one left to mend what you have destroyed.”

We know much more than we once did about the dangers to the earth's ecology by the ceaseless pursuit of economic gain. The guidance of the Oral tradition in interpreting “do not destroy” expansively, not restrictively, should inspire us now. We should expand our horizons of environmental responsibility for the sake of generations not yet born, and for the sake of God, whose guests on earth we are.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

“You shall appoint judges...[who] will not pervert justice.... Justice, justice shall you pursue... You shall not plant for yourselves an Asheira [tree used for purposes of idolatry, according to Rashi and Ibn Ezra] near the altar of the Lord your God.” The juxtaposition of these verses – the demand for honorable and righteous judges, the concern for an impartial legal system which is a “no bribe zone,” immediately followed by the prohibition of idolatry – seems to mix two completely different areas of religious concern. It combines the moral and ethical laws of interpersonal conduct together with the ritual laws of divine service. Each of these two realms holds a respected place in the Bible, but why group them so closely together without any kind of segue between them?

Second, which of these two crimes is more grievous? Is it a corrupt judicial system which undermines the very infrastructure of an ethical society? Or is it a mistaken religious notion which calls for the worship of a tree instead of the worship of the Creator of the tree? Certainly the injurious implications emanating from the first seem far more damaging than those emanating from the second.

Indeed, the Bible itself adds a rider to the command to pursue justice: “in order that you may live and inherit the land which the Lord your God gives you.” A just society is a necessary prerequisite for the continued life of historic Israel and for Israel's ability to retain sovereignty over her homeland. No such caveats or conditions appear pursuant to the prohibition of the Asheira.

Moreover, the Bible has already expressed its displeasure at those who worship trees or stones, which can neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. Why prohibit worshipping the Asheira tree specifically if it is planted near the sacrificial altar? Is it not equally forbidden to serve a free-standing Asheira tree even if it is nowhere near the sanctuary (Mishkan) or Temple?

The Talmud makes a startling comparison, which begins to provide the solution to our questions:

Resh Lakish said, “Anyone who appoints an unworthy judge is considered like someone who plants an Asheira tree in Israel, as it is written: ‘You shall appoint judges and executors in all your gates’ and it is written right next to it, ‘You shall not plant for yourselves an Asheira tree.’” And R. Ashi added, “And if it is in a place where pious scholars are found, it is as if he planted the Asheira next to the sacrificial altar.”

What I believe the sages are deriving from this juxtaposition of the biblical verses is that the real sin of idolatry lies in the perversion of justice perpetrated by the idolaters. This was found in their lack of morality and ethical conscience, in the orgiastic Dionysian rites, which included eating the limbs and drinking the blood of living animals and in the drunken trysts with temple prostitutes.

Idolaters paid no heed to “Thou shalt not murder” when they sacrificed innocent children to Molekh! And worst of all was when the immorality of idolatry invaded the hallowed gates of the Holy Temple. At that point, the entire reason for Israel's

nationhood ceased to exist, so that God was forced to leave His House and see to it that it be destroyed.

The truth is that almost every time the Bible forbids idolatry, it is within the context of the immoral behavior which characterized it:

Do not bow down to their gods, do not worship them and do not act according to their practices.

Guard yourself lest you seek out their gods.... They burn their sons and daughters in fire to their gods.

You shall destroy the Hittites...in order that they not teach you to act according to all their abominations.

Remember that God chose Abraham because he was committed to compassionate righteousness and moral justice; on Tisha B' Av, the memorial day of our Temples' destruction, we read publicly the verse, “But let him who glories glory in this: Understand and know Me, that I am God who exercises loving-kindness, moral justice, and righteous compassion on the earth, for in these things do I delight,” says the Lord”.

Although Maimonides consistently defines idolatry in pure and absolute theological and metaphysical terms, Rabbi Menahem HaMeiri (13th and 14th century, Provence) defined idolatry in terms of the “disgusting immoral acts of the idolaters,” whose paganism prevented them from accepting the universal moral laws of the Noahide Covenant. For the Meiri, anyone who was moral was ipso facto not to be considered an idolater. In the final analysis, he understood that to know God is to pursue justice and righteousness; idolatry is not so much a sin of incorrect theological opinions as it is a sin of social corruption and immorality!

The Person in the Parsha: R. Tzvi Hersch Weinreb

Darwin and the Mussar Movement - Ethics is a subject about which we all have many questions. What makes an ethical personality? How do we make ethical decisions in complicated circumstances? Personally, there are two specific questions that have always been of concern to me. One is, “How does one get started upon the process of becoming a more ethical person?” This question is especially relevant at this time of year when many of us begin to think about the upcoming High Holidays and the requirement that we embark upon a process of introspection, of repentance, of teshuvah.

There is a second type of question that I pose to myself: “Where do we look to for guidance in ethical matters?” Are we restricted only to sacred sources? Or do secular sources also hold wisdom with regard to ethical behavior and to self-improvement in the ethical sphere?

Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook, the first chief Rabbi of the land of Israel speaks of two sources for ethical guidance. The first is yir'at shamayim, fear of heaven, which is a religious source. The second is hamussar hativ'i, natural ethics, by which he means the knowledge of right and wrong, which is available to all mankind, no matter what their religion is, if any. Rav Kook asserts that these two sources go hand-in-hand and must be consistent with one another.

More recently, I have been reading a book by the psychiatrist Maurice Levine, entitled *Psychiatry and Ethics*. Levine quotes from Charles Darwin's autobiography: “I had... followed a golden rule, namely that whenever a published fact, a new observation or thought came across me, which was opposed to my general results, to make a memorandum of it without fail and at once; for I had found by experience that such facts and thoughts were far more apt to escape from the memory than favorable areas. Owing to this habit, very few objections were raised against my views, which I had not at least noticed and attempted to answer.”

Levine uses this interesting habit of the father of the theory of evolution to illustrate what he considers

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to be a fundamental process in the development of a truly ethical person. He calls this the process of “self-scrutiny”. He writes, “A good part of a man's ethics consists of the ways in which he copes with his temptations.” Darwin was aware of his own temptation to only recognize evidence that supported his theories and to conveniently ignore or forget facts that would undermine them. And he acted to control that temptation.

Darwin was certainly not unique in this weakness, although the manner in which he dealt with it was exemplary. We all have ideas about our projects, or about ourselves, and we all tend to pay careful attention to everything that would confirm our opinions. And we all excel at ignoring, suppressing, forgetting, or discounting all information that might force us to reevaluate our theories or, heaven forbid, re-examine our opinions about ourselves.

As Levine puts it, one of the fundamentals of sound ethical character is “the need to know oneself, the need to be as honest with oneself as possible, the need to avoid self-kidding.”

In Parshat Shoftim we encounter a mitzvah which seems to be given only to judges: “You shall not judge unfairly... you shall not take bribes, for bribes blind the eyes of the discerning and upset the plea of the just.” In the mid-19th century, a rabbi named Israel Salanter began a movement designed to educate people about the importance of ethics in the Jewish tradition. That movement was known as the “Mussar Movement,” “mussar” being the Hebrew word for ethics. One representative of the Mussar Movement was Rabbi Abraham Grodzinski, who was murdered by the Nazis in the ghetto of Kovno during the Holocaust.

Rabbi Grodzinski wondered what those of us who are not judges can learn from the injunction against taking bribes. What lesson is there for every man in the observation that “bribery blinds the eyes of the discerning?” His answer was that “We all have personal interests, personal inclinations that result in misperceptions, misjudgments, and tragic moral errors. These personal prejudices are the equivalent of bribery. Our own self-interest often blinds us and distorts our judgment as to what is right and what is wrong.”

The great ethical teachers in our tradition consistently point out that in a sense, we are all “judges,” and we are constantly acting as judges in all of the decisions that we make throughout even the most mundane day. And we are always subject to “bribes;” that is, to the temptations to ignore information that is uncomfortable to us, that threatens our pre-existing assumptions, or that forces us to re-examine the question of whom we really are.

Charles Darwin and Rabbi Israel Salanter, who were almost exact contemporaries of each other, had very different worldviews. Had they had the opportunity, they would have debated fiercely about the origins of the universe and of the nature of humanity. But on this one point, they would have thoroughly agreed: we are all subject to the temptation of distorting reality to fit our own selfish interests. And we all need to be vigilant against such temptation.

These sources helped me answer both of my questions. Firstly, are we restricted only to sacred writings in our search for ethical guidance? No, we can even find such guidance in the autobiography of a man whose writings were considered to be the greatest threat to traditional religion. And secondly, what is the first step for those of us who wish to initiate a process of teshuvah, of ethical self-improvement. It may very well be what our ancient scholars referred to as “cheshbon hanefesh,” and what a contemporary thinker has aptly termed “self-scrutiny.”

R' Moshe Schwab z"l (1918-1979) writes: With the arrival of the month of *Elul*, we are faced with the question, "What is *Elul*?" How is this month different from every other month?

R' Yisrael Salanter z"l said, "Every month should be *Elul*, but *Elul* is *Elul*." R' Schwab explains: All year long, a person should act the way we try to act during *Elul*. At least, when *Elul* arrives, one should be aware that his life, both the material and spiritual aspects, hangs in the balance. This is true of oneself, of one's family, and of every member of the Jewish People.

Elul is the time to prepare for *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, the days on which, we believe with perfect faith, we will be judged. We understand that everything that will happen, whether on a personal or communal level, depends on those days. Yet, one cannot "leap" into *Rosh Hashanah*. One must prepare for it. To the degree that one prepares himself, to that extent he will experience *Rosh Hashanah*. Conversely, to the degree that one is lax in preparing for *Rosh Hashanah*, to that extent he will miss out when *Rosh Hashanah* comes.

A person who knows that he has a court date in the distant future does not let his life be overshadowed by that upcoming event. However, as that date looms near, the litigant begins to fixate on it. So should we be when *Elul* approaches. All year long, we know that *Rosh Hashanah* is in the distant future, and we ignore it. When *Elul* comes, it is time to start focusing on our upcoming court date. *Chazal* say that on *Rosh Hashanah*, "Every living creature passes before Hashem." This really means, "Every living creature." There are no exceptions. (*Ma'archei Lev* Vol. I, p. 57)

Shabbat

"The Sabbath presence (literally, 'The face of *Shabbat*') let us welcome." (From the Friday night hymn, *Lecha Dodi*)

What does it mean to welcome "the face" of *Shabbat*? R' Ben Zion Bruk z"l (1904-1985; founder of the Bet-Yosef Novardok Yeshiva in Yerushalayim) explains:

We all make sure to complete our preparations before *Shabbat* begins--some people out of habit, and some people out of fear of performing prohibited activities after sunset. But there is more, something deeper than that, to *Kabbalat Shabbat* / Welcoming the Sabbath. As R' Moshe ben Maimon z"l (*Rambam*; 1135-1204; Spain and Egypt) writes: "It is a *Mitzvah* for a person to wash his face, hands and feet in hot water on *Erev Shabbat*, wrap himself in his garment, and sit solemnly waiting to receive the face of *Shabbat*, as if he were going out to greet a king."

Imagine, elaborates R' Bruk, that a king was coming to town and one went out to watch the fanfare from a distance out of curiosity. That is not called "receiving the face of the king." The purpose of welcoming a king is to take advantage of his appearance to strengthen his dominion and confirm the relationship between him and his people. [A more modern analogy, perhaps: If one goes to a wedding reception--known in Hebrew as a "*Kabbalat Panim*" (literally, "receiving the faces")--but stays in the background eating *hors d'oeuvres*, never saying "*Mazal Tov*" to the bride, the groom, or their parents, he has done nothing to enhance the celebration or to strengthen his own relationship with the celebrants.]

So it is, writes R' Bruk, when the *Shabbat* Queen arrives. One can actively prepare himself to greet "the face" of *Shabbat*, or one can be content with letting *Shabbat* slip in quietly. The former is called welcoming "the face" of *Shabbat*. This means, among other things, not reciting the psalms of *Kabbalat Shabbat* out of habit; rather reflecting on their meaning and their connection to the Holy Day. (*Hegyonei Mussar* I p.23)

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Teshuvah

Rambam z"l writes: Do not think that *Teshuvah* / repentance is necessary only for bad deeds. Rather, just as one must repent from bad deeds, so one must seek out his *De'ot ra'ot* (loosely translated: character flaws) and repent from those also. These may include: anger, hatred, jealousy, competitiveness, mockery, lust for money or honor, lust for food, etc. From all of these, one must repent. This, *Rambam* adds, is more difficult than repenting from bad deeds because, when a person is immersed in these, it is very difficult to extricate himself. (*Hil. Teshuvah* 7:3)

R' Gershon Edelstein z"l (1923-2023; *Rosh Yeshiva* of the Ponovezh Yeshiva) comments: This teaches that a person must repent from having bad *Middot* / character traits. Even someone who was born with bad *Middot*, to whom they are natural, must change his nature and correct those *Middot*. Admittedly, changing one's nature is very difficult work!

R' Edelstein continues: There are tactics that can help a person correct his *Middot*. The first is Torah study, which the *Gemara* (*Kiddushin* 30b) describes as the antidote to the *Yetzer Ha'ra*. The more one attaches himself to the Torah, the more it influences him to perfect his character.

Second, R' Edelstein adds, prayer can help a person correct his character flaws. For example, we pray (at the end of *Shemoneh Esrei*), "Guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking deceit," asking *Hashem* to help us correct bad *Middot* that involve action (speaking). We continue, "To those who curse me, let my soul be silent, and let my soul be like dust to everyone." Here we ask *Hashem* to help us develop humility, which, in turn, will help us not be pained when others offend us. Indeed, humility is the key to correcting many bad *Middot*.

However, R' Edelstein continues, prayer is not enough. One must work on his character using the tools of *Chochmat Ha'nefesh* (loosely translated, knowing oneself) taught by *Sifrei Mussar* / works on character improvement. One cannot repair his *Middot* without studying *Mussar*, R' Edelstein writes. As R' Yisrael Lipkin z"l (1810-1883; "R' Yisrael Salanter"; founder of the *Mussar* movement) said: "Changing oneself without studying *Mussar* is like trying to see or hear without eyes or ears."

R' Edelstein adds: There is a great benefit to studying *Mussar*, for though such works one knows what sins and shortcomings one must correct. In addition, *Mussar* works give advice on how to change one's nature, and what actions are helpful. As is well known, a person is influenced by his actions. Part of fulfilling the obligation to repent, R' Edelstein concludes, is engaging in steps that lead to repairing one's *Middot*. (*Asifat Shemuot: Tishrei* p.182)

"It shall be when he [the king] sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself two copies of this Torah in a book . . . It shall be with him, and he shall read from it all the days of his life, so that he will learn to fear Hashem, his Elokim . . ." (17:18-19)

The Torah states that reading the words of the Written Torah can lead a person to *Yir'at Hashem*/ reverence for G-d, notes R' Moshe Zuriel z"l (1938-2023; former *Mashgiach Ruchani* of Yeshivat Sha'alvim and a prolific author, who passed away last week). This results, explains R' Zuriel, from reflecting upon the fact that the words one is reading are holy, having been uttered by *Hashem* Himself.

R' Zuriel continues: This should teach each of us about the importance of studying the Written Torah every day (in addition to *Gemara* and *Halachah*). Many people read "*Shnayim Mikra V'echad Targum*" / the weekly *Parashah* twice with the commentary of Onkelos. But, do we heed the admonition of the *Maggid* / angel that appeared regularly to R' Yosef Karo z"l (1488-1575; Greece and Eretz Yisrael; author of the *Shulchan Aruch* and other works): "You read *Shnayim Mikra V'echad Targum* superficially like someone stoking coals, like someone hurrying to fulfill an obligation"? Basic *Halachic* works, such as the *Mishnah Berurah*, confirm the imperative to be proficient in the Written Torah, R' Zuriel notes.

It is true, R' Zuriel observes, that the *Gemara* (*Bava Metzia* 33a) seems to downplay the importance of studying the Written Torah. However, that is merely because we would not know how to perform any of the *Mitzvot* if not for the details found in the Oral Law (the *Mishnah* and *Gemara*). But that should not cause a person to neglect the Written Torah. Indeed, in terms of holiness and the ability to inspire *Yir'at Hashem*, the Written Torah, which is the direct word of *Hashem* through His Prophets, is superior.

(*Lekket Ahavat Ha'Torah*)



"So that his heart does not become haughty over his brethren and not turn from the commandment right or left, so that he will prolong years over his kingdom, he and his sons amid Yisrael." (17:20)

R' Hillel Lichtenstein z"l (1814-1891; Hungary and Galicia) writes: We learn in *Pirkei Avot*, "If one's fear of Heaven precedes his wisdom, his wisdom will persist." Fear of Heaven is the foundation for remembering one's Torah studies.

This may be alluded to in our verse, R' Lichtenstein writes. Our Sages say that if one is haughty, he will forget his wisdom. And they say, "Who are royalty? Torah scholars!" Thus, our verse could be read: If one is not haughty and one does not deviate right or left from the *Mitzvot*--i.e., if he has fear of Heaven--then he and his descendants will remain royalty, i.e., Torah scholars.

(*Shiyarei Maskil* 1:4)

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AG WON'T DEFEND REASONABLENESS LAW AT HIGH COURT, LETS LEVIN ENLIST OUTSIDE COUNSEL (Times of Israel 8/16/23)

Ahead of a High Court hearing on petitions against the so-called "reasonableness law," Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara told Justice Minister Yariv Levin on Wednesday that she will not defend the legislation in court and authorized him to enlist outside counsel.

Baharav-Miara's decision followed disagreements between her and the government over the law, passed by the Knesset on July 24 despite intense opposition and months of popular protests. She is expected to recommend the court strike down the legislation, which one of her deputies last month called "extreme" and warned poses "very severe harm" and "multi-system damage."

The attorney general, who has frequently been at loggerheads with the government and faced calls for her firing, has expressed her opposition to other legislation before the High Court of Justice, including asking the judges to strike down a law barring the court from potentially ordering Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to recuse himself amid his ongoing criminal trial.

In a statement sent out on her behalf by the Justice Ministry, Baharav-Miara informed Levin that due to "the apparent difference in views" between them, the government could seek alternative legal representation.

"The attorney general's decision is based on the exceptional nature of events, in view of the fact that the petitions deal with precedent-setting and particularly sensitive constitutional issues," the statement added.

Levin tapped Ilan Bombach, a lawyer who has represented the Likud party in the past and was vice chairman of the Central Elections Committee in 2022, as outside counsel in the case.

"The possibility that the High Court will strike down a Basic Law is unthinkable. They utterly don't have the authority," Bombach told Channel 12 news after Baharav-Miara's announcement. "Even those firmly opposed to the judicial reform cannot agree to the High Court taking upon itself the authority to invalidate a Basic Law."

The coalition argued that the amendment was critical to restrain what it sees as an overly activist court interfering in government decisions, while opponents argued the reasonableness standard is a key tool for protecting certain rights and the independence of law enforcement officials.

A hearing on the law will be held in the High Court of Justice on September 12 with a panel unprecedented in size that will comprise all 15 Supreme Court justices. Last week, the High Court issued a procedural injunction against the law, requiring the government to explain why it believes the petitions against it should be struck down by the court. The court stressed the move was for "purposes of efficiency alone" and did not reflect its position.

YEAR AFTER ISRAEL-LEBANON MARITIME BORDER DEAL, OFFSHORE DRILLING RIG ARRIVES (Israel Hayom 8/16/23)

An offshore drilling rig arrived at its destination in the Mediterranean Sea off Lebanon's coast and will start operations in the coming weeks to search for gas, cabinet ministers said Wednesday.

The rig is expected to begin drilling this month in Lebanese waters near the border with Israel after the two countries reached a deal last year on their maritime border. Lebanon and Israel have formally been at war since Israel's creation in 1948.

Cash-strapped Lebanon hopes that future gas discoveries will help the small Mideast nation pull itself out of the worst economic and financial crisis in its modern history.

Caretaker Minister of Transport Ali Hamie wrote on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, that the rig arrived Wednesday morning at the location where it is scheduled to begin work. The rig faces the port city of Tyre.

"We hope that Lebanon will become an oil state," Lebanon's Energy Minister Walid Fayyad told reporters in Beirut, adding that the results of the drilling are expected in two or three months.

Under the US-mediated deal between Lebanon and Israel that was signed in October, the disputed waters would be divided along a line straddling the "Qana" natural gas field in the Mediterranean. Gas production would be based on the Lebanese side, but Israel would be compensated for gas extracted from its side of the line under a separately signed deal between TotalEnergies and Israel.

URUGUAY TO OPEN DIPLOMATIC OFFICE IN JERUSALEM (Arutz-7 8/16/23)

Uruguay announced on Wednesday that it would open a diplomatic office in Jerusalem. During a meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen in Montevideo, Uruguayan President Luis Lacalle Pou and Foreign Minister Francisco Bustillo Bonasso announced that his country would open a diplomatic office for innovation partnerships in the Israeli capital.

Foreign Minister Cohen invited President Lacalle Pou for a visit to Israel, during which he would inaugurate the office.

In addition, the ministers discussed expanding the import quotas of Uruguayan meat to Israel, a move that would lower the prices of imported meat and fight the rise in the cost of living.

Cohen remarked on the Uruguayan decision: "We are continuing to strengthen the international position of Jerusalem, the capital of Israel. When I entered this position at the beginning of the year, I set a goal to double the

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diplomatic missions in Jerusalem, and this week we made two important steps to reach that goal. Uruguay is one of Israel's most important allies in Latin America, and President Lacalle Pou's decision to open an innovations office in Jerusalem will advance relations between the countries and the economic and trade ties between us."

PARAGUAY LEADER SAYS HE IS 'ISRAEL'S GREATEST FRIEND,' TO REOPEN JERUSALEM EMBASSY (Israel Hayom 8/16/23)

Some five years after Paraguay closed its embassy in Jerusalem, its new president, Santiago Peña announced Tuesday that the South American country will reopen it in the coming months. This would make it the fifth country to have relocated its embassy to the Israeli capital, after the US, Kosovo, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Peña, who was sworn in on Tuesday, met with Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen just hours after his inauguration. Cohen said that he invited the leader "to make a presidential visit this year, during which he could rededicate the Paraguayan Embassy in Jerusalem." He added that Israel would also reciprocate by opening its embassy in Asunción, the country's capital. Peña said in response, "I am Israel's greatest friend."

According to Cohen the reopening of the embassy in Jerusalem "will bolster Israel's standing and the important ties between the two nations," adding that "we will continue strengthening the historical bond with Latin American countries, who have stood by Israel and the Jewish people."

Paraguay moved its embassy to the capital in 2018 but several months later closed it after it elected a left-wing president. Israel was outraged and shut down its embassy in the country in response.

ULTRA-ORTHODOX LEADERS REJECT NETANYAHU PLEA TO COMPROMISE ON ARMY DRAFT BILL (Ha'aretz 8/14/23)

Leaders of the Israeli government's ultra-Orthodox parties told Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday that they will not accept any compromise regarding a new bill exempting Haredi men from mandatory military service.

Reportedly, the security establishment opposes the part of the bill that lowers the age of exemption for these men from 26 to 21. Haredi men who wish to be exempted from mandatory military service are currently required to attend religious schools until they reach the age of exemption. The proposed bill allows them to leave their studies earlier, allowing them to integrate into the labor market.

In a discussion on Sunday afternoon, Netanyahu met with United Torah Judaism chairman Yitzchak Goldknopf, Degel Hatorah chairman Moshe Gafni, Justice Minister Yariv Levin and Shas leader Arye Dery. During the meeting, Netanyahu told Gafni and Goldknopf that army officials are pressuring him to amend the legislation, but according to sources who spoke to Haaretz, the two refused any change.

"As far as we're concerned, there's no compromise on the military service exemption law. If it isn't approved at the [Knesset's] winter session, the Haredi parties won't consider themselves committed to the coalition," the sources said.

Sources within the Haredi parties added that Dery tried to bring about a compromise during the meeting by at least agreeing to postpone the legislation, but the leaders of United Torah Judaism refused.

In June, the government ordered the military not to recruit Haredi draft-eligible men until March 2024, even though the law allowing their service to be postponed expired that month. According to the decision, the government will promote a revised bill until the end of the Knesset's next winter session while promoting another legislation that will increase the benefits to Haredi men who serve in the army.

The decision states that "The government will regulate in legislation the integration of Haredi draft-eligible yeshiva students in the army, national service and the labor market, with an emphasis on quality employment opportunities." It was further stated that "the government instructs the Defense Minister to order the military not take any steps that involve the drafting of yeshiva students until March 31, 2024." The new bill is expected to

be approved by the government until November 10 and legislated by the end of the next Knesset winter session.

The Likud party said in response that "Contrary to the reports, the Prime Minister did not meet with the leaders of the Haredi parties and did not speak with them on Sunday."

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ON SHABBAT? LIKUD MK HAS A CONDITION (Arutz-7 8/17/23)

MK Nissim Vaturi (Likud) on Wednesday said he would support the operation of public transportation on Shabbat but set a condition for such a move.

"If the local authority itself operates public transportation in certain areas where it is possible, then there is no problem. Judaism comes with love - not by coercion," Vaturi told Galei Tzahal (IDF Radio).

Earlier on Wednesday, Tel Aviv Mayor Ron Huldai announced that he would boycott the inauguration ceremony of the Tel Aviv Light Rail as an act of protest against its non-operation on Shabbat.

"The launching of the Light Rail is a historic and important event, an event for which I've waited 23 years, it's really a great excitement. I won't miss it and will make it on Friday to ride with the first passengers. A vision that has become a reality," he noted.

Huldai added, "As someone who supports and promotes transportation on weekends, I've been saying for a long time - the light rail must operate and serve the public on weekends as well. This is appropriate in a liberal and democratic country."

GIORA ROMM, ISRAELI AIR FORCE'S FIRST FLYING ACE, DIES AT 78 (YNet 8/12/23)

Giora Romm, the Israeli Air Force's first jet ace, passed away Friday night at the age of 78 after a bout with cancer.

Romm, born in 1945 in Tel Aviv, is widely considered one of the greatest combat pilots of the Israeli Air Force, earning the first "ace" title by scoring five kills during the 1967 Six-Day War.

At the start of the war, he shot down two MiG-21 planes over Egypt, and on the same day, he shot down a MiG-21 over a Syrian airfield that he had just bombed. The next day he was wounded in the leg by Syrian anti-aircraft fire, but the day after that he escaped from the hospital, and on the same day - June 7, 1967 - he shot down two Egyptian MiG-17 planes.

Two years later, during the War of Attrition, his plane was shot down by Egyptian forces and he was injured and taken captive. He spent three months in an Egyptian prison before being released as part of a deal between Israel and Egypt. After gradually returning to flying, he participated, among other things, in bombing runs during the Yom Kippur War.

Romm served for decades in the Air Force and in the early 1990s was appointed as Israel's military attaché in the United States, after failing to clinch the role of Air Force commander.

After his extensive military career, Romm served as director-general of the Infrastructure Ministry, the Jewish Agency and the Civil Aviation Authority. His last public position was as chairman of the board of directors of the National Road Safety Authority. In 2019, Romm ran for state comptroller.

Romm holds a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from Bar Ilan University and a master's degree in business administration from UCLA.

Romm's widow, Miriam, posted a photo on Facebook Saturday morning showing him in his hospital bed, shaking hands with the Air Force Commander Major General Tomer Bar. Beside the image, she wrote, "Giora's last smile, our beloved."

ISRAEL LOOKING TO INTEGRATE CHATGPT IN CLASSROOMS (Ha'aretz 8/17/23)

The Education Ministry will conduct a trial program during the coming school year to examine the use of artificial intelligence as an aid in matriculation (bagrut) exams, writing term papers and in other academic work.

The ministry will conduct research side by side with the various pilot tracks, after which it will formulate recommendations about expanding the program

to more schools.

In recent days, the ministry's research division has begun soliciting schools to participate in the programs. The staff of the schools accepted into it will get special training by the ministry to maximize the benefits. The ministry said it would not limit the number of schools that join the pilot.

"At a time when AI tools have become simple and accessible on the internet, there's a real need to promote student understanding and their effective use to prepare them for a world saturated with AI in all areas of life," said an explanatory note attached to the proposal sent to the schools.

One of the program tracks will test the possibility of students taking matriculation exams using the internet, including AI tools such as Chat GPT. Initially, the pilot will focus on exams in science and data subjects. Students at the schools in the pilot will have access to the internet while taking exams. The exam questions will be written on the assumption that students are using AI tools to get the answers.

Another track will look into how to integrate AI tools into classes preparing for the history, Bible and literature matriculation exams.

This pilot is aimed at classes where the normal matriculation exam has already been replaced by one involving a series of assignments and exams over the course of the school year. In the pilot, the students' final matriculation score will include tasks and assignments completed using the internet and AI tools.

Another track will examine how to use AI tools like Chat GPT in competing term papers, ones that amount to five study units in the matriculation exam and come in place of the regular matriculation exam. This trial will continue for three years in order to give enough time to assess student progress.

In collaboration with the Education Ministry, schools will formulate a new grading system for exams that takes into account the use of AI.

The pilot program, which will get underway this school year, follows an earlier pilot in which students were allowed to use the internet in non-matriculation exams. Ten schools participated, covering all sectors of Israeli education.

THREE ISRAELI UNIVERSITIES RANK AMONG WORLD'S BEST 100 (YNet 8/15/23)

Three Israeli universities were recognized among the world's top 100 for the third successive year, according to the 2023 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) released on Tuesday by ShanghaiRanking Consultancy.

Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot jumped 16 spots from last year to 67th place and the Technion in Haifa climbed five to place at 78th while the Hebrew University of Jerusalem dropped seven places from last year to 85th. Since 2012, the Technion has consistently been ranked among the top 100 institutions in the ranking except for 2020 and currently ranks as the fourth best technological institution.

Harvard University topped the ranking list for the 21st year in a row. It is followed by two other U.S. universities - Stanford and MIT.

England's Cambridge ranked fourth, followed by University of California, Berkeley. Other institutions in the top 10 are Princeton, Oxford, Columbia, Caltech and University of Chicago.

The U.S. is leading in the prestigious ranking with a total of 38 American universities making it to the top 100 this year.

The Shanghai Ranking, published annually since 2003, is considered one of the most reliable rankings in academia. The rankings assess the quality of research at academic institutions and are based on various criteria, including the number of faculty members and alumni who have won Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, as well as the volume and quality of publications in leading journals. The ranking includes approximately 2,500 universities, with the rankings of the top 1,000 being published.

ISRAEL POLICE FIND CRYSTAL METH, HEROIN HIDDEN IN KINDER SURPRISE EGGS (JPost 8/16/23)

Undercover Rehovot Israel Police officers were in for a surprise this week when they discovered packets of crystal meth and heroin in a Kinder

Surprise egg capsule, the police spokesperson said on Wednesday.

An indictment was filed on Tuesday against a Rehovot resident in his 20s who was in possession of the egg. Like the Easter bunny, the suspect is alleged to have made home deliveries – drug trafficking by electric scooter to give clients their fix.

Police had caught the suspect in the act, and searched him and his vehicle. Police found an egg capsule. A favorite of children, Kinder Surprise eggs are chocolate eggs with orange capsules inside that contain small toys that often require assembly. Some parents are concerned that the capsules present a choking hazard, but the egg found by police presented a different health risk altogether.

Opening the egg, police found it packed with small packets of the drugs crystal meth and heroin. Police determined on Tuesday that they had enough evidence from the egg hunt to detain the criminal until the end of judicial proceedings.

HEALTH MINISTRY WARNS AGAINST SWIMMING IN SEA OF GALILEE WITHOUT GOGGLES (Ha'aretz 8/16/23)

Israel's Health Ministry is warning against swimming in the Sea of Galilee without goggles, after recent reports of three people suffering from severe corneal inflammation and scarring after swimming in the lake.

Two of those affected were diagnosed with an infection of microsporidium – a parasite that can cause eye infections and even vision impairment.

The ministry is asking anyone who has swum in the lake and suffers from eye inflammation, redness, pain, or can detect any foreign object inside their eye, to contact an ophthalmologist for diagnosis and treatment.

ISRAELI ARCHEOLOGISTS FIND 'MOST ANCIENT GATE' DISCOVERED IN HOLY LAND (JPost 8/15/23)

A 5,500-year-old city gate was uncovered during excavations carried out near Kiryat Gat in southern Israel, with archaeologists saying this is the most ancient gate ever discovered in Israel.

The gate and part of a fortification system were discovered at Tel Erani ahead of the laying of a water pipe by the Mekorot Water Company which is set to supply water to the Intel factory.

The fortifications date to the early Bronze Age, about 3,300 BCE, reflecting the beginning of urbanization in the Land of Israel and the Southern Levant.

Until the discovery of the gate at Tel Erani, the oldest known gate in Israel was at Tel Arad, which dates to about 300 years later than the newly found gate.

About 1.5 meters of the gate remain intact. The remains include a passageway built of large stones, leading into the ancient city. The gate is flanked by two stone towers, with rows of mudbricks in between. The gate is attached to city walls found in earlier excavations.

After the excavation, the gate was covered up to protect it from erosion. The planned water pipe was moved in order to preserve the gate.

Emily Bischoff, director of the excavation on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority explained that "This is the first time that such a large gate dating to the Early Bronze Age has been uncovered. In order to construct the gate and the fortification walls, stones had to be brought from a distance, mudbricks had to be manufactured, and the fortification walls had to be constructed. This was not achieved by one or a few individuals. The fortification system is evidence of social organization that represents the beginning of urbanization."

Martin-David Pasternak, the Israel Antiquities Authority's researcher for this period, added that "It is probable that all passers-by, traders, or enemies who wanted to enter the city had to pass through this impressive gate. The gate not only defended the settlement, but also conveyed the message that one was entering an important strong settlement that was well-organized politically, socially, and economically. This was the message to outsiders, possibly also to Egypt, where the process that would lead to the unification of the Lower and Upper Egypt under King Narmer was already beginning."

Pasternak added that, "At the end of the Early Bronze Age, the Egyptians

themselves arrived here and settled the tel, and they reused the gate."

Dr. Yitzhak Paz, an Israel Antiquities Authority archaeologist specializing in the Early Bronze Age period, explained that Tel Erani was an important early urban center in the area during the Early Bronze Age.

"The tel site was part of a large and important settlement system in the southwestern area of the country in this period," added Paz. "Within this system we can identify the first signs of the urbanization process, including settlement planning, social stratification, and public building. The newly uncovered gate is an important discovery that affects the dating of the beginning of the urbanization process in the country."

"The extensive excavations carried out by the Israel Antiquities Authority over recent years have led to dating the beginning of urbanization to the end of the fourth millennium BCE, but the excavations carried out at Tel Erani have now shown that this process began even earlier, in the last third of the fourth millennium BCE."

Eli Escusido, director of the Israel Antiquities Authority, stated that "The discovery of the most ancient city gate known in the country adds another important piece of knowledge to our archaeological knowledge."

Excavations at Tel Erani began in the mid-1950s under the Department of Antiquities, the Israel Antiquities Authority, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, and the University of Krakow, Poland.

INTEL DROPS \$5.4 BILLION DEAL WITH ISRAELI CHIPMAKER AMID U.S.-CHINA SPAT (i24NEWS 8/16/23)

Tech giant Intel has decided to abandon its \$5.4 billion plan to acquire Israeli contract chipmaker Tower Semiconductor due to a lack of regulatory approval from China.

The deal, signed in February 2022, faced a requirement for Chinese regulatory clearance, which Intel failed to secure within the stipulated timeframe.

The failure, experts say, highlights the impact of U.S.-China tensions on corporate transactions, particularly in the tech sector.

Intel won't pursue an extension of the contract and will instead pay Tower a \$353 million breakup fee. It remains uncertain if regulators would have eventually approved the deal had the companies prolonged the contract for review.

The escalating disputes between the United States and China regarding trade, intellectual property, and Taiwan's future have slowly impacted business deals, particularly within technology firms.

Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger had sought approval from Chinese regulators and even visited China recently for discussions. However, the company continues its investment in its foundry business, which manufactures chips for other entities, irrespective of the Tower acquisition.

Although Israel's Tower Semiconductor saw its Nasdaq-listed shares trade at \$33.78, significantly lower than the \$53 per share deal price, investors had already abandoned hope in light of the situation.

This episode mirrors DuPont De Nemours' experience when it canceled its \$5.2 billion deal to purchase electronics materials maker Rogers due to delays in securing Chinese regulatory approval.

Intel's foundry business has gained traction, reporting revenue of \$232 million in the second quarter of the year, a significant rise from \$57 million the previous year. This success stems from "advanced packaging," a method allowing Intel to combine different chips to create more potent ones.

Intel's appetite for acquisitions in Israel remains strong, with Gelsinger indicating further potential deals. The company has notably invested \$25 billion in establishing a new factory in the country.

ISRAEL MUST DRAW COMMON RULES, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE (Former President Reuven Rivlin, YNet 8/7/23)

We tend to think only about the present, but Israel has known harder times than these. Menachem Begin's command, calling to avoid civil war at all costs, was given after the sinking of the Altalena in which many perished.

In contrast, even during the days of the disengagement from Gaza, when right-wing leaders decided to stop the tens of thousands marching from Kfar Mimon into Gaza, they knew the price of their "concession" from the start. In real-time and from a historical perspective, Israel held firm. With this, we showed each other that we accept certain rules the games should be played by, understanding that the price of a full-scale confrontation could be even more dangerous.

In the absence of any agreed-upon rules of the game, loss of trust is much harsher and more dangerous – it may lead us to the "point of no return," that dreadful scenario from which there's no way back.

Here are two examples illustrating the loss of trust: Firstly, in the eyes of a very wide public, law enforcement's handling of the protests against the judicial overhaul isn't similar to their handling of protests against the disengagement plan, or protests by ultra-Orthodox, Israeli-Arabs or Ethiopian Jews in recent years.

Ask yourselves an honest question: Were Haredi demonstrations in Jerusalem broadcast live on TV, reporting every minute detail about police conduct in the protests? Did we listen to accusations of police brutality against protesters then?

Secondly, the frantic way in which the Knesset legislates and amends Basic Laws and the constitutional framework enacted in the last 25 years erodes any ability to debate and decide on essential constitutional questions.

Indeed, were we not shocked when Basic Laws were changed for political needs, sometimes to increase the number of acting ministers, sometimes to create a rotation in the prime ministerial position and sometimes to form a rotation government?

If your constitutional change is deemed legitimate, but my constitutional change is a non-starter, and if your violent protest is a legitimate democratic demonstration, where all detained protestors are released, whereas my violent protest is a criminal act of rebellion, with dozens arrested even before it starts and hundreds arrested by its end – then we have no rules to play by, and the point of no return is growing closer.

Therefore, before we argue or even agree to hold honest dialog, let's first agree on the rules to which we must abide. Let's hold firm as we did in the past.

When each side is convinced that the police work for the other side - let's establish legal agreements on the right to protest and its limits, on what's allowed and prohibited in a demonstration and primarily on uniform standards of law enforcement.

When the core issue of constitutional laws, including the concept of separation of powers and the interaction between them, is disputed, let's at least establish procedural agreements (supermajority, safeguards to Basic Laws, special legislative procedures, etc.) for the Basic Law: The Judiciary so that we can better manage the debate.

Even in days when we were most divided, during the Oslo Accords or the disengagement from Gaza, we sat in the Knesset as rival members of parliament and managed to reach agreements, sometimes only on procedures but often also on important decisions.

Political rivals like Yitzhak Levy, Moshe Shahal, Dov Khenin, Aryeh Eldad, Mohammad Barakeh, Uri Ariel, Chaim Oron and even myself, as well as many other good people, reached agreements without giving up our ideological positions.

Perhaps a "rule forum" is needed, a group of former politicians who know how to communicate and negotiate with the opposing political side, even during times of deep divisions.

Together with a group of seasoned jurists (from the Knesset, government offices and even research institutions), who specialize in shaping political procedures into legal tools, this forum could help all of us crawl back from the edge.

Such a forum would not deal with ideological decisions, but only with the rules according to which things should be held; it wouldn't produce reports no one reads, but would prepare 2-3 practical legislative proposals that would help bring us back to common ground before it's too late.



The Greater Washington Community Kollel SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Follow the Signs

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

“Prepare for yourself the way... so that the murderer can find refuge.” (19:3)

Our Parsha discusses the laws of *Arei Miklat* – the designated cities to which the unintentional murderer runs to seek refuge. Rashi explains that the instruction to “prepare for yourself the way” included a requirement to erect road signs directing people to the nearest *Ir Miklat*.

Remarkably, we don’t find such a requirement regarding other travels. The Jewish people have an obligation to visit Yerushalayim three times a year on the holidays of Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot. One would think that there should be a requirement to make signs directing the masses on the correct route to Yerushalayim, but we find no such consideration.

Rav Yerucham Levovitz suggests that the Torah specifically does not mandate signs to Yerushalayim. The Torah would prefer that the travelers ask around from the local residents to direct them to Yerushalayim. This would promote engagement with other people about the precious Mitzvah of traveling to Yerushalayim for the holidays and generate a culture of excitement for others to partake as well.

Regarding an unintentional murderer seeking directions to an *Ir Miklat*, however, the Torah does not want to create a commotion about a murder. The Torah wishes that it should not become public discussion. Therefore, the signs and directions are posted so that there will be no need for the murderer to engage with anyone else.

We can learn a tremendous lesson from this. Simple discussion of a murder or other wrongdoing can negatively impact our worldview. We do not want it to even be a topic of conversation, even as a passing reference. Conversely, regarding Mitzvos, the opposite is true. We want there to be conversation and commotion around Mitzvah observance as that will likely inspire others to raise their own level of performance. What we see, what we hear, and what we talk about have a profound effect on ourselves and our values.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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Point to Ponder

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

Or who will come with his fellow into the forest... (19:5)

Rebbi Yehuda says, a blind person who kills someone accidentally does not go into exile. The reason is since the verse says (Bamidbar 35:23) "without seeing" and a blind person never sees (Makkos 9b).

Rebbi Yehuda says, a blind person is exempt from all the mitzvos of the Torah (Kiddushin 31a).

If a blind person is exempt from the mitzvos anyway, he would not be obligated to go into exile either. So why does Rebbi Yehuda need a special inference from a separate verse to teach that?

What is the connection between an unworthy judge and an Asheira tree?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Why does the Torah juxtapose the prohibition of cooking meat and milk with the command to take ma'aser/tithes?

Answer: If one does not tithe his produce, Hashem will cook (cause a disease to destroy) the goat (the kernels of wheat) in the mother's milk (while it is still in the stalk) (Rashi).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Shoftim*, after forbidding various occult practices, the Torah commands: "You shall be wholehearted with Hashem, your G-d" (18:13). *Tosafos* (*Shabbas* 156b s.v. *Chaldai'i*) cites the *Sifrei* as ruling that this verse forbids resolving questions via the drawing. Various authorities explain that this refers only to attempts to divine future events by the drawing of lots, but it is permitted to utilize lots to allocate scarce resources between various claimants (*ha-Elef Lecha Shlomo* OC 62, *Shevet ha-Levi* 7:16:6).

The *Yalkut Shimoni*, however, declares that it is permitted to "seek counsel from the Torah" (*Mishlei* 960), and some understand this to refer to bibliomancy ("the use of [sacred] books in divination"). The *Erech Lechem* (YD 179:4) rules that it is permitted "to open the Torah to see which verse comes up, since (the Torah) is our life." The Chida suggests that this is included in "seeking counsel from the Torah," and he cites the author of the *Shevet Mussar* as condoning the practice (*Shiurei Brachah* *ibid.* os 6). Elsewhere, he records having observed "senior rabbis" having engaged in bibliomancy in situations of distress (*Chaim Sha'al* 2:38:41, and cf. *Ma'agal Tov* [5704] p. 70 and *Shem ha-Gedolim ma'areches gedolim* os Nun #14).

More recently, the practice of bibliomancy has acquired the name of "*goral ha-Gra* (the Gra's lottery)," although to the best of this author's knowledge, there is no known connection between it and the Gra (the Gaon of Vilna). There are a number of twentieth-century accounts of various prominent rabbinic figures having engaged in the practice to resolve difficult dilemmas, although these are generally anecdotal and lacking authoritative sources. According to one report, R. Chaim Kanievsky cited his father (the Steipler) as having been opposed to the practice of the *goral ha-Gra* on two grounds: we do not know precisely how to perform it, and it is not proper to rely on lotteries, as per the admonition to be wholehearted with Hashem (*Orchos Rabbeinu* 1 p. 218). Another source, however, claims that: In the past years, R' Chaim has performed lotteries a number of times, in order to decide regarding various important matters wherein both available options seemed to be equally correct. ... The manner of the lottery is according to the instruction he received from his father the Steipler. (*Divrei Siach*, Vol. 1 Issue 22, *Pinchas*)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. We must be two.
2. We can't be related.
3. We must be questioned.
4. In Shema I am large.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am a new house.
2. I am a new vineyard.
3. I am a new wife.
4. I am afraid.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Blessings on Har Grizim (To observe, My place was not greasy, I was given toward the sunset, I am not near your Morah..)

#2 Maaser (I'm an investment, I am every tenth, I have many types, Richness is my result.)

KOLLEL BULLETIN BOARD



**SUNDAY
BRUNCH
& LEARN**

GRAND BREAKFAST BUFFET KICKOFF!!

Bagels - Lox & Spreads - French Toast - Coffee & more!

Sunday, Aug. 20 - 9:30am
at Young Israel Shomrai Emunah, 1132 Arcola Ave.

Men's programming - Free of charge

FOUR GREAT LEARNING OPTIONS
TO CHOOSE FROM!

ILLUMINATING
INQUIRIES IN HALACHA
RABBI YITZHAK MANDEL

JUDAISM 102:
FUNDAMENTALS FOR
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NAVIGATING NAVI
SEFER YEHOSHUA
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PARSHA PERSPECTIVES
AN EXPLORATION OF ENGAGING
PARSHA TOPICS
RABBI MENACHEM WINTER