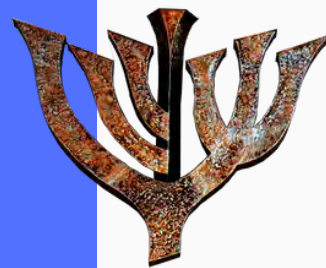


YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH

SHABBOS SHORTS

Candle Lighting 4:30 | Havdalah 5:32

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **The Koss Family** in celebration of **Rabbi Saul Koss'** 70th Bar Mitzvah anniversary and by **Debra Sapper** to commemorate the first Yahrzeit of Arthur Sapper, Asher Ben Mordechai, on the 14th of Kislev. May his Neshama have an Aliyah.



YISE Supports Israel



Our thoughts and prayers are focused on Israel. Please see the back of this sheet for various things you can do to support Israel.

B"H, the final tally from the community yard sale is in! Through the amazing efforts of our community, we donated over \$8,000 to United Hatzalah!!! Yasher Koach to all!!!

Mazal Tov

Chana & Paul Berner on the engagement of their granddaughter, Chaya Esther, daughter of Yaelle & Rabbi Pesach Levi of Lakewood, NJ, to Moshe Florans of Monsey, NY.

Ahuva Engel & Eli Landy on their engagement. Mazal Tov also to Shmueli Engel and the extended Baldinger, Landy and Finkelstein Families.

Kitty Wertheimer on the birth of a great-grandson. Mazal Tov to his parents, Hilary & Jeremy DuBois, and his brother, Yoni. Mazal Tov to grandparents, Nancy & Jeffrey DuBois, Allison Glickman and Roz & Marc Bokoff, great-grandfather Norman DuBois and the entire Wertheimer, DuBois and Bokoff families.

Kiddush Sponsors

Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by the Hashkamah Minyan Kiddush Group.

Shul Kiddush is sponsored by Jack Mehlman and Family to commemorate the Yahrzeit of their beloved wife and mother, Gittel Leah Bas Moshe Dovid on ט"ז כסלו.

Sephardic Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by Simi & Sammy Franco in honor of their daughter's birthday.

Shabbos Shiurim Sponsors

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur is sponsored by **David Jaray** in honor of Rabbi Grossman and all those who attend his Shiur and by Ina Klinger, mother of **Elaine Rubin**.

Ohr HaChaim Chabura sponsored by Ina Klinger, mother of **Elaine Rubin**.

Weekday Shiurim Sponsors

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.

December SHMA Deadline

The December SHMA will be published next week. Submit community events and shiurim updates for December by Monday, November 27 at NOON to: announce@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:

4:30 (B) 4:20 (Sephardi, LBM)

SHABBOS DAY:

Shacharis:

7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S),
8:00 (Sephardi, LBM), 9:15 (Teen, H)

Mincha:

2:30 (B), 4:25 (B), 4:20 (Sephardi, LBM)

Maariv: 5:32

DIVREI TORAH:

8:45 Main Minyan - Rabbi Rosenbaum

9:15 Minyan - Rabbi Hillel Shaps

SHIURIM:

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur (SBM)
Rabbi Rosenbaum

Ohr HaChaim Chabura, 8:55 (S)

Rabbi Hillel Shaps

Shiur after Mincha (B)

Rabbi Rosenbaum

Youth Announcements

Teen Minyan - Led by Rabbi Moshe Holzer, 9:15 in The House, followed by Kiddush

Shabbos Groups - 10 AM until shul ends

- **Toddler Group**, under 3 with parent, Toddler Room
- **Kinder Group**, 3-5, upstairs behind the balcony
- **Boys 6-9 & Girls 6-9 and 5th-6th Grade Girls**, meet in lower lobby and walk to YGW
- **Jr Congregation** - 4th-6th grade boys, in The House

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

Dor L'Dor - Motzei Shabbos, November 25, 7:00 PM in the Social Hall. [see flyer](#)

YISE Supports Israel

Adopt a Shiva - Please join the rest of the shul in sending messages of consolation to the families of Naor Levy and Maayan Mor, both massacred in Israel on Oct. 7. Please see letter for details.

Tehillim for Israel - We are gathering in the Belonofsky Sanctuary on Sunday evenings after Mincha/Maariv (approximately 40 minutes after the posted Mincha time) for 15 minutes of communal Tehillim.

Daily Chizuk - Rabbi Rosenbaum will lead a daily 15-minute Zoom of Tehillim recital and study of the Sefer Ahavas Chesed Sunday through Friday at 12:30 PM on **Zoom A**.

Avinu Malkeinu at Daily Minyan - following Shemoneh Esrei at Shacharis and Mincha.

Tehillim for Israel WhatsApp - Join at: chat.whatsapp.com/GdkM5n3uJx44h8xFbwBEIO

Financial Support - A list of charitable organizations is available at: www.yise.org/israel-2023-10-11-small.pdf

Our Local Soldiers - Send Hebrew name and mother's Hebrew name of relatives serving in the IDF to csimon@yise.org.

Political Action - Tell Congress: Support Emergency Aid to Israel. AIPAC information at: <https://www.aipac.org/act>

The Maryland Jewish community, in partnership with the Baltimore Israel Relief Initiative (BIRI), is providing essential supplies to IDF soldiers on the borders of Gaza and Lebanon. You can contribute by purchasing items from this Amazon registry <https://www.amazon.com/registries/gi/guest-view/1Z0ULHTS3BUME> and delivering them to Goldie Fields' home at 11420 Heather Crest Ln. Please contact Goldie Fields at 845-671-0355 for more information.

Local Law Enforcement - Our security team is working with the Montgomery County Police Dept. and Secure Community Network. MCPD has increased patrols. Please greet and thank the officers for their efforts to protect the community.

Prayer and Mitzvos - As we engage our efforts through tzedakah and political action, let us also beseech Hashem daily to bring safety to the citizens of Israel, success to its military, and clarity to its leadership.

Upcoming YISE Events

Tap Into the Times/Prepare for Chanukah! - A Sunday morning Chabura, 8:15 AM - 8:40 AM in the Belonofsky Sanctuary, led by Rabbi Postelnek. Now learning Torah relevant to the month of Kislev and Chanukah. [see flyer](#)

The next Ruach Minyan will take place on December 1, led by Yosef Lindell. Important details: The Ruach Minyan is starting at Kabbalos Shabbos in the Social Hall, following Mincha, which is in the Belonofsky Sanctuary at 4:30 PM. Following Mincha, the Ruach Minyan will convene in the Social Hall. So bring your family and invite your friends. It's going to be Gevaldic! For more information, contact adambashein@gmail.com

Friday Night Oneg: All are invited to an Oneg with food, singing, Divrei Torah and words of Chizuk from Rabbi Yona and Michal Budow from the Torah MiTzion Kollel of Berman Hebrew Academy. December 1, 8:00PM-9:30PM at the Postelnek home, 11600 Fillmore Drive. [see flyer](#)

Pre-Chanukah Shiur - "When the Lights Go Out: Building Bitachon When Facing Imperfection." Given by Rabbi Postelnek, Sunday December 3rd, 8:00PM, at the home of Malya & Lucas Druskin, 117 Claybrook Drive. [see flyer](#).

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, December 4, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on **Zoom A**.

Zoom Connection details in the SHMA and at <https://wp.yise.org/zoom>. Flyers are available at <https://wp.yise.org/flyers>.

The Week Ahead

		Sunday Nov 26	Monday Nov 27	Tuesday Nov 28	Wednesday Nov 29	Thursday Nov 30	Friday Dec 1
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)	4:35	4:35	4:35	4:35	4:35	
	Sephardi (LBM)	4:25	4:25	4:25	4:25	4:25	
Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)		7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	

NEXT SHABBOS

December 1-2, 2023
19 Kislev 5784
Parshas Vayishlach
Candle lighting 4:28
Havdalah 5:30

Friday Night:
Mincha:
4:30 (B)
4:20 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shabbos Day:
Shacharis:
7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S),
8:00 (Sephardi, LBM),
9:15 (Teen, H)
Mincha:
2:30 (B), 4:25 (B),
4:20 (Sephardi, LBM)
Maariv: 5:30

Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 5:44 AM,

Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 6:12 AM, Latest Netz: 7:09 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:29 AM,

Earliest Mincha: 12:28 PM, Earliest Shkia: 4:45 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 5:31 PM

RABBI DOVID ROSENBAUM
RABBI YOSEF POSTELNEK - ASST RABBI
JOSH SEIDEMANN - PRESIDENT

NEXT SHABBOS SHORTS DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, NOON
SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE SHABBOS SHORTS TO: ANNOUNCE@YISE.ORG
WWW.YISE.ORG | 301-593-4465 | OFFICE@YISE.ORG



YOUNG ISRAEL
SHOMRAI EMUNAH
of
Greater Washington

RABBI DOVID ROSENBAUM

RABBI YOSEF POSTELNEK
Assistant Rabbi

RABBI GEDALIAH ANEMER, ZT"L

JOSHUA SEIDEMANN
President

MEIR KRAMER
Vice President

BARBARA PRICE
Vice President

ISAAC MOSES
Vice President

RABBI YEHUDA SHINENSKY
Vice President

ORI CARMEL
Vice President

JONAH MAINZER
Secretary

NANCY JAMES
Treasurer

SIMI FRANCO
Office Manager

בס"ד

ד' בסלו תשפ"ד לפ"ק

November 16, 2023

Dear Friends,

As we all look to support our brethren in Israel, we are painfully aware of families enduring the unimaginable horror of losing a loved one.

We are accustomed to paying Shiva calls when we have a loss in our own community, but often find more elusive or difficult the task of comforting our brothers and sisters in Israel, particularly those we do not know personally but who fell in battle or were victims of terrorist attacks.

With that in mind, our community, along with hundreds of others are "adopting" Shiva homes of the fallen. Both of the individuals named below perished on October 7. We hope that each of you will take a moment to research the lives of these victims and write condolence notes using the links below.

Naor Levy

נאור לוי הי"ד (24)

Hometown: Holon

<https://ou.iotform.com/233186612966868>

Maayan Mor

מעין מור הי"ד (30)

Hometown: Holon

<https://ou.iotform.com/233186918848876>

This is a powerful way to take part in the mitzvah of Nichum Aveilim (Comforting the Bereaved) and to demonstrate our connection to our brothers and sisters in Israel.

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Joshua Seidemann, President

SHMA**YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH
SHOMRAI MONTHLY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Shul Announcements

Tehillim Insights WhatsApp Group - Deepen your connection to Tehillim with short, meaningful messages from Rabbi Rosenbaum and Rabbi Postelnek. One Perek a day! Recordings and signup link at: <https://wp.yise.org/tehillim> *see flyer*

New Welcoming Committee! If you would like to welcome a new person or family to your Shabbos table and the YISE community, email welcome@yise.org with the subject "happy to welcome" and we will contact you 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 details to announce@yise.org

Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary! Want to celebrate a Birthday or Anniversary? Email office@yise.org for details.

Seeking Shalosh Seudos Sponsors for the next few months. 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 Contact Ethan Cohen to volunteer to set up and clean up.

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>

Upcoming Community Programs & Listings

Rabbi Menachem Leibtag this Motzei Shabbos, November 4, at 8:30 pm at Woodside Synagogue Ahavas Torah, 9001 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring. Light refreshments served. Free admission.

Morning of Hope and Healing with Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington on Sunday, November 5, 10:30 AM at Beth Sholom in Potomac. Honor volunteers David Balto and Rona & Aaron Lerner. BCGW is also partnering with and raising funds for Soroka Medical Center, a hospital in the Negev. Register or place your ad at: <https://www.wizevents.com/bikurcholimgw-gala2023> Donate to Soroka at: <https://www.soroka.org/bikurcholimgw-donation/?emergency=bikurcholimgw> For more information email rmyers@bikurcholimgw.org or call 202-331-4481.

The Golden Network: Lunch and Learn Wednesday, November 8 & 22 at 11:45 AM at YISE RSVP to director@goldennetwork.org or 301-732-1773 by November 5. *see flyer*

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday nights, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. November 15 on Zoom, Meeting ID: 986 546 841, Passcode: 3671. November 8, 29 in person in the YISE Social Hall. No meeting on November 22 - Thanksgiving break. 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.

Camp Chaverim Early Bird Registration for Summer 2024 is now open! Lock in your spot today and select your Chaverim Swag by signing up at chaverimovernight.com. Early Bird / Swag deadline: November 15.

Recurring Community Programs and 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 9:30am at the home of Michelle Penn 816 Lamberton Dr.. For more information, email channahandjeff@gmail.com or call 773-219-5397.

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

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

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. Contact Judd Lifschitz at lifschitz@srlaw.com to be added to the invite list. Sunday 8:30 AM, Monday - Thursday 8:45 PM. Shabbos, November 4, at 5 PM then 7:30 AM for the rest of November.

Daily Halacha Program from Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold Receive one every day in your inbox. Sign up at dvarhalacha.com.

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

RABBI DOVID ROSENBAUM
RABBI YOSEF POSTELNEK - ASST RABBI
JOSH SEIDEMANN - PRESIDENT

DECEMBER DEADLINE: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, NOON
SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE SHMA TO: ANNOUNCE@YISE.ORG
WWW.YISE.ORG | 301-593-4465 | OFFICE@YISE.ORG

Sunday

7:35 AM - 8:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
8:15 AM - 8:40 AM - Tap into the Times led by Rabbi Postelnek Chabura learning pieces that connect to our current times & our personal Avodah, in the **Belonofsky Sanctuary**
9:30 AM - GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch & Learn Four great Shiurim to choose from, in the **Social Hall**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), on **Zoom A**
10:00 AM - Rabbi Tuvia Grauman - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, on **Zoom C**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**

Monday

6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
8:45 AM - The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's Shiur for men & women studying Parashas Hashavua, on **Zoom B**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Hillel Shaps On the Same Page Gemara for Men, in the **Social Hall**
8:30 - 9:30 PM Chavrusa Learning, in the **Social Hall**. For more info contact Rabbi Levy at 240-423-8810

Tuesday

5:55 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Gemara Shiur for Men, on **Zoom A**
6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
1:30 PM - Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's Shiur for Men and Women "Profits from the Prophets", in-person, in the **Small Beis Medrash** and on **Zoom G**
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM - CLAS Mrs. Sara Malka Winter New day, new topic: Visions of the Prophets, Lessons & Insights from the Weekly Haftorah for Women, on **Zoom D**
8:45 PM SCP (Semichas Chaver Program) for more information contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org

Wednesday

6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
***9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's** one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
***11:00 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, now learning Sefer Iyov, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:00 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Women's Navi Shiur, now learning Sefer Shmuel, on **Zoom A**
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman - Reading Responsa for Men, on **Zoom E**
8:30 PM - Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning the third Perek of Maseches Bava Basrah, in the **Social Hall** and on **Zoom H**

** Rabbi Rosenbaum's 9:30 AM & 11:00 AM Shiurim will not meet on Wednesday, November 15.*

Thursday

6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:15 PM - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Avraham Sussman Yesodei Hatorah Gemara Skills Building for Men, on **Zoom F**

Friday

5:55 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Gemara Shiur for Men, on **Zoom A**
6:35 AM - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:30 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Sefer Ahavas Chesed as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**

*Class times and locations as of November 1.
 Please check <https://wp.yise.org/about/classes/>
 for updated info.*

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, password 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, password 161699



DOR L'DOR

At Young Israel Shomrai Emunah!

*A Family Chevrusah-style Learning in a fun environment
Delicious Pizza! Interactive Discussions! Weekly Raffles!*

5784 Motzei Shabbos Times:

November 11	— 7:00 pm
November 25	— 7:00 pm
December 16	— 7:00 pm
December 30	— 7:00 pm
January 13	— 7:00 pm
January 27	— 7:30 pm
February 10	— 7:45 pm
February 24	— 7:55 pm
March 9	— 8:00 pm

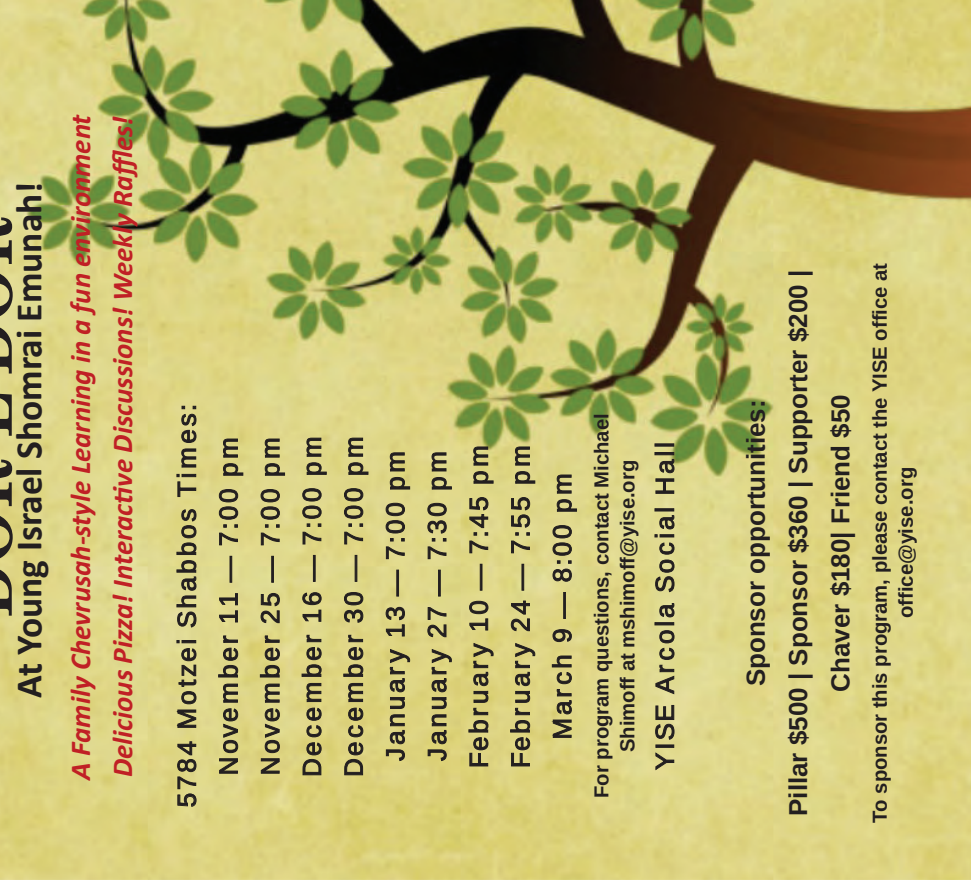
For program questions, contact Michael Shimoff at mshimoff@yise.org

YISE Arcola Social Hall

Sponsor opportunities:

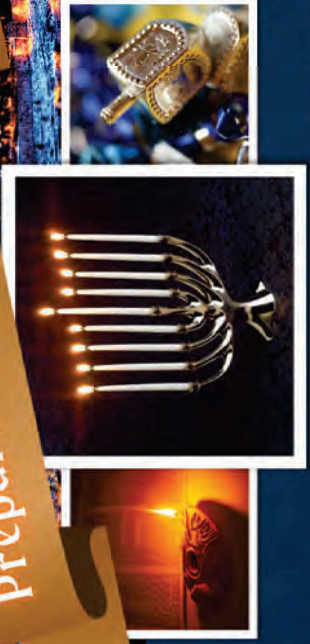
Pillar \$500 | Sponsor \$360 | Supporter \$200 | Chaver \$180| Friend \$50

To sponsor this program, please contact the YISE office at office@yise.org





Young Israel Shomrai Emunah



Prepare for Chanuka!

TAP INTO THE TIMES

Sunday Morning Chabura

Join us for Chabura style learning led by Rabbi Postelnek *before or after* your Sunday morning Shacharis to learn Torah relevant to the month of Kislev and Chanuka!

Sundays 8:15–8:40am
In the Belonofsky Sanctuary

CONTINUES NOV. 26!



YISE INVITES YOU TO A

FRIDAY NIGHT ONEG

WITH DIVREI TORAH AND
WORDS OF CHIZUK FROM

RABBI YONA & MICHAL BUDOW

*Coming from Yerushalayim, the Budows are on Shlichut as part of the **Torah Mitzion Kollel** in **Berman Hebrew Academy** where Rabbi Budow serves as the Rosh Kollel and Midrasha, and Mrs. Budow as a Judaic Studies teacher in the Upper School. Rabbi Budow previously served as a tank gunner in the 40th brigade of Cheil HaShiryon.*



FOOD • SINGING • DIVREI TORAH • COMMUNITY

PARSHAS VAYISHLACH

DEC. 1 | 8:00 - 9:30PM

THE POSTELNEK HOME

11600 FILLMORE DRIVE

*Rabbi Budow will also speak at the 8:45 Minyan
Shabbos morning in the Belonofsky Sanctuary.*

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah • 1132 Arcola Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20902

YISE invites you to
A pre-Chanuka shiur
with Rabbi Postelnek

When the Lights Go Out:

Building Bitachon When Facing Imperfection

Sunday, December 3rd

8:00PM

At the home of Malya and Lucas Druskin

117 Claybrook Drive

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah • 1132 Arcola Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20902

Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Volume 30, Issue 7

Shabbat Parashat Vayetze

Shabbat Shalom

5784 - B"H

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

How the Light Gets In - Why Jacob? That is the question we find ourselves asking repeatedly as we read the narratives of Genesis. Jacob is not what Noah was: righteous, perfect in his generations, one who walked with God. He did not, like Abraham, leave his land, his birthplace and his father's house in response to a Divine call. He did not, like Isaac, offer himself up as a sacrifice. Nor did he have the burning sense of justice and willingness to intervene that we see in the vignettes of Moses' early life. Yet we are defined for all time as the descendants of Jacob, the children of Israel. Hence the force of the question: Why Jacob?

The answer, it seems to me, is intimated in the beginning of this week's parsha. Jacob was in the middle of a journey from one danger to another. He had left home because Esau had vowed to kill him when Isaac died. He was about to enter the household of his uncle Laban, which would itself present other dangers. Far from home, alone, he was at a point of maximum vulnerability. The sun set. Night fell. Jacob lay down to sleep, and then saw this majestic vision: He dreamed: "Ve-hinei!" - He saw a ladder set upon the ground, whose top reached the heavens. "Ve-hinei!" - On it, angels of God went up and came down. "Ve-hinei!" - The Lord stood over him there and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west, the east, the north, and to the south. Through you and your descendants, all the families of the earth will be blessed. "Ve-hinei!" - I am with you. I will protect you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken of to you."

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Truly, the Lord is in this place - and I did not know it!" He was afraid, and said, "How full of awe is this place! This is none other than the House of God, and this is the gate of the heavens." Note the fourfold ve-hinei, in English "and look," an expression of surprise. Nothing has prepared Jacob for this encounter, a point emphasised in his own words when he says, "the Lord is in this place - and I did not know it." The very verb used at the beginning of the passage, "He came upon a place," in Hebrew vayifga ba-makom, also means an unexpected encounter. Later, in rabbinic Hebrew, the word ha-Makom, "the Place," came to mean "God." Hence in a poetic way the phrase vayifga ba-makom could be read as, "Jacob happened on (had an unexpected encounter with) God."

Add to this Jacob's night-time wrestling match with the angel in next week's parsha and we have an answer to our question. Jacob is the man who has his deepest spiritual experiences alone, at night, in the face of danger and far from home. He is the man who meets God when he least expects to, when his mind is on other things, when he is in a state of fear and possibly on the brink of despair. Jacob is the man who, in liminal space, in the middle of the journey, discovers that "Surely the Lord is in this place - and I did not know it!"

Jacob thus became the father of the people who had their closest encounter with God in what Moses was later to describe as "the howling wasteland of a wilderness". Uniquely, Jews survived a whole series

of exiles, and though at first they said, "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" they discovered that the Shechinah, the Divine Presence, was still with them. Though they had lost everything else, they had not lost contact with God. They could still discover that "the Lord is in this place - and I did not know it!"

Abraham gave Jews the courage to challenge the idols of the age. Isaac gave them the capacity for self-sacrifice. Moses taught them to be passionate fighters for justice. But Jacob gave them the knowledge that precisely when you feel most alone, God is still with you, giving you the courage to hope and the strength to dream.

The man who gave the most profound poetic expression to this was undoubtedly David in the book of Psalms. Time and again he calls to God from the heart of darkness, afflicted, alone, pained, afraid: Save me, O God, for the floodwaters are up to my neck. Deeper and deeper I sink into the mire; I can't find a foothold. I am in deep water, and the floods overwhelm me.

From the depths, O Lord, I call for Your help.

Sometimes our deepest spiritual experiences come when we least expect them, when we are closest to despair. It is then that the masks we wear are stripped away. We are at our point of maximum vulnerability - and it is when we are most fully open to God that God is most fully open to us. "The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit". "My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart You, God, will not despise". God "heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds".

Rav Nahman of Bratslav used to say, "A person needs to cry to his Father in heaven with a powerful voice from the depths of his heart. Then God will listen to his voice and turn to his cry. And it may be that from this act itself, all doubts and obstacles that are keeping him back from true service of Hashem will fall from him and be completely nullified."

We find God not only in holy or familiar places but also in the midst of a journey, alone at night.

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for You are with me." The most profound of all spiritual experiences, the base of all others, is the knowledge that we are not alone. God is holding us by the hand, sheltering us, lifting us when we fall, forgiving us when we fail, healing the wounds in our soul through the power of His love.

My late father of blessed memory was not a learned Jew. He did not have the chance to become one. He came to Britain as a child and a refugee. He had to leave school young, and besides, the possibilities of Jewish education in those days were limited. Merely surviving took up most of the family's time. But I saw him walk tall as a Jew, unafraid, even defiant at times, because when he prayed or read the Psalms he felt intensely that God was with him. That simple faith gave him immense dignity and strength of mind.

That was his heritage from Jacob, as it is ours. Though we may fall, we fall into the arms of God. Though others may lose faith in us, and though we may even lose faith in ourselves, God never loses faith in us. And though we may feel utterly alone, we are not. God is there, beside us, within us, urging us to stand and move on, for there is a task to do that we have not yet done and that we were created to

fulfil. A singer of our time wrote, "There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." The broken heart lets in the light of God, and becomes the gate of heaven.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothing to wear, so that I shall come back to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God and I shall erect a monument."

What does it really mean 'to return whole, in peace, (beshalom) to one's parents' home? Is it really possible to 'come home' again? The Torah portion of Vayetzeh speaks volumes about parents, adult children and what it really means to come home.

Rabbi Yeshoshua Baumei, in his collection of halakhic inquiries called Emek Halakha, writes the following fascinating responsum. A certain individual vowed to give a hundred dollars to a local synagogue if his son came back 'beshalom' - usually understood to mean whole - alive, in one piece - from the war. As it turned out, the son returned very much in one piece; the only problem was that he brought along his gentile wife, whom he'd married in France, as well as their child. The father now claimed that the conditions of his vow had not been met since the forbidden marriage constituted a breach of the 'beshalom.' The synagogue rabbi and board of trustees disagreed, claiming that as long as the son had returned home from the front without a war wound, the father owed the hundred dollars. Both parties agreed to abide by Rabbi Baumei's ruling.

Rabbi Baumei ruled that the father was required to pay the money to the synagogue, based on a Mishna in the little-known Tractate Tvil Yom.

I believe that we need not go all the way to a Mishna dealing with heave offerings in order to define the words 'to return to one's father's home beshalom.' Our biblical portion deals with our patriarch Jacob setting out on a dangerous journey far from home, who also takes a vow that if God protects him and he returns to his father's house in peace - beshalom - he will then erect a monument to the Lord.

The definition of 'beshalom' in the context of Jacob's vow might shed more direct light on the question asked of Rabbi Baumei.

It should be noted that although Jacob leaves his Uncle Laban's home and employ at the conclusion of Chapter 32 of the book of Genesis, he wanders all over the Land of Canaan until the end of Chapter 35, when he finally decides to return to his father's house. I would submit that Jacob was waiting for the peace which comes from his being accepted by his father, the peace which comes from a loving relationship between father and son. Without this sense of parental acceptance, no child can truly feel whole. And you will remember that Jacob is haunted by his having deceived his blind father by posing as his brother Esau and thereby his having received his father's blessing under false pretenses!

Unless he feels that his father has forgiven him for the deception which haunts him throughout his life,

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he knows that he will never be able to 'return to my father's house in peace.'

Thus, we can read the series of events that begins with Jacob's departure from Laban at the end of Chapter 32 and his reunion with his father three chapters later as a crucial process in Jacob's development vis-a-vis his paternal relationship.

It begins with a confrontation between the brothers in which Jacob bends over backwards to appear subservient to Esau, repeatedly calling him 'my master'; plying him with gifts, urging him to 'take, I pray, my blessing' – all to the end of returning the fruits of the deception to the rightful biological first-born.

Then we encounter the worst betrayal of all, the terrible act of Reuven having usurped, or interfered with, the sleeping arrangements of his father. Whether we understand the words literally, that Reuven actually had relations with his father's concubine, Bilha, or whether we follow the interpretation of the Midrash, that Reuven merely moved his father's bed from Bilha's tent to the tent of his mother, Leah, after the death of Rachel, his action was a son's flagrant invasion of the personal, private life of his father.

We now find one of the most striking passages in the Torah – not because of what it says but because of what it does not say. The literal reading of the biblical text records that Reuven went and slept with Bilha, his father's concubine. 'And Israel heard about it... (vayishma Yisrael)'. Not only does the biblical sentence end here, but what follows in the parchment scroll is a complete break in the Torah writing. It is not just a gap of white space that continues on the same line, but it is rather a gap which continues until the next line, an open parchment space which generally signals a wordlessness which is fraught with deep emotion.

I would suggest that between the lines, the Torah is telling us that when Jacob hears of his son's deception, he becomes enraged, even livid with anger, but that he holds his wrath inside, remains silent, and thinks a great deal – perhaps amidst many tears.

The text continues by presenting us with an almost superfluous fact: "Now the sons of Jacob were twelve" – including Reuven. Then come four verses listing all the names of the twelve sons, at long last followed by the verse, "And Jacob came unto Isaac his father to Mamre, to Kiryat Arba, which is Hebron..."

Apparently now – and not before – Jacob is finally ready to come home.

But why now? Is it not reasonable to assume that the last event which the Torah records, the cause of understandable rage between Jacob and his son, is what surprisingly led to Jacob's reconciliation with his father Isaac!

I would suggest that the blank space following Jacob's having heard of his son Reuven's indiscretion might have begun with rage, but it concluded with resolve for rapprochement. Jacob still thinks that Reuven's arrogance is beyond contempt, but how can a father divorce himself from his son? And even more importantly, is it Reuven's fault that he acted the way he did? Am I myself not at least partially to blame for having rejected my first-born Reuven in favor of the younger Joseph? Perhaps Reuven was trying to tell me – albeit in a disgraceful and convoluted way – that he was my rightful heir, and I had rejected him unfairly.

So does Jacob agitate within himself. And he decides at last that if he can and must forgive his son for his deception towards him, it is logical to assume that his father, Isaac, who was also guilty of preferring one son over the other – Esau over Jacob – must have forgiven him for his deception as well.

Now, finally, Jacob is ready to return to his father's home in peace. He has made peace with his father

because he believes his father has made peace with him. Finally, he can make peace with himself.

When does a son return to his father beshalom? Only when the father accepts the son, and the son accepts the father – in a personal and emotional sense, as well as in a biological one.

So, does the father in our responsum have to pay the money to the synagogue? Only if he is ready and able to accept his son and his new wife beshalom. And that depends on the father and on the son in all the fullness, complexity and resolution of their relationship – past, present and, only then, future.

Rabbi Dr. Norman J. Lamm's Derashot Ledorot The Stone on the Well - Boulder or Pebble? –

[Excerpt] In reading today's Sidra we are puzzled by some extraordinary incidents therein recorded. Jacob, we read, had chanced upon a group of shepherds waiting to water their sheep from a nearby well. And on it, there rested a stone, a stone big enough to cover the mouth of the opening of the well: "ve'ha'e'ven ha'gedolah al pi ha'be'er". When Jacob notices the shepherds lingering, he tells them, "hashku ha'tsoan u'lechu re'u" - why don't you go ahead, remove the stone from the mouth of the well and water your sheep? It all seemed so terribly simple to the naive Jacob. But they answered: "va'yomru lo nuchal ad asher ye'afsu ha'adrim" – they said: we cannot, it is impossible, until all the herds gather and the other shepherds help us. Jacob was puzzled by their attitude, and he thought he might be able to do it – and, in the Bible's eloquent simplicity: "vayigash yaakov va'yegal ess ha'e'ven me'al pi ha'be'er" – He went over and rolled the stone off the mouth of the well! Just like that!

We can well imagine the attitude of the shepherds when Jacob walked over to the well. "Look," they probably sneered, "look who's going to play big hero - Jacob, the Batlan, the Luftmensch!" And we can also imagine their amazement - and their embarrassment - when this same Jacob walks up to the stone and effortlessly rolls it off. The stone appeared to Jacob, say the Rabbis, "ki'mlo pi kvara katanah", as big as a hole of a strainer. What to these mighty muscle men appeared to be a boulder, appeared to Jacob to be a mere pebble!

This narrative certainly is remarkable. The feat of strength of Jacob and the apparent weakness of the shepherds require some explanation. Why could Jacob do it? - and even more important - why couldn't the shepherds? What does all this mean, and what is it that the Bible is trying to teach us?

The "be'er", the well, was interpreted in many different ways by our Rabbis. Some said that it refers to Zion - the love for the Jewish home. Others would have it mean the feeling for Jewish ethics, when they say: "be'er - zeh Sinai". Still others say: "be'er zeh ha'mehaleches im ha'avos", that it refers to the tradition of the Jew and his sense of continuity. In essence, what our Rabbis are trying to tell us is that the "Be'er" is the well of the Jewish personality, it is the source of the forces of opportunity and accomplishment which well up in the Jewish soul and beg to be released. It is a man's talents and his innate abilities which seek expression. But we see so many people, you might say, who never amount to much despite the fact that they have a wealth of talent and ability. True - their talents are never released because there is a stone on the mouth of their well, there are difficulties - hard, cold and rocky - which must be rolled away first. The stone represents the difficulties in the way of each and every man in his desire to set free the forces which lie in the great well of his personality and being. And it is his attitude to this stone, his approach to these difficulties, which determines whether he will be able to roll it away, like Jacob, or be forced to keep the well covered - like the shepherds.

Likutei Divrei Torah

Yes, it is the attitude which counts most. It is the idea which gives birth to the fact. The reason the shepherds could not roll the stone away was that they were convinced that they could not do it. Listen once again to the Bible's words: "va'yomru lo nuchal", they said "we cannot - it's impossible". When a man thinks that a particular task is impossible, then for him it becomes impossible.

Jacob, however, had no such difficulty. He did not think that it was impossible. He thought that it certainly was possible for a man to remove the stone from his well. He therefore went over and, without further ado, simply moved it out of the way. He thought it was possible, and so for him it became possible.

That same rule holds true for all of us. If we face the stone on our individual wells, the difficulties which keep us back from doing those constructive things which we want to do, and and we imagine that stone to be a boulder - that that is what it is, and try as we shall it cannot be budged...

On the other hand, take a man like the late Pres. Roosevelt. At the prime of his life he was cut down by crippling infantile paralysis. What a stone! What a rock! And yet we know, from the many biographies written of him, that his attitude was anything but that of resignation, anything but "lo nuchal" - he was going to beat it. It was for him only "ki'mlo pi kvara katanah" - and so the stone became not a boulder but a pebble, and he removed it, allowing all the world to benefit from the treasures stored up in the well of his personality.

And what is true for individuals is true for communities and for this community in particular. Of course there are stones on our well. This is not primarily a residential area, the interest in religion in general is waning, and so on and so forth. Look at it that way, and the stone is as formidable as a boulder, and we might as well give up before we start. Think of it, however, as a minor significance, remember that within walking distance of this synagogue there live a minimum of over four thousand adult Jews, and your stone becomes not a boulder but a pebble. As long as we don't say "LO nuchal", we can't, it can't be done, impossible, the well can be tapped to good use.

And so, getting back to Jacob, his show of strength was of the mind and not of the muscles; it was a matter of attitude, not sheer brawn. And it was this very same attitude, this "never say 'die'" attitude, which made him perform such miracles all his life. This ivory-tower scholar, the "yoshev ohalim", was able to turn shepherd for 14 long years to work for Rachel whom he loved. Thus the "ish tam", the naive student, was able to outsmart Laban in his own game of trickery and deceit. Thus he was able to envision a ladder rising into heaven. All this - because he never said "lo nuchal" - impossible.

And Jacob's reward was ample. When he crossed "maavar yabok" with his family and then went off by himself, an angel appeared out of heaven and began to grapple with him. The angel who represented, according to Tradition, "saro shel Esav", the patron angel of Esau, wrestled with him on the bleak plains of Mesopotamia until morning. It was the battle for spiritual supremacy - who will ultimately control the destiny of the human race:

The limits of a man's ability are much greater than most men think they are. Tremendous forces churn incessantly in the well of human nature and particularly in the Jewish soul. The stone upon that well can either block it, or the stone can be cast away. What a man does with that stone depends on what he thinks of it. He can be a peasant and, in primitive fear, imagine it a boulder and choke off his life's mission. Or he can be a Jacob and understand that the stone is only a pebble, cast it off, and eventually grapple even with angels - "vatuchal," and win.

We read in this week's *Parashah* about the 14 years that Yaakov worked as a shepherd as "payment" for Lavan's daughters, Rachel and Leah. After those years, Lavan asked Yaakov not to leave his household, which had been blessed on Yaakov's account. He said (30:28), "Specify your wage to me and I will give it." In effect, Lavan told Yaakov: Name your price! And what did Yaakov choose? To receive as yet unborn speckled, spotted, and brown sheep as payment. Yaakov said, "Do not give me anything [else]; if you will do this thing for me, I will resume pasturing and guarding your flocks."

R' Avraham *ben Ha'Rambam* z"l (son of Maimonides; Egypt; 1186-1237) asks: Shepherding is painful work, as Yaakov himself said (31:40), "By day scorching heat consumed me, and frost by night; my sleep drifted from my eyes." Why, then, did he choose to remain a shepherd for Lavan instead of naming some other price?

R' Avraham answers: Being a shepherd enabled Yaakov to engage in *Hitbodedut* / solitary meditation on spiritual matters, while any other occupation would have distracted him from that pursuit. This is why Moshe Rabbeinu, too, chose to be a shepherd and why he drove the sheep deep into the wilderness. Surely there were suitable grazing places closer to Midian, but Moshe Rabbeinu did not want to be in a place where his *Hitbodedut* would be disturbed.

R' Avraham adds: The other Patriarchs also engaged in *Hitbodedut*. Regarding Yitzchak we read (24:63), "Yitzchak went out to supplicate in the field." Regarding Avraham we read (22:5), "Avraham said to his young men, 'Stay here by yourselves with the donkey, while I and the lad go yonder; we will worship and we will return to you.'" From the fact that this statement did not arouse the curiosity of Avraham's "young men" (Yishmael and Eliezer), we can infer that Avraham regularly engaged in *Hitbodedut*, R' Avraham writes. (*Ha'maspik L'ovdei Hashem*" *Perek Al Ha'hitbodedut*)

Shabbat

R' Yitzchak ben R' Elyakim (Poznan, Poland; early 17th century) writes: Our Sages say (*Berachot* 57b) that *Shabbat* is a microcosm of *Olam Ha'ba* / the World-to-Come. Our world was created to endure for six millennia, and the seventh millennium will be a "*Shabbat*." All Jews who observed *Shabbat* properly in this world will merit to observe that *Shabbat*. They will not work; they will only learn Torah and pray. [Ed. note: From the fact that there will be prayer in the World-to-Come, where we will have no needs or worries, we can learn that prayer is not merely asking for our needs; rather, it is an expression of our relationship with *Hashem*.]

R' Yitzchak continues: Just as in *Olam Ha'ba* there will be no pain or worry, just pleasure and tranquility--*Tzaddikim* will sit there with crowns on their heads and bask in the light of the *Shechinah*; also, there will be no haughtiness, wasted words or *Lashon Ha'ra*--so it should be on *Shabbat*, even more than on a weekday.

Just as in *Olam Ha'ba* *Tzaddikim* will occupy themselves with nothing but spiritual matters and there will be no *Yetzer Ha'ra*, so it should be on *Shabbat*. All eating and drinking on *Shabbat* should be for the sake of Heaven and not for one's own pleasure; only because that is what G-d commanded in order to preserve the soul within the body.

Just as in *Olam Ha'ba* there will be no jealousy or hatred, and everyone will be happy with his portion even if it is smaller than someone else's portion, so a person should rejoice on *Shabbat* with whatever *Hashem* gave him and not wish for more than that. Fortunate and praiseworthy is a person who behaves this way! R' Yitzchak exclaims.

R' Yitzchak concludes: This world is comparable to *Erev Shabbat* / the eve of the Sabbath. Just as one who toils and cooks many dishes on *Erev Shabbat* will have many things to eat on *Shabbat*--and the opposite is true if one does not prepare before *Shabbat*, for it is too late to prepare once *Shabbat* begins--so, too, one who toils and performs many *Mitzvot*, good deeds, and acts of charity in this world will merit *Olam Ha'ba*.

R' Yitzchak adds: These are only some of the similarities between *Shabbat* and *Olam Ha'ba*, but there are a thousand times more!

(*Lev Tov* ch.6)

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“And he dreamt, and behold! A ladder was set earthward and its top reached heavenward; and behold! angels of *Elokim* were ascending and descending on it.” (28:12)

R' Moshe ben Maimon *z"l* (*Rambam*; 1135-1204; Spain and Egypt) writes: When a prophet sees a vision, it may take one of two forms. Sometimes, every single detail in the vision contributes to the prophecy's message. In other cases, the vision may include extraneous details, which serve as literary flourishes or which are meant to conceal the parable's true message.

Yaakov's vision of the ladder falls into the first category, *Rambam* writes. (*Moreh Nevochim*, Introduction)

R' Yosef Gikatilla *z"l* (1248-1310; Spain; author of *Sha'arei Orah*) explains: Yaakov, and likewise other prophets, did not prophesy until they understood the structure of the world, from bottom to top. Only then could they meditate on abstract matters and connect themselves to the Upper World, separating themselves completely from the distractions of their physical senses. This is what Yaakov's dream is teaching us--the step-by-step process, reminiscent of a ladder that is the only way to attain prophecy.

“I will explain a little,” R' Gikatilla continues. “And he dreamt”--This introductory phrase tells us that what follows is a prophetic dream that Yaakov experienced because he came to a holy place, as the previous verse says, “He encountered the place.”

“And behold! A ladder”--Yaakov saw the entire world as a ladder, *i.e.*, he understood the connection between the lowliest creations and *Hashem*. Yaakov understood that *Hashem* created everything and its existence flows from Him through a series of steps, like rungs of a ladder.

“Was set earthward”--One who wants to attain prophecy must first understand the secrets and the structure of the natural world.

“And its top reached heavenward”--Once he understands the lower world, he can proceed to the higher worlds, first perceiving how the heavenly bodies move by the command of *Hashem*, and gradually proceeding to the world of the angels.

“And behold! angels of *Elokim* were ascending”--Next he must recognize that angels are not physical beings, only abstract “intellects.” Having done that, he can seek to “ascend” with them and discover what needs to be discovered, be it a secret of the spiritual worlds or something that is needed to address a problem in the physical world.

“And descending”--Finally, he can take what he learned back to the physical world. (*Kitvei Rabbeinu Yosef Gikatilla: Likkutim* p.27)

“He took from the stones of the place which he arranged around his head, and he lay down in that place.” (28:11)

R' Mordechai ben Hillel *z"l Hy"d* (rabbi of Nurnberg, Germany; murdered in the Rindfleisch Massacres in 1298) writes: There are those who have a custom to sleep with a stone under their heads on *Tisha B'Av* night. Our verse can serve as an allusion to such a practice, for Yaakov saw the *Bet Hamikdash* and its destruction. (*Mordechai: Mo'ed Katan* 934)

R' Shlomo Zalman Ehrenreich *shlita* (Brooklyn, N.Y.) writes: The words of R' Mordechai imply that Yaakov already knew when he took a stone for a pillow that he was at the place of the *Bet Hamikdash* and that the *Bet Hamikdash* would be destroyed. This does not seem to be consistent with the Torah's narrative, which says that Yaakov awakened from his vision and exclaimed (verse 16), “Surely *Hashem* is present in this place and I did not know!” Before that, he apparently did not appreciate where he was and certainly did not know about the future destruction of the site.

R' Ehrenreich answers: The *Gemara* (*Pesachim* 88a) notes that Avraham Avinu referred to the place of the Temple as a “*Har*” / “mountain” (*Bereishit* 22:4), Yitzchak Avinu referred to it as a “*Sadeh*” / “field” (24:63), and Yaakov Avinu referred to it, in our *Parashah*, as a “*Bayit*” / “house.” [Until here from the *Gemara*.] What do these different names or references signify?

R' Chaim Yosef David Azulai *z"l* (*Chida*; 1724-1806; Chevron, *Eretz Yisrael* and Livorno, Italy) explains that all of the Patriarchs saw prophetically that the *Bet Hamikdash* would be built and destroyed. Avraham and Yitzchak assumed that the site of the Temple has no holiness when the Temple is not standing. Thus, they viewed the place only as a lonely mountain (*Har*) or field (*Sadeh*), respectively. Yaakov, however, viewed the site's holiness as eternal. Therefore, he called it a house (*Bayit*). [Until here from *Chida*]

Based on this, R' Ehrenreich writes, we can say that Yaakov did know when he came to the place that it was the future site of the *Bet Hamikdash*, and he also knew that the Temple was destined to be destroyed. The reason why he nevertheless allowed himself to sleep there was that he thought, at that point, as his father and grandfather had thought: that the place has no sanctity when the *Bet Hamikdash* is not standing. Only after Yaakov dreamt of the ladder and of the angels going up and down did he conclude, “Surely *Hashem* is present in this place.” Yaakov did know where he was, he just did not know that *Hashem* was present in that place at that moment. After that realization, he named the place “*Bayit*.”

(*Avnei Ha'makom: Sha'ar Ha'avanim* p.7)

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NSC HEAD: HOSTAGE RELEASE WILL NOT TAKE PLACE BEFORE FRIDAY (Arutz-7 11/22/23)

The head of the National Security Council, Tzachi Hanegbi, announced on Wednesday night that the beginning of the release of the hostages being held by Hamas will be carried out in accordance with the original agreement between the parties, and not before Friday.

"The negotiations for the release of our hostages are progressing and continuing all the time," added Hanegbi.

An Israeli official told Kan 11 News that there is a 24-hour delay in the implementation of the agreement, because the agreement has not yet been signed by the other side - Hamas and Qatar.

"The Qataris informed us around 11:00 p.m. that Hamas has not yet signed the agreement and therefore there will be a delay in its implementation. We are optimistic that the plan will be implemented when the agreement is signed," the official added.

The families of the hostages said they had not been informed about the delay in the implementation of the deal and learned about it from the media.

Earlier on Wednesday it was reported that Mossad Director David Barnea visited Qatar ahead of the fulfillment of the deal to release some of the hostages who are being held by Hamas in Gaza.

Barnea was accompanied by Maj. Gen. (Res.) Nitzan Alon, who is in charge of intelligence related to the hostages. Barnea is in close contact with CIA director Bill Burns, a key figure in the deal, along with President Biden's Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa, Brett McGurk.

A diplomatic official detailed on Wednesday evening how the release of Hamas hostages will be handled.

The official stated that in the first stage, at least, the families of the hostages will not receive advance notice of the release of their loved ones.

"We don't want to inform the families beforehand because we don't trust Hamas. To cause distress to the family would be the worst thing. As soon as the people are in our hands, we will inform the families and bring them to the meeting point at the hospital. The first day will be a model for us regarding how to proceed," said the source.

"In the evening, we will receive the names. The next morning, Hamas will begin gathering the people to be released. The procedure is that they bring them to the Red Cross for transit. As soon as there is physical identification according to the lists, permission will be given to transfer their people back and fly our hostages to the hospitals," he added.

NETANYAHU: MOSSAD TO ACT AGAINST HAMAS LEADERS (Israel Hayom 11/22/23)

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant explicitly threatened the leaders of Hamas at the press conference on Wednesday hours before a hostage release deal with the terrorist organization was to be set in motion.

At the event, Netanyahu warned the Islamic organization's senior officials, who orchestrated the biggest terrorist attack in Israeli history on Oct. 7, that Israel had put a target on them.

"I have instructed the Mossad to act against the leaders of Hamas." Netanyahu also claimed that "there is no commitment in the ceasefire agreement not to act in the aftermath against the leaders of Hamas in any way."

Netanyahu addressed the question of whether the leaders of Hamas have immunity under the hostage deal that was approved this week, which could see as many as 50 hostages released in the first stage some six weeks after

they were abducted by the terrorist group into the Gaza Strip during the atrocities, which resulted in some 1200 Israeli residents murdered, with some women raped and brutalized.

Netanyahu stressed that the hostage release does not involve any provision that guarantees the safety of the terrorist leaders. "Such a clause does not exist," he said.

Minister Gallant specifically referred to Ismail Haniyeh and Khalid Mashaal, who run Hamas' political bureau. "They are living on borrowed time. All over the globe. They are walking dead people."

SON OF SENIOR HEZBOLLAH PARLIAMENTARIAN ELIMINATED IN SOUTHERN LEBANON (Arutz-7 11/23/23)

The Hezbollah terrorist organization confirmed on Wednesday night, that Abbas Mohammed Raed, the son of the chairman of Hezbollah's faction in the Lebanese parliament, was killed in an attack attributed to Israel in the village of Beit Yahoun in southern Lebanon.

According to Hezbollah's announcement, four other terrorists from the organization were killed in the attack, including Khalil Jawad Shahimi, a commander in Hezbollah's special operation unit, the Radwan Force.

On Wednesday evening, the IDF Spokesperson's Unit said that IDF fighter jets struck Hezbollah terror infrastructure in Lebanese territory.

Additionally, it added, IDF troops and aircraft struck a terror cell that attempted to launch rockets into Israeli territory, and a terror cell that fired at IDF troops.

Several hours earlier, IDF fighter jets struck terrorist infrastructure and a military site belonging to the Hezbollah terrorist organization in Lebanon.

In addition, IDF aircraft together with artillery struck a Hezbollah terrorist cell

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that fired from Lebanese territory toward the area near Hanita in northern Israel.

Furthermore, earlier in the day, shots were fired from a military site in Lebanon toward the area of Mattat where IDF soldiers were operating. In response, the military site was struck.

'KILL A JEW, GET A CAR': ANTI-ISRAEL INCITEMENT RUNS RAMPANT IN WEST BANK AMID HAMAS WAR (YNet 11/20/23)

In a shocking offer, the owner of a car dealership near Ramallah posted an advertisement reading, "Anyone who brings a dead Jew will receive a free car." The advertisement, which circulated around social media, sparked a wave of hateful and violent sentiments against Jews and Israelis, leading IDF forces to raid the business. The owner was arrested, and the vehicles were confiscated.

As part of the effort to curb incitement and dismantle Hamas infrastructure in the West Bank, where over 200 suspects have been arrested for incitement to violence since the beginning of the war; IDF, Shin Bet and Border Police forces conducted raids on Sunday overnight, apprehending 16 wanted individuals across the West Bank. Among them is Tarek Abdallah Ahmed Salam, a senior Hamas figure.

Additionally, the forces gave chase to terrorists who had fired at Israeli vehicles near the Al-Za'wiyeh Bridge in the northern West Bank.

In the past week, IDF forces launched Operation New Dawn in the village of Al-Mughayyir in the central West Bank, aimed at combating incitement. Within the operation, an armory was seized, Hamas flags were confiscated, propaganda materials were seized and demolition orders were issued for illegal buildings in the village.

The IDF has identified severe incitement in the village of Na'alín, where a strong connection to the Hamas terrorist organization was revealed. Among other findings, a video was discovered depicting young teenagers aged 14-15, their faces covered, raising and nodding in front of a Hamas flag in what appears to be a simulated swearing-in ceremony.

In various parts of the village, Hamas flags were hung on mosque minarets. A recording circulating on social media called on residents of Na'alín and Dir Qadis to block the bypass road near Huwara, preventing the passage of Israeli settlers by throwing stones and Molotov cocktails.

PA RETRACTS STATEMENT DENYING HAMAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR MASSACRE (j24NEWS 11/20/23)

The Palestinian Authority (PA) on Monday retracted its statement denying Hamas's responsibility for the tragic massacre during the Nova festival near Kibbutz Re'im on October 7.

Sources said that the issuance of this statement wasn't sanctioned by PA President Mahmoud Abbas.

The now-deleted statement from the PA alleged that fire from "Israeli helicopters" caused the deaths of 364 individuals at the festival. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denounced the PA's claim as "utterly absurd" and condemned Abbas, referencing his past denial of the Holocaust while currently denying Hamas's role in the massacre.

"My goal is that post the destruction of Hamas, any future administration in Gaza does not deny the massacre, does not indoctrinate children into terrorism, refrain from financing terrorists, and does not promote the destruction of Israel," stated Netanyahu, emphasizing the importance of truthful representation for peace.

The United States National Security Council spokesperson commented, expressing that the PA's retraction doesn't honor the victims of the tragic attack carried out by Hamas on October 7. Acknowledging the PA's removal of the statement, they appreciated the clarification that it does not represent the official position of the PA.

Netanyahu, in a released video statement, strongly criticized the PA for reversing the truth, accusing Israel of the massacre instead of attributing it to Hamas.

He reiterated his opposition to the notion of the PA governing the Gaza

Strip post the Israel-Hamas conflict, emphasizing the necessity for a responsible administration that does not deny such tragic events, avoid promoting terrorism, or advocate Israel's destruction for achieving lasting peace.

SHIN BET INTERROGATIONS BREAK OPEN HAMAS STRATEGY, OPERATIONS (JPost 11/21/23)

The Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) has obtained intelligence regarding the most intimate and sensitive issues related to Hamas operations, their forces' thinking, and internal dealings, The Jerusalem Post has learned.

Further, the agency has interrogated dozens of the more senior Hamas terrorists who participated in the October 7 slaughter of Israelis in the South. These dozens, the Post understands, were vetted out of the more than 105 Hamas terrorists who were initially arrested in the South as well as from over 500 terrorists who were detained later, many of whom were interrogated in real-time in the field in Gaza City by Unit 504.

This vetting is a critical process because it allows the Shin Bet's highly experienced and specialized interrogators to focus on the highest impact detainees to understand Hamas's strategy, intentions, and broader tactical operations.

In contrast, many other detainees were less well-trained and, in some cases, spontaneously joined the slaughter when they heard about the success in breaking into Israel as it was happening.

Separately, the Shin Bet and IDF have established both a system that constantly updates information about the October 7 invasion, as well as a new physical apparatus in the South to assist with ongoing targeting and IDF counter-invasion maneuvering operations.

This information is regularly helping with deciding whether to attack specific targets and when to attack those targets, sometimes enabling IDF forces on the front to attack a target within an hour.

There is also electronic intelligence the IDF collects, often from aerial surveillance and other sensors, which enables the IDF to attack especially block-to-block targets even faster – sometimes within minutes.

In contrast, the Shin Bet information, while also sometimes used at a smaller tactical level, often involves higher-value targets, such as top Hamas commanders or critical Hamas terror infrastructure.

One of the targeted killings the Shin Bet facilitated is the assassination on November 11 of Ahmed Siam, a Hamas Naser Radwan company commander who had held about 1,000 Gazan civilians hostage in Gaza's Rantisi Hospital to use them as human shields. That assassination had a dramatic impact on the broader situation in the field, such as facilitating large numbers of Palestinian civilians escaping from being essentially held hostage by Siam.

Additionally, the Post has learned that some Shin Bet interrogations have led to more fundamental changes in IDF attack plans, sometimes in real-time, after a deeper understanding of Hamas's defense plans.

Other strategic impacts from Shin Bet interrogations include unmasking Hamas's systematic use of hospitals, ambulances, mosques, and other sensitive civilian locations for its terror operations.

On November 8, the Shin Bet specifically used interrogations to publicly disclose the full extent of Hamas's use of the above categories of locations, as well as health clinics and schools, for terror purposes.

A terrorist interrogated by the Shin Bet admitted that Hamas uses ambulances to transport weapons and terrorists throughout the Gaza Strip.

"I can leave with any ambulance I want," the terrorist acknowledged.

Moreover, he said, "Al-Qassam [Brigades] has its own ambulances, some of which are also at the military base... the appearance of ambulances is similar to civilian ambulances so that they do not arouse suspicion or be bombed by Israel.

"During combat, ambulances are also used to evacuate fighters and operatives," he said. "They also transport food, IEDs [improvised explosive devices], and weapons, because that's the safest way to get there."

Next, the terrorist confessed, "Most of Hamas's senior political and military

figures are hiding in hospitals, especially Shifa Hospital. They take advantage of the hospitals so they won't be bombed."

Despite the terrorist's statement put out on November 8, while the IDF found extensive proof of Hamas's terror activities at Shifa Hospital following entering the complex on November 15, the IDF later backed off of claims that Hamas's highest officials had been there, saying instead it had meant battalion-level Hamas commanders (mid-senior level).

The terrorist then went on to explain how a lot of the Gaza Strip had been booby-trapped with cables connecting explosives to the operating systems in mosques and civilian clinics.

On October 23, the Shin Bet disclosed videos of six separate interrogations of Hamas terrorists captured on October 7.

Each terrorist had a slightly different experience, but the Shin Bet flagged some common themes. All the Hamas agents were given explicit instructions to kill and kidnap civilians including the elderly along with women and children. While they did this, the Shin Bet emphasized that their senior commanders stayed behind in secure areas in Gaza.

One of the terrorists told Israeli forces that they were told: "Whoever brings a hostage back [to Gaza] gets \$10,000 and an apartment."

They said that the plan had been to take over the towns they attacked and to hold positions there once they had finished killing and kidnapping the residents.

The video released by the Shin Bet and the police shows the various Hamas operatives going into extreme detail about their activities on the morning of October 7.

"The instructions were to kidnap women and children," said one. Another described an encounter with a dead body, saying: "Her body was lying on the floor. I shot her, and my commander yelled at me for wasting bullets on a dead body."

They made it clear that when it came to murder, they were not to distinguish between civilians and soldiers.

Some Shin Bet interrogators may be working round the clock for weeks to wear down critical detainees or to obtain additional helpful intelligence from them after limited initial success.

In an unusual twist, a large number of Shin Bet retirees have returned to service during the war to better shoulder the full brunt of the wide number of tasks the Shin Bet is handling during wartime.

DECOY SPEAKERS AND STEALTH ATTACKS: HAMAS EMBRACES GUERRILLA TACTICS AGAINST IDF (YNet 11/22/23)

Senior commanders responsible for the ground maneuver in the Gaza Strip estimated from the outset, about a month ago, that those who quickly adapt and learn during the operation would achieve successes at the expense of the other side.

In recent days, it seems that Hamas is trying to enhance its surprises for the forces maneuvering in central Gaza City, in neighborhoods like Zeitoun and Jabalia in the northeast of the Strip. These traps mainly involve hit-and-run attacks by lone terrorists who emerge from hiding, shoot, and escape to a tunnel connected to the other side of the street, from where a group emerges and fires RPG missiles from multiple directions.

In the past week, the terrorists have also adopted a more sophisticated method: placing speakers in alleys that have been attacked by air force or artillery fire. These speakers emit conversations in Arabic between children or teenagers, intended to confuse the approaching forces.

When the terrorists hear the roar of tanks or the movement of infantry fighting vehicles, they activate these speakers to disorient the soldiers. In one instance, an infantry force, followed by tanks, investigated such noises at the end of an alley leading to a previously attacked street.

As the force advanced, a group of terrorists hiding on a high floor of a building across the street opened fire with machine guns and anti-tank missiles at the soldiers. The force engaged in a prolonged firefight, with the support of aircraft, eliminating all the terrorists, including one who tried to flee the scene.

ISRAEL WILL WALK INTO A TRAP IF IT ACCEPTS SINWAR'S DANGEROUS DEAL (Ariel Kahana, Israel Hayom 11/21/23)

The truth is that this discussion should not have been public at all. When Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar ordered his murderous henchmen on the morning of October 7 to kidnap Israelis, he planned to achieve exactly what has been unfolding in recent days in Israel. Namely, he got what he wanted in the constant drip of news intended to play with our emotions and squeeze us until we agreed to a deal on his terms.

Unfortunately, the discussion is taking place, and what emerges from it are very problematic terms for Israel. According to reports, Israel will agree to a three- to five-day ceasefire in exchange for 50 women and children held by the murderers. The release of terrorists from Israeli prisons may also be part of the agreement, which is being mediated by Qatar.

Despite the strong desire to see our captives return home, it seems that the contours of the emerging deal involve significant risks and difficult problems. There is also great doubt as to whether Hamas will deliver its end of the deal. Firstly, even if Hamas honors its word, which is not guaranteed at all, five days of ceasefire is a long time. Although the IDF chief of staff says he can manage the risk, no one, including him, knows exactly what Sinwar has up his sleeve. We have learned the hard way that the intelligence assessments on deterrence and containment of our enemy are divorced from reality. Therefore, with all due deference to the IDF chief of staff, suspending operations for five days is no small thing, and he cannot accurately assess their cost either.

The deal is based on the assumption that Sinwar still has command and control capabilities over his men, who, under his direction, will release the captives. If this chain of command still exists, it means that in five innocent days of ceasefire, he and his murderers can breathe, regroup, and prepare a strategic surprise for the IDF.

In other words, a prolonged ceasefire may significantly change the course of the war in our disfavor. Moreover, there is still the possibility that Hezbollah and/or Iran will decide to exploit the lull to join the conflict. It is also clear that Hamas will exploit it for a global sympathy campaign, showcasing the destruction in Gaza and pressuring Israel not to renew the fighting.

Beyond all this, there are reasons to anticipate that the monster named Yahya Sinwar will deceive us. During Operation Protective Edge, and over the years, Hamas violated ceasefires many times. This time, instead of 10 captives a day, he may release eight or five. Instead of a ceasefire, we will face various skirmishes because of elements that are ostensibly not under his control, of course, he will blame us for compromising Hamas' ability to assert control in the Strip. Sporadic rocket fire will likely continue. What will we do then, when the agreement is violated? We will let it collapse before the other captives are released as planned? We will resume the military offensive just before they are back home.

The answer is negative. We won't have the stamina to forgo the deal even once it is violated. Once we embark on the path of negotiation, no one will easily halt it, even if the implementation is partial. Thus, we will have negotiated for ourselves five days of ceasefire for 50 captives, only to get back 40 or fewer. On top of that, our soldiers will be injured without being allowed to respond, because of the deal, while Hamas is allowed to get back on its feet. This is the wrong path to take.

Therefore, instead of walking right into a trap, we need to continue on the same path we have been on for 45 days. That is, continue to exert pressure on Hamas, which has already yielded results. Its initial demands were much higher: Sinwar gave up on releasing all the prisoners, as his people initially declared, only because Israel continued to pound Gaza. And he will continue to show flexibility if we continue pressuring him.

Not only him but also Qatar. Instead of cozying up to the sheikhdom's ruling family, Israel needs to condemn them, close Al-Jazeera, and make it clear that we demand the return of our people here and now. Qatar has leverage over Hamas, and Israel wields influence on Qatar. It is time to use them and chart a clear path to victory: Sinwar comes out from the bunker with our people surrounding him as humane shields.

THREE-QUARTERS OF PALESTINIANS SUPPORT HAMAS' ATTACK ON OCTOBER 7. WHY? (Dahlia Scheindlin, Ha'aretz 11/22/23)

A survey of Gaza and West Bank Palestinians by the Arab World Research and Development group (AWRAD) from the first week of November left many readers aghast: Nearly 60 percent of respondents very much supported the "military operation carried out by the Palestinian resistance led by Hamas on October 7." Another 16 percent expressed moderate support. That's three-quarters in total who supported the indefensible.

Another three-quarters of Palestinians (76 percent) said Hamas was playing a positive role, while 98 percent said they feel some or great pride as a Palestinian. Just 13 percent of Palestinians opposed Hamas' attack (21 percent in Gaza). That sounds paltry, but just under 20 percent of Israeli adults consider themselves left-wing – the peace-supporting dissenters from their society.

There are technical disclaimers: AWRAD's sample was about half the size of robust Palestinian surveys, just 668 respondents, including 277 in Gaza, which lies in ruin with about one million people displaced, placing major obstacles on sampling. But with such strong trends, "flawed polling" is an easy way out. The only thing left to do is to try and understand.

Even under a lifetime of political oppression, how could someone support what Hamas did?

The survey offers some insight by asking what people believed to be the main reason for the "operation." The top reason cited was to "stop violations of Al-Aqsa" (35 percent); consistent with the history of the region, in which perceived offenses against Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque have fueled the bloodiest wars – from the 1929 riots to the second intifada. But 29 percent also cited "to free Palestine" and 21 percent said the attack was to break the siege on Gaza. Combined, half of respondents chose a version of freedom – 15 points higher than the Al-Aqsa response.

These questions force outsiders to ask: what is the conceptual world of the respondents? Soon after Russia invaded Ukraine and began committing horrors, the Russian-American author and journalist Masha Gessen was asked to analyze why Russian polling showed such high support for the war. Gessen explained that their book, "The Future is History," found that in a totalitarian society, "it's not that you can't find out what people really think. It's that people can't really think."

It's hard to compare Russians and Palestinians or Hamas to a classic totalitarian state. But they clearly share two critical features: First, both societies are at war, and their side kicked off the latest round with a terrible act of aggression. (Israel of course has committed terrible aggressions too, but Israeli public attitudes are for another article.)

Second, Palestinians don't live under anything like democracy. In fact, between the Palestinian Authority, Hamas and the Israeli military lording over everything, they live under many layers of non-democracy. Perhaps especially in Gaza, it's worth asking what people can "really think."

Huda Abuarquob, a longtime civil society and peace activist, spoke to me by phone from Dura, outside Hebron. "If polling shows high support," she explained, "it's their first reaction to an act that put Gazans back on the map." In fact, other studies show that Palestinians feel profoundly, existentially, alone. The second post-October 7 West Bank survey, commissioned by a new policy outfit called the Institute for Social and Economic Progress, asked which international actor is Palestine's most important strategic ally: 56 percent said "none." The top ally was Russia, then Turkey (18 and 11 percent, respectively); just 8 percent chose "the Arab world." Palestinians have no homegrown heroes either. In focus groups, the institute quoted a participant saying "I feel that the Palestinian population is orphaned, there is no one to lead them."

In this lonely reality, some Palestinians I know were initially spirited by images of people breaking out of Gaza, even if they later found the full extent of violence revolting. Huda recalled that in those early hours, people didn't internalize that it was about "killing human beings," she said; they thought it was the start of liberation.

When they realized what was happening, she said, "in closed circles, in family, partners, friends, no one supports the atrocities, which are against our values." Reports of rape and beheadings did not fit those values, she explained, so the subsequent mis- or disinformation that they weren't true made people happy.

In fact, there was little love for Hamas prior to October 7. In a well-publicized Arab Barometer survey of Palestinians just ahead of the attack, researchers found that anger was mounting. People blamed Hamas for economic and social woes, a stunted life, and no progress toward ending the occupation. A week before October 7, Huda heard from a Gazan man that "there's a lot of anger against Hamas, and the only thing that can save Hamas now is a war." That bred another conspiratorial angle: that Hamas and the Netanyahu government coordinated to help each other. "Palestinians in the West Bank say that Hamas always does something to stop a revolution against them, or to help the Israeli government get out of a crisis," said Huda. Some think that Qatar could be in on the plot, wondering why Israel has not assassinated or arrested Hamas leaders in Qatar if it truly wanted to.

But as the war went on, attitudes changed, said Huda. By the time of the AWRAD poll four weeks in, the wreckage of Gaza was overwhelming. Over 99 percent of the Gaza sample said there was no safe place for them or their family. Nearly two-thirds of all Palestinians believe the war is between Israel and Palestinians at large, not just Hamas. The poll also found 98 percent said "people around them" would never forget what Israel has done to them. Huda said she still argues "how immoral [Hamas'] actions against women and children were, but this is not the time for internal divisions. We need to stand by the people in Gaza, we can't accept any justification for it – and since then this is the focus."

In all this darkness, a certain frenzied optimism isn't actually surprising; it's a "rally-round-the flag" effect, tinged with desperation. Israelis too are feeling more optimistic about the future of the state. Nearly three-quarters in the AWRAD survey say Palestine will emerge victorious from this war.

Media sources help shape these views, of course. The recent West Bank survey, like many before it, showed that the vast majority get their news from Al Jazeera (76 percent), and another 10 percent from "axis of resistance" countries. But the image of brainwashing might be misleading. Obada Shtaya, a Palestinian Fulbright scholar and civil society strategist from Tel, a village outside Nablus, who is also a co-founder of the institute that commissioned the West Bank study, explained that there could well be "a parallel between where you get your news and your perception of what may happen. Maybe people are hoping they don't get wiped out or lose the war, and then consume media that confirms their biases."

Or the rallying for Hamas might express something darker: fear. Huda said that Palestinians believe Hamas will get even stronger now, making them more afraid to speak against it. Fear can immobilize people: in the third week of October, the West Bank survey found that people's top choice out of six terms to describe their emotional state of mind was "helplessness."

Just what do these polls say about the Palestinian wartime mind-set? In an email, Gessen elaborated again on Russian public opinion:

"Garden-variety tyranny demands performance (you can think one thing and say another)," they wrote, drawing on Hannah Arendt, while totalitarianism makes people into an empty vessel by making fact and truth "unpredictable." Again, perhaps these terms can't be easily imposed on Palestinians, but it's also hard to argue with Gessen's next point: "Now we add war to this. More anxiety and a state of social, legal, and psychological mobilization. There are now so many layers of meaninglessness to polling. 1) people are afraid to say the wrong thing because [of] the police state; 2) people are afraid to say the wrong thing because of the psychic cost of breaking with a mobilized, anxiety-saturated society; 3) even if they weren't afraid, they don't have the information. ... So whatever they say is what they think they should say, the right thing to say, but also the only thing available to them to say."

Personally, I don't think this makes polls meaningless. As always, they are one more tool reflecting society – in this case, a society that has never been free, and is always at war.



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TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

“Geshmak to Be a Yid!”

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

“And Rachel and Leah replied and said to him, ‘Do we still have a share or an inheritance in our father’s house? Are we not considered by him as strangers, for he sold us and also consumed our money?... So now, all that G-d said to you, do.’” (31:14-16)

After negotiating a deal with his father-in-law, Lavan, Yaakov amasses a small fortune attracting the jealousy of Lavan’s family. Shortly after Yaakov notices that Lavan’s view of him has greatly soured, G-d instructs Yaakov to “return to the land of your forefathers.” (31:3) Yaakov summons his wives, Rachel and Leah, and proceeds to describe to them the many challenges he has encountered while dealing with their father, Lavan. Yaakov concludes by recounting how an angel of G-d had instructed him to “leave this land and return to the land of your birth.” (31:13)

While we can readily understand why Yaakov took the time to explain to them why remaining in Lavan’s home was a bad idea – this would make it easier for them to accept G-d’s instruction to leave, Rachel and Leah’s reaction seems problematic. “Do we still have a share... in our father’s house?” they say. “Are we not considered by him as strangers? So now, all that G-d said to you, do.” From their standpoint it should have been very simple. Whatever G-d says to do, we will do. Why do they need to first validate the positive benefits of the command before declaring that they should all do as G-d instructed?

Rav Moshe Feinstein answers that Rachel and Leah are teaching us an invaluable lesson about how we should view G-d’s commandments. Every *mitzvah* (commandment) is for our benefit (See Devarim 6:24 and 30:40) and we will not lose out by fulfilling them. We therefore should not view the *mitzvos* as tests or trials, but rather as opportunities. Rav Moshe laments those who complain, “*shver tsu zayn a yid* – it is difficult to be a Jew.” When someone labels Jewish observance as challenging, even if that person can overcome those challenges, they leave an impression on their children and others that the *mitzvos* are difficult, and there’s no telling if *they* will be able to overcome those trials as well. Instead, we should emphasize how the *mitzvos* are good for us and provide opportunity for a joyous and fulfilling lifestyle. It was this perspective that Rachel and Leah were modeling. They were certainly ready to follow G-d’s command no matter what. At the same time, they contemplated and then expressed how G-d’s will for them was not a test but rather what was best for them.

This lesson is particularly potent in times like these. When antisemitism rears its ugly head, we must strengthen our own Jewish pride and recognize how fortunate we are to be chosen by G-d to learn his Torah and fulfill his *mitzvos*. The motto we are to live by and to pass on to our children should be that it’s “*geshmak to be a yid* – it is delightful to be a Jew!”

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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Point to Ponder

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

He (Yaakov) took from the stones of the place... (28:11)
Yaakov arose early in the morning and took the stone... (28:18)

The stones began to argue one with the other, "The Tzadik should rest his head on me..." Hashem immediately made them into one stone. Therefore the verse later refers to the stone as a single stone (Rashi).

Where does the original verse relate that Yaakov took multiple stones? Why is Rashi bothered by a contradiction between the verses? It merely says that Yaakov took from the many stones, it does not specify if he took one or more stones.

When was Har HaBayis (The Temple Mount) not in Yerushalayim?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Rivka says: "Why should I be bereaved of both of you on the same day?" (27:45) How was this prophecy fulfilled?

Answer: Yaakov and Eisav both died on the same day.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

Last week, we noted the Talmud's assertion that Yaakov had unjustifiably neglected his filial duty during the twenty-two years he spent away from his father in the house of Lavan and on the journey home (*Megillah* 17a). Rabbeinu Bachya b. Asher (28:5) raises an obvious difficulty with this indictment of Yaakov: his parents had explicitly **ordered** him to travel to Padan Aram and take a wife from among Lavan's daughters, which is what he did, so why was he punished for this? R. Bachya answers that his parents' intention had been for him to marry Leah and return immediately when they sent for him, but he chose to pursue Rachel ("due to her beauty") and offered to work for her for seven years, and so the entire duration of his stay there was in the service of his **own** interests, and so he was punished for this.

This approach of R. Bachya seems to contradict a ruling of R. Yosef of Colon (the Maharik), regarding a man whose father objected to his choice of a wife. The Maharik maintains that the son need not, and indeed should not, obey his father in this matter, on several grounds, including the principle that it is a Torah imperative for a man to marry "the woman that he desires, and who finds favor in his eyes," and this imperative overrides the commandment to honor one's parents (*Shut. Maharik* 166:3). It would seem to follow from this remarkable contention of the Maharik that once Yaakov had fallen in love with Rachel, he was **obligated** to marry her, and he would not even have been **permitted** to relinquish her in favor of Leah out of filial duty!

The truth is that the Maharik's assertion of a *halachic* imperative to marry the woman that he loves notwithstanding, other authorities have ruled that ethical considerations can sometimes make marrying a woman that one does not love (or at least to whom one is not physically attracted) the right thing to do. R. Yisrael Yehoshua Trunk of Kutna encouraged a man whose fiancée's face had become ravaged by smallpox to keep his engagement, despite his claim that she was now repulsive to him. Although according to the letter of the law he was within his rights to terminate the engagement, it would be wrong to do so, to breach the covenant between them and to humiliate the poor woman who had done nothing wrong whatsoever (*Shut. Yeshuos Molcho EH* 46).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. We were spotted (but not necessarily *spotted*) at the well.
2. Designs differentiated us.
3. For us there was separation.
4. We made Yaakov wealthy.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am the simple one.
2. I am sharp.
3. I am truthful.
4. I could mislead.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Esav/Edom (I caused kicking, I caused the missing Aleph, I was complete, I am named for a color.)

#2 Yaakov (I am named for my grasp, My name can mean trickery, I was named for my battle, Am I the firstborn?)

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