

YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH

SHABBOS SHORTS

Candle Lighting 4:28 | Havdalah 5:31

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored by **Delia Weiss, Miriam, Steve, Edan, and Merav Friedman** in honor of the upcoming marriage of their grandson, son, and brother, **Matan Friedman**, to Rakhel Finkelstein, and by **Debra Sapper and Family** in memory of the upcoming second Yahrzeit of Arthur Sapper.



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wp.yise.org/whatsapp

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.

Mazal Tavs

Judy & Moshe Mehlman on the engagement of their son, Yehoshua, to Amanda Bergman, and to Amanda's parents, Gail and Marty Bergman of Toronto, Canada. Mazal Tov to grandfather, Jack Mehlman, siblings, Yehudah, Hershel, and Tova, and to all the aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Nancy & Pesach Mehlman on the birth of a grandson to their children Yocheved & Shlomo Mehlman of Long Island. Mazal Tov to great-grandfather Jack Mehlman and all the aunts, uncles and cousins.

Tamar Demby & Dov Simen on the birth of a son. Mazal Tov to big brother Ariel. The Shalom Zachor will take place Friday at 8:00 PM at 11512 Colt Terrace.

Condolences

Susan Zwany on the passing of her mother, Selma Faye Sherman. Shiva is being observed at 7111 Park Heights Avenue, Apt. 911, Baltimore, MD 21215, through Sunday morning. The family requests visitors Motzei Shabbos: 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM.

Kiddush Sponsors

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

Shul Kiddush is sponsored by **Delia Weiss, Miriam, Steve, Edan, and Merav Friedman** in honor of the upcoming marriage of their grandson, son, and brother, **Matan Friedman** to Rakhel Finkelstein and by **Tamar Demby & Dov Simen** in honor of the Brit Milah of their son.

Sephardic Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by Lior Dahan in honor of his wife Efrat and his daughters, Abigail Esther and Hadas Sara wishing them Hatzlacha and Bracha and by **Rachel & Rafi Cattani** in honor of their son Eitan and all of the Daf Yomi learners for finishing Masechet Baba Basra.

Shalosh Seudos is sponsored by the **Berenson Family** in honor of **Karen's** father's first Yahrzeit, Moshe Ben Meshulam HaCohen, A"H. May his neshama have an Aliyah.

Drasha, Shiurim & Coffee Station Sponsors

Hashkamah Minyan Shiur is sponsored by **David Jaray** in appreciation of **Rabbi Grossman** and in memory of all those who have lost their lives in Israel. May their Neshamas have an Aliyah.

Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur is sponsored by **David Jaray** in appreciation of **Rabbi Grauman** and in memory of Rabbi Hyatt, A"H. Refuah Shlema to all those that are wounded in Israel during these times and Brachos for the Israeli soldiers, hostages, and students.

Men's Night Seder is sponsored by **Judy & David Marwick** in memory of Judy's parents, Helen & Abe Spector.

The Lower Lobby coffee station is sponsored by an anonymous Roast Master.

Shabbos Schedule

Minyan Locations:

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

FRIDAY NIGHT:

Mincha/Maariv:

4:30 (B,SBM), 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), 4:10 (B), 4:20 (Sephardi, LBM)

Shalosh Seudos: 4:35 (S)

Maariv: 5:31 (B)

DIVREI TORAH:

8:45 Minyan:

Rabbi Rosenbaum

9:15 Minyan:

Rabbi Postelnek

Hashkamah Minyan Gemara Shiur: (SBM)

Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman

Sfas Emes Chabura: 8:55 (S)

Rabbi Postelnek

Alsheich between Mincha/Maariv: (LBM)

Rabbi Levy

Youth Announcements

Teen Minyan - 9:15 AM in The House, followed by Kiddush

Shabbos Groups - New format!

- Toddler Group, under 2 with parent, Toddler Room starting at 10 AM
- Kinder Group, 2-PreK, upstairs behind the balcony now beginning at 9:30 AM until the end of shul
- Boys K-4th & Girls K-Middle School meet in lower lobby at 10am. K-3rd girls and the boys groups at YGW, 4th and up girls in The House. Pick-up 11:15 AM in the Lower Lobby.

Teen Minyan Boys Oneg - this Shabbos, December 13, 8:30 PM at Rabbi Holzer's house, 912 Hyde Road.

Boys Shabbos Chaburah - 4th-6th grade boys between Mincha/Maariv with Rabbi Hillel Shaps in the Social Hall.

High School Girls Trivia Night, this Motzei Shabbos, December 14, 8:30 PM in the Social Hall. [see flyer](#)

Chanukah Youth Craft Fair - this Sunday, December 15, 11 AM - 1 PM for preschool and elementary school age children. [see flyer](#)

Upcoming YISE Youth events:

12/21 Dor L'Dor

12/21 Rescheduled HS Boys Laser Tag & Melave Malka, [see flyer](#)

YISE Supports Israel

YISE invites members with family on active IDF duty to share their profiles at announce@yise.org.

YISE maintains a community-wide Tehillim WhatsApp group. To join, visit chat.whatsapp.com/GdkM5n3uJx44h8xFbwBE10. To submit names of soldiers serving in the IDF for tefilot, please send the soldier's Hebrew name and his/her mother's Hebrew name to csimon@yise.org.

We pray that our soldiers will return soon to their peacetime roles, and in the interim ask our members to daven and undertake other zechuyos on behalf of these and other IDF personnel defending Israel and our people.

Tefilah We gather in the Belonofsky Sanctuary on Sunday evenings after Mincha/Maariv for 15 minutes of communal Tehillim. Additionally, Tehillim are recited at each daily and Shabbos minyan.

Shiur for Israel: Rabbi Rosenbaum leads a daily 15-minute Zoom of Tehillim recital and study of Sefer Hachinuch, Sunday through Friday at 12:30 PM on Zoom A.

Tzedaka A list of charitable organizations is available at: <https://www.yise.org/israel-charities>

As we engage our efforts through tefilah, 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.

Israel Unity Concert - Stand in Solidarity Through Music and Song - Join us for a magical night of music, community and inspiration benefitting Israel! The event will feature three world-renowned musicians and Alon and Shiree Mesika, parents of Adir OB"M, who was murdered on October 7th at the Nova music festival. Every dollar raised will go toward buying engagement rings and wedding bands for our brothers and sisters in the IDF! Sunday, December 15, 7:30 PM at Magen David Sephardic Congregation. Reservations required: \$36 regular. \$180 VIP. Ring sponsorships are available. To purchase tickets, go to:

<https://aishdcevents.wixsite.com/aishcenter/event-details-registration/israel-unity-concert>

Upcoming YISE Events

Voice Notes of Inspiration - Join Rabbi Rosenbaum's Voice Notes of Inspiration Whatsapp group for daily thoughts on Chanukah from Sunday, December 22 through January 3. yise.org/vnoi.

Sfas Emes Chabura - A twenty-minute Chabura on the Parsha. Find deeper meaning in the Parsha and Chagim by learning the Sfas Emes's weekly insights. 8:55 AM Shabbos morning in the Social Hall. [see flyer](#)

Men's Night Seder Program - Learn with a Chavrusa, Chabura or on your own. Tuesdays & Thursdays in the Small Beis Medrash, 8:30-9:15 PM, Maariv to follow. Chabura option with Rabbi Postelnek, "From Iyun to Halacha: Real questions learned real well." Includes light snacks and Thursday night cholent! To sponsor, visit yise.org/nightseder. [see flyer](#)

Men's Melaveh Malka - Join Rabbi Rosenbaum and Rabbi Postelnek for a Kislev Kumzitz with music, Divrei Torah and subs! Motzei Shabbos, December 21, 8:30 PM at the Postelnek home, 11600 Fillmore Drive. To sponsor, visit www.yise.org/mmm. [see flyer](#)

Visiting Baseball Player, Elie Kligman - December 20 - 21, Shabbos Oneg, Shalosh Seudos, and Motzei Shabbos baseball clinics with Division 1 college baseball player, Elie Kligman. Register for the clinics at yise.org/kligman. [see flyer](#)

Chanukah Mesiba - Join us for delicious food, exciting activities, and fun for all ages - featuring a live magic show! Sunday, December 29, 2:30 PM-5:00 PM, in the Social Hall. Early bird pricing (through December 24): \$8 per child, \$14 per adult, \$45 family max. Visit www.yise.org/mesiba to RSVP and for sponsorship opportunities. [See flyer](#) for more information!

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

Please note: The Shul will implement code-based entry access to the building on or about Monday, December 16.

On all days other than Shabbos and Yom Tov a code will need to be entered on the electronic pin-pad adjacent to the doors.

This code will enable access approximately 10-15 minutes before minyan and other events

and disable at the conclusion of davening or other programming.

The Week Ahead		Sunday December 15 14 Kislev	Monday December 16 15 Kislev	Tuesday December 17 16 Kislev	Wednesday December 18 17 Kislev	Thursday December 19 18 Kislev	Friday December 20 19 Kislev	<u>Next Shabbos</u>
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	December 20-21 2024 20 Kislev 5785 Parashas Vayeishev Candle lighting: 4:30 Havdalah: 5:34 Friday Night: Mincha/Maariv: 4:30 (B, SBM), 4:25 (Sephardi, LBM) Shabbos Day: Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S) 8:00 (Sephardi, LBM), 9:15 (Teen, H) Mincha: 2:30 (B), 4:10 (B), 4:20 (Sephardi, LBM) Maariv: 5:34
	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)	4:20	4:20	4:20	4:20	4:20		
Maariv	Ashkenazi (B)		7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30		
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 5:57 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 6:26 AM, Latest Netz: 7:24 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:41 AM, Earliest Mincha: 12:37 PM, Earliest Shkia: 4:46 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim 5:34 PM								
RABBI DOVID ROSENBAUM RABBI YOSEF POSTELNEK - ASST RABBI JOSH SEIDEMANN - PRESIDENT				NEXT SHABBOS SHORTS DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, NOON SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE SHABBOS SHORTS TO: ANNOUNCE@YISE.ORG WWW.YISE.ORG 301-593-4465 OFFICE@YISE.ORG				



DECEMBER 2024 | 30 MARCHESHVAN - 30 KISLEV 5785

בס"ד

SHMA

YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH
SHOMRAI MONTHLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shul Announcements

Voice Notes of Inspiration - Join Rabbi Rosenbaum's Voice Notes of Inspiration Whatsapp group for daily thoughts on Chanukah from Sunday, December 22 through January 3. [yise.org/vnoi](https://wp.yise.org/vnoi).

Tehillim Insights - Deepen your connection to Tehillim with short, meaningful messages from Rabbi Rosenbaum and Rabbi Postelnek. Recordings about all 150 Tehillim at: <https://wp.yise.org/tehillim>.

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.

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.

Upcoming Community Programs & Listings

Camp Chaverim - Early Bird Registration is OPEN until December 1. Lock in your spot and get your Chaverim swag! <https://chaverimovernight.com/>

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday nights, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. December 4 and 18 in person in the YISE Social Hall. December 11 on Zoom. Meeting ID: 986 546 841, Passcode: 3671. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator. Contact Manasseh Katz at secretary@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info.

Yad Yehuda's cold weather drives - Please help us collect cold-weather FOOD and ACCESSORIES to bring warmth to households that depend on our community's support. Please Donate: FOOD: soups, hot cocoa, tea bags, coffee K-cups, canned pumpkin, pineapple, cranberry sauce ACCESSORIES: NEW scarves, gloves, hats, socks, and girls' tights CHANUKAH: latke mixes, applesauce, olive oil, candles. Ship to or drop at: Yad Yehuda of Greater Washington, 9601 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901. Or drop off at any of our shul or kosher grocery store donation bins.

Mikvah Emunah Society Women's Panel - "Balancing Connections: Nurturing Ourselves, Family and Community" and evening of questions and answers with community Rebbetzins. Tuesday, December 10, 7:30 PM at Ohr HaTorah.

TGN Pre-Chanukah Lunch and Learn - The Menorah with two Shamashim with Rabbi Marvin Goldman—Wednesday, December 18, 12:15 PM, at KMS. RSVP by December 15 to director@goldennetwork.org.

BCGW's Meir L'Olam Hospital Pantry Program's Capital Campaign - Please support COMMUNITY KOSHER HOSPITAL PANTRIES located in seven area hospitals: <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/weblink.aspx?name=E253226&id=53>

BCGW Senior Social Club Chanukah Party - Thursday, December 26 on Zoom at 2 PM. For more information contact: info@bikurcholimgw.org.

Recurring Community Programs and Listings

Friday Night Learning - As a Zechus for Acheinu Kol Beis Yisroel, there will be a 30 minute learning Seder in the Yeshiva before Mincha on Leil Shabbos, Friday nights. All the Bnei HaYeshiva and men of the community are encouraged to attend. No matter where you daven, come to the Yeshiva Beis Medrash before Mincha and increase the merits of Klal Yisroel.

Rays of Wisdom - Life Lessons From Pirkei Avos - Greater Washington Community Kollel invites women of the community to a weekday morning text-based Chaburah led by Mrs. Channah Cohen. Mondays at 9:30 AM 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 - 10:30 AM. Gemara Ribit 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM. Hilchot Lashon Hara 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM. Sunday Alshich 11:45 AM - 12:45 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. Email us at barbara@getizun.org or leave a phone message at 240-433-3944.

Daf Yomi Shiur currently meets at the YGW Boys' Campus. Weekdays also online via a WebEx video conference. Sunday 8:30 AM, Monday - Thursday 8:45 PM. Shabbos, 7:30 AM. Contact Judd Lifschitz at lifschitz@slslaw.com for more info.

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

JANUARY DEADLINE: MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, NOON
SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE SHMA TO: ANNOUNCE@YISE.ORG
WWW.YISE.ORG | 301-593-4465 | OFFICE@YISE.ORG

***Rabbi Rosenbaum's daily 12:30 Tehillim/Sefer HaChinuch shiur - will not meet December 15 and 16**

Sundays

7:05 - 7:50 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
9:30 AM - GWCK Sunday Kollel Learning 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 HaChinuch as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**

Mondays

6:35 - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
8:15 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
8:45 AM - The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's Shiur for men & women studying Parashas Hashavua, on **Zoom B**
***12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum** Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on Sefer HaChinuch as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:00 - 9:00 PM Chavrusa Learning, in the Small Beis Medrash. For more info contact Rabbi Levy at 240-423-8810
8:45 PM SCP (Semichas Chaver Program) New semester begins Nov. 11 for more information contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org

Tuesdays

5:55 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Gemara Shiur for Men, on **Zoom A**
6:35 - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
8:15 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 Sefer HaChinuch as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
1:30 PM - Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's Shiur for Men and Women "Profits from the Prophets" now studying Sefer Shoftim, in-person, in the **Small Beis Medrash** and on **Zoom G**
8:30 - 9:15 PM - Men's Night Seder, learn with a chavrusa, chabura, or on your own. Maariv to follow.

Wednesdays

6:35 - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
8:15 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on the Parsha, on **Zoom A**
9:00 AM - The Golden Network Presents: Mrs. Esther Dziadek's Siddur Class, on **Zoom B**
12:30 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum Tehillim followed by a 15-min Shiur on Sefer HaChinuch as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:00 PM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Women's Navi Shiur, now learning Sefer Melachim, on **Zoom A**
8:15 - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman - Reading Responsa, on **Zoom E**
8:10 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**

Thursdays

6:35 - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
8:15 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 Sefer HaChinuch as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**
8:15 - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Avraham Sussman Yesodei Hatorah Gemara Skills Building for Men, on **Zoom F**
8:15 - 9:15 PM - CLAS Rabbi Hillel Shaps On the Same Page Gemara for Men, in the **Social Hall**
8:30 - 9:15 PM - Men's Night Seder, learn with a chavrusa, chabura, or on your own. Maariv to follow.

Fridays

5:55 AM - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Gemara Shiur for Men, on **Zoom A**
6:35 - 7:22 AM - Rabbi Yehoshua Levy's Gemara Shiur, Masechet Chulin, in the **Franco Beit Midrash**
8:15 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 Sefer HaChinuch as a merit for Israel, on **Zoom A**

Class times and locations as of November 28. 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

Pre-9:15 Minyan Chabura
on the Weekly Parsha and Chagim



שבת אמת SFAS EMES

*Beginning November 2,
Parshas Noach!*

8:55am Shabbos Mornings
YISE Social Hall

Given by Rabbi Postelnek
& Rabbi Rosenbaum

DELVE INTO THE PARSHA!
FIND DEEPER UNDERSTANDING!
SOMETHING TO SHARE AT THE TABLE!

YISE YOUTH PRESENTS



HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS TRIVIA NIGHT

**MOTZEI
SHABBOS,
12/14 AT
7:30 PM**

YISE SOCIAL HALL

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
EMAIL [SSHIMOFF@YISE.ORG](mailto:sshimoff@yise.org)

YISE YOUTH PRESENTS



CHANUKAH

Crafting Event

For Preschool & Elementary School Children

Sunday, December 15th
11am to 1pm
in the YISE Social Hall



For more info, email sshimoff@yise.org

JOIN

YISE'S

MEN'S

NIGHT SEDER

LEARN WITH A CHAVRUSA,
CHABURA OR ON YOUR OWN!

Tuesdays & Thursdays | Restarts Nov. 5th!

Small Beis Medrash | 8:30-9:15pm

Maariv to follow

Light snacks, Thursday night cholent! To sponsor: yise.org/nightseder

FROM IYUN TO HALACHA:
REAL QUESTIONS LEARNED REAL WELL

with Rabbi Postelnek





Weekend with Visiting Baseball Player, **Elie Kligman**

December 20-21

- **Friday, December 20, 8:00 PM: Oneg Shabbos,** at the home of Carol and Tuvia Lazar (708 Lambertson Drive)
- **Shabbos, December 21, 4:35 PM: Shalosh Seudos,** at YISE Social Hall
- **Motzei Shabbos, December 21: Interactive Baseball Clinics with Elie** at Berman Hebrew Academy*

7 - 8 PM: Elementary School Boys and Girls (Grades 2 - 5)
8:15 - 9:15 PM: Middle School Boys and Girls (Grades 6 - 8)

*Spots are limited, advance registration required, **register at**
yise.org/kligman



Elie was drafted by the Washington Nationals in the 2021 draft, becoming the first Major League Baseball draftee not to play on Shabbos. Elie opted to attend college before going pro, and is currently a Division 1 student-athlete at Sacramento State University. He is currently one of two observant Jewish baseball players in the NCAA, and has played for Team Israel and in the summer, West Coast League. Elie looks forward to joining us for a fun and exciting weekend!



DOR L'DOR

At Young Israel Shomrai Eemunah!

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

5785 Motzei Shabbos Times:

November 9 — 7:00 pm
November 23 — 7:00 pm
December 7 — 7:00 pm
December 21 — 7:00 pm
January 4 — 7:00 pm
January 18 — 7:15 pm
February 1 — 7:15 pm
February 15 — 7:30 pm
March 1 — 8:00 pm

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

YISE Arcola Social Hall

Sponsor opportunities:

Pillar \$500 | Sponsor \$360 | Supporter \$250 |
Chaver \$180 | Friend \$50

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



MEN'S KISLEV KUMZITZ

& Melaveh Malka

Join Rabbi Rosenbaum
& Rabbi Postelnek for

MUSIC

DIVREI TORAH

CHIZUK & HISORERUS

SUBS

Motzei Shabbos
December 21
8:30PM

 **Postelnek Home**
11600 Fillmore Drive
To sponsor: yise.org/mmm

YISE YOUTH PRESENTS

LASER-TAG &

MELAVE MALKA

FOR HIGH SCHOOL BOYS

SAT NIGHT
DECEMBER 21ST @
8:45PM

AT THE YISE HOUSE
1128 ARCOLA AVE



FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL
SSHIMOFF@YISE.ORG



YOUNG ISRAELI SHOMRAN ENIMAN

CHOCOLATE ACTIVITIES
FONDUE FOUNTAIN
BALLOON DROP & POP
GAMES AND PRIZES
DONUT DE
MAGICIAN
EDIBLE
CHOCOLATE

YISE CHOCOLATE CHANUKAH MESIBA

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29
2:30PM – 5:00PM
YISE SOCIAL HALL

PASTA, ACTIVITIES AND FUN FOR ALL!
MAGIC SHOW AT 3:30PM!

ENDING WITH MENORAH LIGHTING, SINGING & GELT

RSVP & SPONSOR @ YISE.ORG/MESIBA

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Menorah sponsor	\$360	Early-bird	Walk-in
Prime sponsor	\$100	Child (3-11)	SPECIAL MEMBER FAMILY
Perennial sponsor	\$72	Adult	Adult
		Family max.	Family
			max.
			\$52



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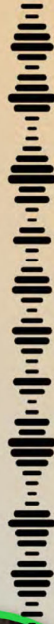
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Shabbat Shalom

Volume 31, Issue 8

Shabbat Parashat Vayishlach

5785 - B"H

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

Collective Responsibility - By any standards it was a shocking episode. Jacob had settled on the outskirts of the town of Shechem, ruled by Hamor. Dina, Jacob's daughter, goes out to see the town. Shechem, Hamor's son, sees her, abducts and rapes her, and then falls in love with her and wants to marry her. He begs his father, "Take this girl as a wife for me".

Jacob hears about this and keeps quiet, but his sons are furious. She must be rescued, and the people must be punished. Hamor and his son come to visit the family and ask them to give consent to the marriage. Jacob's sons pretend to take the offer seriously. We will settle among you, they say, and intermarry, on condition that all your males are circumcised. Hamor and Shechem bring back the proposal to the people of the town, who agree.

On the third day after the circumcision, when the pain is at its height and the men incapacitated, Simon and Levi, Dina's brothers, enter the town and kill every single male.

It was a terrible retribution. Jacob rebukes his sons: "You have brought trouble on me – you have made me odious to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and Perizzites. I am few in number, and if they join forces and attack me, I and my household will be destroyed."

But Simon and Levi reply: "Should he have treated our sister like a prostitute?"

There is a hint in the text that Simon and Levi were justified in what they did. Unusually the Torah adds, three times, an authorial comment on the moral gravity of the situation:

Jacob's sons, having heard what had happened, came back from the field. They were shocked and furious, for Shechem had committed an outrage in Israel by sleeping with Jacob's daughter. Such a thing cannot be done!

The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister.

Yet Jacob condemns their action, and although he says no more at the time, it remains burningly in his mind. Many years and fifteen chapters later, on his death-bed, he curses the two brothers for their behaviour: Simon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence their wares. Let me never join their council, nor my honour be of their assembly. For in their anger they killed men; at their whim they hamstrung oxen. Cursed be their anger, for it is most fierce, and their fury, for it is most cruel. I will divide them up in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

Who was right in this argument? Maimonides vindicates the brothers. In his law code, the Mishneh Torah, he explains that the establishment of justice and the rule of law is one of the seven Laws of Noah, binding on all humanity: And how are the Gentiles commanded to establish law courts? They are required to establish judges and officers in every area of habitation to rule in accordance with the enforcement of the other six commands, to warn the citizenry concerning these laws and to punish any transgressor with death by the sword. And it is on this basis that all the people of Shechem were guilty of death (at the hands of Simon and Levi, sons of Jacob); because Shechem (their Prince) stole (and raped) Dina, which they saw and knew about, but did not bring him to justice...

According to Maimonides, there is a principle of collective responsibility. The inhabitants of

Shechem, knowing that their prince had committed a crime and failing to bring him to court, were collectively guilty of injustice.

Nachmanides disagrees. The Noahide command to institute justice is a positive obligation to establish laws, courts and judges, but there is no principle of collective responsibility, nor is there liability to death for failure to implement the command. Nor could there be, for if Simon and Levi were justified, as Maimonides argues, why did Jacob criticise them at the time and later curse them on his death bed?

The argument between them is unresolved, just as it was between Jacob and his sons. We know that there is a principle of collective responsibility in Jewish law: Kol Yisrael arevin zeh bazeh, "All Jews are sureties for one another." But is this specific to Judaism? Is it because of the peculiar nature of Jewish law, namely that it flows from a covenant between God and the Israelites at Mount Sinai, at which the people pledged themselves individually and collectively to keep the law and to ensure that it was kept?

Maimonides, unlike Nachmanides, seems to be saying that collective responsibility is a feature of all societies. We are responsible not only for our own conduct but for those around us, amongst whom we live. Or perhaps this flows not from the concept of society but simply from the nature of moral obligation. If X is wrong, then not only must I not do it. I must, if I can, stop others from doing it, and if I fail to do so, then I share in the guilt. We would call this nowadays the guilt of the bystander. Here is how the Talmud puts it:

Rav and R. Chanina, R. Yochanan and R. Habiba taught [the following]: Whoever can forbid his household [to commit a sin] but does not, is seized for [the sins of] his household; [if he can forbid] his fellow citizens, he is seized for [the sins of] his fellow citizens; if the whole world, he is seized for [the sins of] the whole world. Shabbat 54b

Clearly, however, the issue is a complex one that needs nuance. There is a difference between a perpetrator and a bystander. It is one thing to commit a crime, another to witness someone committing a crime and failing to prevent it. We might hold a bystander guilty, but not in the same degree. The Talmud uses the phrase "is seized." This may mean that he is morally guilty. He can be called to account. He may be punished by "the heavenly court" in this world or the next. It does not mean that he can be summoned to court and sentenced for criminal negligence.

The issue famously arose in connection with the German people and the Holocaust. The philosopher Karl Jaspers made a distinction between the moral guilt of the perpetrators and what he called the metaphysical guilt of the bystanders:

There exists a solidarity among men as human beings that makes each co-responsible for every wrong and every injustice in the world, especially if a crime is committed in his presence or with his knowledge. If I fail to do whatever I can to prevent them, I too am guilty. If I was present at the murder of others without risking my life to prevent it, I feel guilty in a way not adequately conceivable either legally, politically, or morally. That I live after such a thing has happened weighs upon me as indelible guilt.

So there is real guilt, but, says Jaspers, it cannot be reduced to legal categories. Simon and Levi may

have been right in thinking that the men of Shechem were guilty of doing nothing when their prince abducted and assaulted Dina, but that does not mean that they were entitled to execute summary justice by killing all the males. Jacob was right in seeing this as a brutal assault. In this case, Nachmanides' position seems more compelling than that of Maimonides.

One of Israel's most profound moralists, the late Yeshayahu Leibowitz (1903-1994), wrote that though there may have been an ethical justification for what Simon and Levi did, "there is also an ethical postulate which is not itself a matter of rationalisation and which calls forth a curse upon all these justified and valid considerations." There may, he says, be actions which can be vindicated but are nevertheless accursed. That is what Jacob meant when he cursed his sons.

Collective responsibility is one thing. Collective punishment is another.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

Esau Revisited – Identity Without Continuity -

"And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, and they wept." Years ago, a college classmate provocatively announced that he planned to name his first son after the most maligned figure in the entire Torah: Esau. And the truth is that on the basis of a literal reading of the biblical text (p'shuto shel mikra) a case could be made to defend Esau. In fact, we're doing Jacob, his twin brother, a disservice by ignoring Esau's positive behavior. Only by presenting the best possible portrait of Esau, and then probing where the cracks lie, can we achieve an authentic portrait of Jacob.

Let's consider Esau's defense. After we are introduced to Esau as Isaac's favorite son since 'the hunt was in his [Isaac's] mouth' (Gen. 30:28), we are immediately taken to the fateful scene where Jacob is cooking lentil soup when Esau came home exhausted from the hunt. The hungry hunter asks for some food, but Jacob will only agree to give his brother food in exchange for the birthright. Who is taking advantage of whom? Is not a cunning Jacob taking advantage of an innocent Esau?

Then there is the more troubling question of the stolen blessing. Even without going into the details of how Jacob pretends to be someone he's not, Esau emerges as an honest figure deserving of our sympathy. After all, Esau's desire to personally carry out his father's will meant that he needed a long time to prepare the meat himself. Indeed, it was Esau's diligence in tending to his father that allowed enough time to pass to make it possible for his younger brother to get to Isaac's tent first. Surely, Rebecca must have realized the profound nature of Esau's commitment to his father, for she masterminded Jacob's plan.

Additionally, Esau possessed qualities that many people admire, particularly in America where the spirit of the Wild West lives on. Esau was a hunter and was not afraid to go out into the unknown. He spoke the language of the buffalo and the Apache. He was a frontiersman: reading tracks, smelling the wind and listening with a sensitive ear. In nineteenth-century England he would have explored Africa. Had he lived in Spain, he would have been at

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the right side of Columbus. Esau may not be a scholar, but he is nevertheless a larger-than-life, self-made man whose exploits are the stuff of legends.

On his return from the field, Esau realizes that Jacob has already received the blessing originally meant for him. His response cannot fail to touch the reader. Poignantly, Esau begs of his father, “‘Have you but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father.’ And Esau lifted up his voice and wept”.

Does this sound like someone whose name should be shunned forever? We all know the pain of arriving somewhere a moment too late, begging for the door to be reopened. But we’ve missed our chance. We walk away, disappointed and heartbroken, and in Esau’s plea for a blessing we feel his immense pain, and hear our own pain. At this moment, Esau is Everyman and we all weep with him.

Isaac does give him a blessing that ensures he eventually becomes the head of Edom, a powerful nation identified by our Sages as the progenitor of Rome; and, in the final forty-three verses of Vayishlach, we find the civilization created by Esau: its wives, children, grandchildren, chiefs and generals, are meticulously recorded by our Bible.

But it is the beginning of Vayishlach that clinches our pro-Esau case. Jacob finally returns to his ancestral home after an absence of twenty years. Understandably, Jacob is terrified of his brother’s potential reaction, and so in preparation, Jacob sends messengers ahead with exact instructions as to how to address Esau. Informed of the impending approach of Esau’s army of four hundred men, he divides his household into two camps, so that he’s prepared for the worst. But what actually happens defies Jacob’s expectations: Esau is overjoyed and thrilled to see him. The past is the past. “And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, and they wept”). Even if Esau is the villain, shouldn’t this moment of reconciliation redeem him? And what a redemption: the two halves of Isaac coming together in an embrace of peace and love and hope. Jacob accepts a cool reconciliation, refusing Esau’s offer of their traveling together. Jacob is somehow constrained to travel a different path. At Jacob’s behest, the brothers separate once again.

The defense rests. Thus described, Esau hardly seems worthy of the official censure of Jewish history as the personification of the anti-Jew. In fact, my college friend had good reason to name his son after Esau. So, why are our Sages so critical of him?

I would suggest our analysis so far overlooks something central in Esau’s character. Yes, there are positive characteristics of Esau to be found in many Jews across the Diaspora. Many are aggressive, self-made people who weep when they meet a long-lost Jewish brother from Ethiopia or Russia. They have respect for their parents and grandparents, tending to their physical needs and even reciting – or hiring someone to recite – the traditional mourner’s Kaddish for a full year after their death. Financial support and solidarity missions to the State of Israel, combined with their vocal commitment to Jewry and Israel, reflect a highly developed sense of Abrahamic (Jewish) identity, just like Esau seems to have. Esau feels Abrahamic identity with every fiber of his being.

But when it comes to commitment to Abrahamic (Jewish) continuity, to willingness to secure a Jewish future, many of our Jewish siblings are found to be wanting – just like Esau. Undoubtedly, one of the most important factors in keeping us ‘a people apart’, and preventing total Jewish assimilation into the majority culture, has been our unique laws of kashrut. Refusing to break bread with our non-Jewish work colleagues and neighbors has imposed a certain social distance that has been crucial for maintaining our identity. But Esau is willing to give

up his birthright for a bowl of lentil soup. Hasn’t the road to modern Jewry’s assimilation been paved with the T-bone steaks and the lobsters that tease the tongues lacking the self-discipline to say no to a tasty dish? Like Esau, the overwhelming majority of Diaspora Jewry has sold its birthright for a cheeseburger.

Esau’s name means fully-made, complete. He exists in the present tense. He has no commitment to past or future. He wants the freedom of the hunt and the ability to follow the scent wherever it takes him. He is emotional about his identity, but he is not willing to make sacrifices for its continuity. Primarily, it is on the surface, as an external cloak that is only skin-deep. That’s why it doesn’t take more than a skin-covering for Jacob to enter his father’s tent and take on the character of Esau. Indeed, Esau is even called Edom, red, after the external color of the lentil soup. Esau has no depth; he is Mr. Superficial!

And what’s true for a bowl of soup is true for his choice of wives. Esau marries Hittite women. And that causes his parents to feel a ‘bitterness of spirit’. No wonder! The decision of many modern Jews to ‘marry out’ has reached an American average of 52%! The ‘bitterness of spirit’ continues to be felt in many families throughout the Diaspora. Even those who marry out and continue to profess a strong Jewish identity cannot commit to Jewish continuity. Perhaps Esau even mouthed the argument I’ve heard from those I’ve tried to dissuade from marrying out. ‘But she has a Jewish name! She even looks Jewish!’ He may have said, ‘Her name is Yehudit [literally, a Jewess, from Judah]; she has a wonderful fragrance [Basmat means perfume]’ (

On the other hand, Jacob’s name is a future-tense verb meaning ‘he will triumph at the end.’ Jacob is constantly planning for the future, anticipating what he must do to perpetuate the birthright. Similarly, if we want to continue as a people we have to realize two things from the lesson of our almost-forefather Esau: don’t sell the birthright cheap, and to guarantee a Jewish future, one has to plan strategically.

**Rabbi Dr. Norman J. Lamm’s
Derashot Ledorot [Excerpt]**

The Ways of Esau - At the beginning of this morning’s Sidra, we find Jacob awaiting the fateful confrontation with his brother Esau. Jacob is apprehensive – even terrified – as he prepares for Esau who is advancing upon him with four hundred armed men, with vengeance and murder in his heart. At this point, Jacob decides to divide his retinue into two separate camps. His reason, according to the Torah, was that should Esau destroy one camp, at least the other would escape and survive.

Allow me to bring to your attention an additional reason for Jacob’s strategy, one suggested by the eminent Hasidic master, the author of the Sefat Emet, in the name of his renowned grandfather, the Kotzker Rebbe. He bids us read a bit further, when Esau and Jacob finally do meet. Esau ran towards Jacob, embraced him, fell upon his neck – va-yishakehu, and he kissed him. The word va-yishakehu is written with a series of dots on the top of it. This is rare in the Torah, and when it does occur, it indicates that there is a deeper meaning that must be searched out. That our Rabbis did, and Rabbi Yanai taught: melamed she-lo bikesh le’nashko ela le’nashkho – Esau did not intend to kiss Jacob, to give him a neshikah or kiss. He did intend to give him a neshikhah – a bite, a mortal wound. He embraced him, and then fell upon his neck in his characteristically wild, bestial manner in order to kill him. But, by a miracle, Jacob’s neck turned hard as marble, and so Esau – kissed him. It was a hypocritical kiss; a kiss not of love but of death, not of affection but of affliction.

Likutei Divrei Torah

These are the two ways Esau always tries to overcome Jacob: the ways of neshikah and neshikhah. Sometimes Esau acts directly and openly like a wolf. At other times he is devious and sly – like a fox. At such times the neshikah hides the deadly neshikhah, and honey drips about the inner poison.

Jacob, knowing of the approaches by Esau, therefore divides his own camp into two, training each of them how to cope with one of the alternate strategies that Esau might be expected to use. He teaches one camp how to resist Esau’s neshikhah, his bite or direct physical onslaught. He teaches the other how to oppose the neshikah or kiss of Esau, his inviting manner which intends only to throw Jacob off guard.

Therefore, the Kotzker concludes, Jacob prayed to G-d: hatzileni na mi-yad achi, mi-yad Esav, save me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau. In other words, save me both from Esau when he appears undisguised, as Esau my sworn enemy who aims but to destroy me; and save me from Esau when he appears to me as a brother, in the guise of fraternal affection. Deliver me both from his bite and from his kiss.

In our own days we have suffered grievously from the bite of Esau. One third of our people were the victims of the vicious neshikhah. But we have begun to develop the capacity to resist it. From the ghetto resistance fighters to the Hagganah, from the Israel Defense Army to the various efficient agencies combating anti-Semitism in America and abroad, we have learned how to withstand the noxious bite of the Esau of our day.

The great, overwhelming problem of our day, however, is not the bite. It is the kiss of Esau. Where twenty centuries of Christianity have failed to budge us by sword or by stake, by exile or by persecution, the alternative policy of smiling sweetness, of the neshikah, has begun to show the first signs of success. No longer are we threatened with forced conversions. No longer do ex-Jewish priests challenge us to public debates and slander the Talmud as a pack of anti-Christian lies. Now the ex-Jew first praises the Talmud as a very fine book indeed – but one that has been surpassed. Nowadays a missionary to the Jews first writes a book against anti-Semitism. Then he writes a book about “building bridges.” Then he invites us into a “dialogue.” And so on....

We want to live in peace with all our non-Jewish neighbors, even as Jacob was willing to go to all lengths to pacify and appease Esau. But, again like Jacob, we are not willing to sell our souls for it. The price is too high.

Remember what Judaism really is: As David put it, Torat ha-Shem temimah, the Torah of the Lord is complete, pure, uncorrupted. It is not a relativistic document that changes in every generation and climate. No one has a warrant to toss it about like a football. No one has the mandate to lay his hands on it – especially if they are spiritually soiled hands. Torat ha-Shem temimah.

Almighty G-d! We face critical times. May we be privileged to receive the blessing of Jacob, about whom it is written, after his encounter with Esau, that va-yavo Yaakov shalem ir Shekhem, that Jacob came to Shechem shalem, perfect, whole. Our Rabbis explain: shalem be’gufo, be’mammono, be’torato – whole physically, financially, and spiritually. May all of Israel attain these perfections. Above all: may all of us, without exception, attain the shalem be’torato, religious wholesomeness. For shalem must lead to the great, universal, prophetic vision of Shalom. Amen.

וַיִּשְׁלַח

At the beginning of this week's *Parashah*, Yaakov prepares to meet Esav for the first time since Esav made up his mind to kill Yaakov. Yaakov hears that Esav is marching toward him with an army of 400 men, and "Yaakov became very frightened" (32:8). Why was Yaakov frightened? Did he not have *Bitachon* / trust in *Hashem*, Who had promised to protect him? Was Yaakov's fear a sin? Many of the classical commentaries--including *Rashi*, *Rambam*, *Ramban*, and *Ibn Ezra*, among others--discuss these questions.

R' Yitzchak Abarbanel z"l (1437-1508; Portugal, Spain and Italy) writes: Yaakov's fear of Esav was not due to a weakness in his *Emunah* / faith or his *Bitachon*. Yaakov's fear was like the feeling a brave warrior has before going into battle--he recognizes the reality that he may be killed, but he forges ahead anyway. If one goes into war thinking there is no danger, we would not call him brave! Where is his bravery, if he is oblivious to the danger he is in? If a person does not know the value of money or is so wealthy that money is meaningless to him, would we praise him for his charity? Only one who understands what he is giving up is praiseworthy!

Likewise, continues R' Abarbanel, Yaakov's *Bitachon* was meaningful only because he was afraid of Esav. Had Yaakov not understood what he was up against, his *Bitachon* would have been worthless. Clearly, Yaakov did trust in *Hashem*, for there were many ways he could have saved himself--fleeing, sending a messenger to their father Yitzchak asking him to intervene, etc.--but Yaakov did not do any of those things. Our Sages teach that a Jew should not say, "I hate non-kosher food." Rather, he should say, "It looks delicious, but the Torah prohibited it to me!" Similarly, writes R' Abarbanel, a person should not say, "I am not afraid!" Rather, he should acknowledge his fear, and then he should place his trust in *Hashem*. (*Peirush Al Ha'Torah*)

וַיִּשְׁלַח

Shabbat

Rabbeinu Bachya ibn Pekudah z"l (Spain; early 11th century) writes: There once was a *Chassid* / pious man who traveled to another city to seek his livelihood. There the *Chassid* met an idolator, and he said to the idolator, "How blind and lacking in understanding you are that you worship an idol!" The idolator responded, "And who do you worship?" The *Chassid* answered, "I worship the Creator, Who is capable of everything, Who sustains all, and like Whom there is no other."

"You are a hypocrite!" retorted the idolator. "How so?" asked the *Chassid*. "If what you said is true," answered the idolator, "why must you travel great distances to find your livelihood? Why doesn't G-d sustain you at home?"

The *Chassid* took this message to heart and returned home, confident that *Hashem* is capable of supporting a person without the person wearing himself out excessively. (*Chovot Ha'levavot: Sha'ar Ha'bitachon*)

R' Zvi Elimelech Shapira z"l (the *Bnei Yissaschar*; died 1841) elaborates: We read (*Yehoshua* 1:8), "This Book of the Torah is not to leave your mouth. You shall contemplate it day and night in order to observe, to do, all that is written in it. *Az* / For then you will make your ways successful, and *Az* / then you will achieve understanding." And we read also (*Iyov* 3:13), "*Az* / then I would be at rest." Commentaries note that the *Gematria* of "*Az*" (אז) equals 8, and they say that these verses are teaching us how to divide the 24 hours of the day: 8 hours for work ("then you will make your ways successful"), 8 hours for Torah study ("then you will achieve understanding"), and 8 hours for rest, which includes sleeping and all of a person's other physical needs ("then I would be at rest"). Of course, notes the *Bnei Yissaschar*, if one can "sanctify the mundane" by working less and studying Torah more, that is desirable.

He continues: This is the lesson of *Shabbat*. One day a week, we recall that *Hashem* created the world, and we do no work at all. Moreover, we observe the *Mitzvah* of *Techum Shabbat* / not traveling beyond the general area where we began *Shabbat*. In this way, we acknowledge that, as the Creator, *Hashem* can lighten our burden of working if we only accept upon ourselves instead to serve Him more.

(*Derech Pikudecha: Lo Ta'aseh* 24, *Chelek Ha'machashavah* 2)

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"I have been diminished by all the kindnesses . . ." (32:11)

We read (*Devarim* 9:4-5), "Do not say in your heart, when *Hashem* pushes [the Canaanite nations] away from before you, saying, 'Because of my righteousness did *Hashem* bring me to possess this Land . . .' Not because of your righteousness and the uprightness of your heart are you coming to possess their Land." Rabbeinu Yonah Gerondi z"l (1210-1263; Spain) writes: This is a commandment that, in general, we should not attribute our success to our own merit. Rather, we should know in our hearts that our success is a kindness from Above and due to His Goodness, as Yaakov Avinu said, "I have been diminished by all the kindnesses"--i.e., I am small compared to all the kindness You have done. (*Sha'arei Teshuvah* 3:29)

R' Gershon Edelstein z"l (1923-2023; Rosh Yeshiva of the Ponovezh Yeshiva) elaborates: When a person receives kindness from *Hashem*, that obligates him more. One should feel that he is not doing everything that is incumbent upon him. For the kindness he has received, he should be more humble, he should perform more good deeds, and he should have more *Emunah* / faith in G-d. If he does not, he is an ingrate. One must feel "small" compared to all the good *Hashem* does for him. (*Peninei Chizuk*)

The *Midrash Tanna D'vei Eliyahu Zuta* (1:5) teaches: Yaakov is to be praised especially for his *Tzedakah* / acts of charity, as it is written, "I have become small." This refers to *Tzedakah*, as it is written (*Mishlei* 16:8), "Better a small amount of *Tzedakah* . . ." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Chaim Abulafia z"l (1669-1744; *Eretz Yisrael* and Izmir, Turkey) writes in the name of R' Y. Chabiliv z"l (referred to by those who quote him as the "*Chassid*" / "pious one" and "*Kadosh*" / "holy one"; possibly a reference to a 17th century rabbi of Chevron by that name): What led the *Midrash* to conclude that our verse refers to Yaakov's giving *Tzedakah*? Seemingly, Yaakov is saying the opposite: I have insufficient merits with which to deserve Your kindness!

R' Chabiliv answers: The *Arizal* teaches that one should not put himself down or minimize his own good deeds in a time of danger. Consistent with this, the author of the *Midrash* was bothered by Yaakov's seeming to minimize his own merits. Therefore, the *Midrash* reinterpreted the verse as extolling Yaakov's merits. (*Etz Ha'Chaim: Parashat Vayakhel*)

R' Chaim Yosef David Azulai z"l (1724-1806; *Eretz Yisrael* and Italy) adds: Nevertheless, Yaakov did not want to appear to have served *Hashem* for the sake of receiving reward. Therefore, he used an ambiguous expression that both alluded to the diminishment of his merits because of G-d's kindness and alluded to his performing the *Mitzvah* of *Tzedakah*.

(*Pnei David*, quoted in *Otzrot Ha'Chida*)

"I have been diminished by all the kindnesses and by all the truth that You have done for Your servant; for with my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps." (32:11)

Midrash Rabbah records a dispute regarding the interpretation of Yaakov's statement, "I have been diminished." Rabbi Abba bar Kahana says, "I am unworthy." Rabbi Levi says, "I am worthy, but I have been diminished." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Meir Popperos Katz z"l (1624-1662; Poland and *Eretz Yisrael*; arranger of the teachings of the *Arizal* and a prolific author in his own right) writes: It is well established that a person is born so that he can earn a share in *Olam Ha'ba*. *Hashem* could have left all of the souls in Heaven and let them bask in His light without having earned that reward. However, a person generally enjoys what he has earned more than he enjoys a handout--one even feels shame when he must receive something for nothing--so *Hashem* requires us to toil for our *Olam Ha'ba*.

R' Katz continues: My teacher R' Zerachiah Guta z"l (Turkey, Egypt, and *Eretz Yisrael*; died 1648) explains the verse (*Tehilim* 140:14), "Behold the righteous will give thanks to Your Name; the upright will dwell in Your presence," in light of this idea. Why will the righteous give thanks to *Hashem*? Because they are able to hold their heads upright, without shame, in His presence!

In this light, as well, we can understand why Yaakov felt small after all the kindness *Hashem* had done for him. However, the sages in the *Midrash* disagree about the extent of those feelings. R' Katz explains:

Our Sages say that Yosef was taken from Yaakov for 22 years because Yaakov did not honor his parents for the 22 years that he was away from home. In particular, Yaakov's fulfillment of the *Mitzvah* of honoring parents was deficient compared to Esav's. Thus, Yaakov said, according to Rabbi Abba bar Kahana in the above *Midrash*, "I am unworthy because of all the kindness"--referring to the kindness that Esav performed for his parents while Yaakov was absent, in addition to all the undeserved kindness that *Hashem* had done for Yaakov.

Rabbi Levi disagrees, however, since Yaakov was honoring his parents by obeying them and going away, as we read (*Bereishit* 28:7), "Yaakov obeyed his father and mother and went to Padan Aram." Thus Yaakov said, "I am worthy, but I have been diminished"--i.e., I did go away originally to honor my parents, but I stayed away longer than necessary to get married, and I become wealthy through *Hashem*'s kindness, as is evident from the fact that "with my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps." (*Tal Orot*)

In answer to the question of why Yaakov was punished when he was merely obeying his parents by going away, R' Gedaliah Anemer z"l (1932-2010; *Rosh Yeshiva* of the Yeshiva of Greater Washington and rabbi in Silver Spring, Maryland) explained: Yaakov was not punished. Rather, though he was excused from honoring his parents for 22 years, the fact remains that he was lacking the merit and protection that performing that *Mitzvah* would have given him. (If one is unavoidably prevented from performing a *Mitzvah*, he is excused, but he still does not get credit for performing it.) (Heard from Rabbi Anemer z"l)

ISRAEL REPORT

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

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ISRAELI WARSHIPS DESTROYED SYRIAN FLEET, DEFENSE MINISTER KATZ CONFIRMS (Times of Israel 12/10/24)

Israeli missile ships destroyed the Syrian military fleet in an operation last night as part of a broad campaign to eliminate strategic threats, Defense Minister Israel Katz says during his visit to a Navy base in Haifa.

In a statement, he says Israeli forces are establishing themselves in the buffer zone between Syria and the Golan Heights and says he has ordered a "sterile defensive zone" to be created in southern Syria, without a permanent Israeli presence, to prevent any terrorist threat to Israel.

IDF STRIKES SOME 300 SYRIAN TARGETS, DESTROYING ASSAD'S AIR FORCE (i24News 12/10/24)

The Israel Air Force has carried out about 300 strikes in Syria over the last 48 hours, according to Israeli security sources on Tuesday. Most of the strikes targeted Syrian army bases, specifically air defense systems and ground-to-ground and ground-to-air missile stocks, as well as the Syrian army's air bases.

On Monday evening, two Syrian security sources told Reuters that IAF planes had hit at least three major Syrian army air bases housing dozens of helicopters and fighter jets. The air force also reportedly carried out several strikes on a research center in the suburbs of Damascus and on an electronic warfare center in the capital.

In a letter addressed to the United Nations Security Council, Israeli Ambassador Danny Danon described the military actions as "limited and temporary" measures necessary to deal with immediate threats to security.

"Israel does not intervene in the internal Syrian conflict," he clarified.

SYRIAN ACTIVIST: 'WE ARE READY FOR PEACE' (YNet 12/11/24)

A Syrian expatriate and activist has commended Israel for destroying Syrian weapons, citing concerns that they could fall into the wrong hands.

Speaking to ILTV News, Rawan Osman said, "I'm happy that Israel has destroyed these weapons and warships." She added that the Kurds should also be grateful, as such actions could prevent them from being targeted by jihadists.

Osman further shared that individuals on the ground in Syria and Lebanon have expressed a readiness to pursue peace with Israel.

"We are sick of the Axis of Resistance and the misery they have brought," she said.

US OFFICIAL BACKS ISRAELI OPERATIONS IN SYRIAN TERRITORY (Arutz-7 12/10/24)

A Biden administration official backed the IDF's advance into Syrian territory following the fall of the Assad regime in a conversation with Kan News on Tuesday saying that Israel made it clear that it is a "temporary and tactical operation to defend its borders."

"No nation can tolerate terror groups being right on their doorstep," the official told the Israeli broadcaster. "Since the Syrian army abandoned its posts in the Israeli-Syrian buffer zone and the area, Israel declared that Syria's enforcement of the 1974 armistice agreement had collapsed. Israel took actions to stabilize the buffer zone and prevent an invasion of Israeli territory. We hope that in the future we will again see stability in the region."

According to the report, Israel updated the US about its operations in Syrian territory and the US administration did not oppose them.

Earlier on Tuesday the Hezbollah-affiliated Al-Mayadeen network that Israeli tanks are now positioned approximately 20 kilometers from the Syrian capital

of Damascus.

Reports also indicated the IDF has taken control of nine villages in the southern outskirts of Damascus, near the border with Lebanon. At the same time, there were reports of extensive strikes in the Damascus area.

FRANCE CALLS ON ISRAEL TO EXIT SYRIA BUFFER ZONE AS SPAIN, GERMANY URGE RESTRAINT (Times of Israel 12/11/24)

France called on Israel to withdraw its troops from the buffer zone along the border with Syria, while Germany and Spain urged Jerusalem to show restraint during the transition period in its northern neighbor.

The French Foreign Ministry said Wednesday that the Israel Defense Forces must pull back from the zone separating Syria from the Israeli Golan Heights, stating that "any military deployment in the separation zone between Israel and Syria is a violation of the disengagement agreement of 1974."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced on Sunday he had ordered the army to "seize" the demilitarized zone in the Syrian-controlled part of the Golan Heights as a defensive move after rebels swept Syrian president Bashar al-Assad from power.

"France calls on Israel to withdraw from the zone and to respect Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity," the foreign ministry spokesman said.

The area is patrolled by a UN peacekeeping force known as UNDOF, with the global body warning Israel on Monday that it is in breach of the 50-year-old deal that ended a 1973 war with Syria. Israel has said it will not become involved in the conflict in Syria and that its seizure of the buffer zone established in 1974 was a defensive move, and that it has taken "limited and temporary measures" solely to protect its security.

Meanwhile, Germany's foreign minister on Wednesday urged both Israel and

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Turkey not to jeopardize a peaceful transition in Syria after the ousting of Assad.

"We must not allow the internal Syrian dialogue process to be torpedoed from the outside," Annalena Baerbock told a Berlin press conference. "Neighbors such as the Turkish and Israeli governments, which are asserting their security interests, must not jeopardize the process."

Baerbock said Syria's "new chapter" was still being written, adding that "the outcome of the revolution is not certain, nor have the people won the transition to a free and peaceful Syria."

"Syria must not be allowed to become a pawn in the hands of foreign powers or forces again," she added.

Speaking on a trip to Jordan, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said Wednesday that Israel's strikes on weapons sites in Syria "can be understood as a measure for security."

"Nobody really knows who will ultimately have control of the country," Pistorius said. "The idea that gas weapons from Syrian factories could fall into the wrong hands and play a role in Islamist-motivated attacks somewhere in the world is an idea that would be unbearable."

By the same token, he said, it was incumbent upon Israel not to "contribute to escalation."

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said Wednesday during talks in Madrid with his Lebanese counterpart that Syria's territorial integrity must be preserved.

During his meeting with Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati, Sanchez "stressed the need for a peaceful and stable Syria, for the benefit of the Syrian people and all countries in the region, especially Lebanon," the Spanish government said in a statement after the closed-door meeting.

"He also called for an orderly political transition for the Syrian people while maintaining the territorial integrity of the country and avoiding further escalation in the region," it added.

REBELS AVOIDING CONFRONTATION WITH ISRAEL (Arutz-7 12/11/24)

Criticism is being voiced against the leadership of the rebels in Syria who have so far refrained from mentioning the seizure of territories near the border by the IDF immediately following the collapse of the Assad regime.

One rebel-affiliated channel noted that the rebel leadership just concluded 14 years of fighting in the civil war and has no interest at the moment in opening another front before it strengthens the internal arena.

SYRIA WAR'S UPSIDE: SKI RESORT'S CEO DREAMS OF EXPANDING HERMON SITE (Israel Hayom 12/10/24)

We climb toward Mount Hermon's peak along the Israeli outpost line, reaching the northernmost point of Israel's border. Until two days ago, this marked the international boundary line. No Israeli foot had crossed it, at least not officially. Now, the path extending into the buffer zone has been cleared. Soldiers from the Shaldag unit have ascended the mountain peak on foot and in jeeps. This time, the Hermon "capture" concluded without a single shot fired.

Shaldag forces advanced several additional miles from here. The scattered patches of snow mark the borderline on Hermon. There's no border fence here, only barrels marking the Alpha Line and the buffer zone. Syrian soldiers abandoned their old outpost years ago. What represents the "eyes of the state" for Israel holds no significance for them. Only UN soldiers and smugglers making their way between Syria and Lebanon remain at the mountain's peak.

Raphael Naveh, CEO of the Hermon ski site, had the privilege of reaching the Syrian peak with senior officers, or as he calls it: "The New Hermon." After the ski site was closed last year, a few employees at the facility are working to prepare it for the upcoming season.

The ski season won't open this year as the cable car cables were damaged, and the experts who need to come from abroad to repair them haven't yet sent a price quote. The site has been declared a closed military zone until the end of the month, and it's estimated that the order will be extended for

another month. Only afterward will the site open to visitors. "It's purely out of Zionism," says Naveh. "We're fixing and hoping to prepare the site. Property tax assessors have already been here; we need to bring repair quotes. Many rockets fell here. Some hit equipment, the cable was torn. All the windows in the site offices were hit by shrapnel. If we hadn't taken immediate action, the entire cable would have fallen, and it would have been very difficult to repair." From the mountain peak, the views of the Hula Valley spread before us, with Lebanon's Shouf Mountains below. On a clear day, you can see Damascus, 43.5 miles away. Only the beginning of Hermon is visible from where we stand. Israel holds 7% of Hermon's area, with the ski site occupying just one percent of the mountain area. At the site's base, Alpine forces are still working to prepare the snow levelers and snow cats as part of winter preparations, though winter hasn't really arrived here yet. According to the forecast, snow might fall in a week.

Among the Alpinist Unit soldiers, there's noticeable disappointment that the Hermon "capture" was given to the Shaldag unit. It's understandable. Those responsible for operational activities in the snow for the past 50 years were left out of the operational picture. The Alpinist soldiers know that when snow falls, conditions on the mountain will change. Untrained forces won't survive here for one day. "We know how to reach every spot on the mountain," says Naveh, "movement will only be possible in snow cats. They'll also need to prepare for stays at the mountain peak."

The Alpinist unit is small and highly skilled. Now that the Hermon area has more than doubled, it will take time to train additional soldiers. According to IDF assessments, Syrian rebels won't approach here in winter. The harsh conditions won't allow infiltration from here, at least not without the help of smugglers, who are the only ones who know how to navigate and operate in high mountain conditions.

Night temperatures here drop below freezing, and the mountain winds create very harsh conditions even without snow. The winter sun is warm and doesn't reflect what happens here after dark. The IDF will need to prepare for stays with special equipment. Everyone understands that when snow falls, the Alpinist Unit will take command.

Naveh dreams about expanding the ski site. Building in Syrian territory is a pipe dream, but expanding the ski runs into the enlarged military area – that's a dream that could come true. "Once, I had a plan to put slopes on the border. To prepare for a peace ski site, where more sites would be established and the slopes would connect like in Europe," he says with a smile.

'THEY'RE NO ZIONISTS': HOW SYRIA'S REBELS TOPPLED ASSAD AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR ISRAEL (Ha'aretz 12/10/24)

The Syrian rebels who toppled Bashar Assad are highly unlikely to pose an immediate threat to Israel, leading Middle East expert Hassan Hassan said on the latest episode of the Haaretz Podcast.

The rapid collapse of the Assad regime in Syria has left Israel concerned about the future of what has been its quietest border in an era of continual instability and war, as Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, the rebel group that drove Assad out and has roots in Al-Qaeda and ISIS, takes charge.

"I suspect they will probably send signals to Israel directly or indirectly, that they're not interested in igniting anything there," said Syrian-born journalist and author Hassan, editor-in-chief of New Lines Magazine. Hassan said he believes that their posture towards Israel would be "cut from the same cloth" as Assad's, who "never really waged war against Israel since 1973."

Haaretz senior military analyst Amos Harel said that Israeli officials are wary of the group and its leader, Abu Mohammed al-Jolani.

According to Harel, the Syrian rebel leader currently "at least pretends to have become more of a moderate. He doesn't talk like an extreme jihadist anymore. But don't think I'm buying into this, and neither are the Israeli intelligence community and the Israeli leadership. The question is whether fighting Israel is a top priority for this new alliance? I don't think so. But is this a beginning of a wonderful era between Israel and Syria? I seriously doubt that."

Hassan said that his countrymen are in a "euphoric early stage" of celebration, stunned to see the end of the 50-year reign of the Assad dynasty. "You really have to have a rich imagination to imagine something worse than Assad," he said. As they watch the images of political prisoners being released after decades, it "reminds them of how bad and brutal the Assad regime was."

The "domino effect" of upheaval will continue across the region, Hassan predicts. With the devastation of Hamas, Hezbollah, and now the Assad regime, "you could say that the Iranian hegemony in the Levant is almost over."

OPTIMISTIC MESSAGE FROM EGYPT: HOSTAGE DEAL IS 'VERY CLOSE' (YNet 12/10/24)

After a senior Israeli official said on Monday that it would be possible to reach a hostage deal "within a week or two," a senior Egyptian official also told Ynet and Yedioth Ahronoth on Tuesday that the announcement of an agreement that would lead to a cease-fire and a hostage deal is "very close." A Hamas delegation led by senior Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya left Cairo on Sunday night, following discussions with Egyptian intelligence chief Major General Hassan Mahmoud Rashad and his team. It was learned yesterday that the delegation had handed over to the Egyptians a detailed list of Israeli hostages - including the sick and elderly, women and men - that Hamas proposes to release in the first phase. The Hamas delegation also handed over a detailed list of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons that Hamas demands to be released as part of the new deal.

The Egyptian official clarified that an Israeli delegation is scheduled to leave for Cairo this week for a meeting at the intelligence headquarters, during which they will be given the lists of hostages and Palestinian prisoners. Hamas made it clear to Egypt that "there is a better chance than ever before of closing a deal," in exchange for the release of the prisoners and Israel's withdrawal from the Philadelphi corridor and other areas in the Gaza Strip.

The Al-Araby channel and the Al-Jazeera network in Qatar reported that, in talks in the Egyptian intelligence offices, an understanding was reached between Egypt and Hamas regarding the places from which the IDF will withdraw in Gaza, and that a week after the withdrawal, a cease-fire will be declared and the round of releasing Israeli hostages and Palestinian prisoners will begin. Israel, the Egyptian source clarified, will first withdraw from Rafah and areas to be determined in advance along the Philadelphi Corridor.

Meanwhile, Qatar's Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed Al-Ansari commented on the progress in the negotiations, saying that his country had renewed contacts with Hamas and Israel "in good faith" as part of the mediation toward a cease-fire in Gaza. "We are open to any path that leads to an agreement, we have not given up on mediation," he said. "Negotiations are continuing and it is too early to talk about developments."

On Monday, an Israeli senior official estimated in an interview with Ynet that "within a week or two" it would be possible to reach a hostage deal, and said that "the conditions are ripe." At the same time, sources close to a senior Hamas official said Monday that there had been significant progress in talks for a deal. According to the same sources, the terrorist organization agreed to a gradual cessation of the war, and to a deal that is divided into three stages and includes a gradual withdrawal.

According to the proposed deal, they said, between the sixth and eighth weeks of the cease-fire, IDF forces will withdraw from the Rafah Crossing and from city centers, after which negotiations will begin for a permanent cease-fire and the release of the kidnapped soldiers.

Hamas, the insiders claimed, has handed Egypt a list of the living Israeli hostages - and is waiting for Israeli agreements regarding the list of Palestinian prisoners it requested, which also includes high-security prisoners.

An Egyptian official explained last week to Ynet and Yedioth Ahronoth that the new proposal put forward by Cairo includes a gradual cessation of fighting in Gaza, with the Israeli side withdrawing from the Rafah Crossing, in

parallel with the declaration of a temporary cease-fire for about 60 days. He emphasized that the first 60 days would be designated as "trial days" for both sides - Israel and Hamas - and that, if the plan holds up, it would be "the end of the conflict between the sides."

About a week after the temporary cease-fire comes into effect, according to the Egyptian official, the process of returning surviving Israeli hostages will begin. At the same time, hundreds of Palestinian terrorists also will be released from Israeli prisons, according to terms to be agreed upon between the parties. During the 60-day trial cease-fire, Israel will maintain a military presence in Gaza. The proposal also addresses the possibility of Palestinian refugees returning to the northern Gaza Strip, as Hamas demands.

As for the Rafah Crossing, according to the plan it is expected to be transferred to the management and supervision of the Palestinian Authority. In previous contacts, Israel raised the possibility of maintaining a certain surveillance capability through cameras at the Rafah Crossing. In addition, according to the senior Egyptian source, a joint management committee from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be established, which will include between 10 and 15 "independent Palestinian political technocrats." The committee will be supervised by American representatives.

REBUILDING ISRAEL'S NORTH POST-LEBANON CEASEFIRE WILL TAKE FIVE YEARS (JPost 12/9/24)

An identical message came both from municipal officials and the residents of Metulla and Kiryat Shmona: Rebuilding the area after 14 months of Hezbollah's attacks is not a matter of months or a year, but likely five years.

The comments were made to The Jerusalem Post during a tour of the North on Monday. They added that almost no one has returned, as of Monday, despite two weeks having passed since the November 26 ceasefire. Manara and some other towns that were heavily hit are in similar circumstances.

Kfar Yuval and other villages are still completely closed and abandoned.

Kfar Giladi and several other towns are experiencing a trickle of returning residents because their homes and infrastructure were not as destroyed as the other places; still, these number very few.

One thing in common to all of these places is that a majority of the population - especially those with children - will not even consider returning until the end of the school year. So, even in the best-case scenario where they want to return, a vast majority of the towns are guaranteed will continue to be ghost towns for another seven to nine months.

How many really want to return? Some believe that the second the 60-day ceasefire ends, Hezbollah will violate it with what would be considered "small" aerial attacks. But what is "small" to the rest of Israel will once again prove deadly for these residents.

Others believe that Hezbollah will be patient and wait several years to rehabilitate its rocket arsenal before attacking, but are virtually certain that an attack will come.

Kiryat Shmona Spokesman Doron Shneper told the Post that, "after 15 months, the war is still going on, and the residents are still impatiently kept from their houses. We need absolute security and a complete victory, not a ceasefire."

Pressed that the IDF has killed 25 Hezbollah fighters since the ceasefire, he responded, "We don't need the IDF to kill 100 or 1,000 of Hezbollah, we need Hezbollah not to exist... We cannot have another October 7" carried out by the terrorist group against the North.

When asked about why Kiryat Shmona is advancing with government funds earmarked for rebuilding the area, like Shlomi - the rebuilding of which has been confirmed by the Post via photos, though there is no visual confirmation - he said it was better to wait to rebuild until true security was achieved, rather than rushing to rebuild only for the newly built structures to be destroyed by Hezbollah again.

Statistics play a big part in these deliberations. In Metulla, for example, out of 650 structures, 100 were directly hit by Hezbollah rockets or anti-tank missiles and some 400 experienced indirect hits. This means that more than 75% of the residencies are not even in a condition to be reoccupied.

Additionally, almost no one in Metulla has proper safe rooms; many have none, while a small number have much older ones that are in disrepair and would not hold up against Hezbollah's current weapons.

Shortly before the war started, 39 residencies were due to get new safe rooms; only 16 were built by the time the war began, and two of them were destroyed by more powerful Hezbollah rockets, since they are only designed to protect against less powerful attacks.

Hezbollah has fired 1,600 rockets and mortars and 450 anti-tank missiles at Metulla alone since the war began. Metulla security chief Doron Mano noted that many of the houses were hit by a large barrage on September 19.

One house he showed, belonging to Zami Ravid, experienced multiple hits. The house had stood for 50 years. The second floor was mostly destroyed, which led to the collapse of the house onto large portions of the first floor.

Several other houses on the same street were struck in the same barrage.

Another house in a different neighborhood of Metulla was hit by the same barrage, also with significant damage to the roof, and a disfigured-looking pool.

A neighbor, Sarah Caspi, was back temporarily on Monday to check on the status of her house, which experienced more minor damage.

She said she was still interested in living in Metulla at some point, but the situation is complex: None of her children who also used to live there want to return, and "they think I am crazy" for wanting to come back.

Caspi noted that just three weeks ago, the IDF found some of the largest volume of Hezbollah weapons in any one place in southern Lebanon – inside a tall Lebanese tower that overlooked her house from less than a kilometer away.

She and her children realize that they could have been Hezbollah's quick and easy victims in an October 7-style invasion.

Pressed further about why she wanted to return, she acknowledged that before the war, her residence was worth around NIS 5 million, and that now she could not sell it if she wanted to; sometimes economic realities triumph over safety.

Kiryat Shmona's numbers – in percentages – are less bad: "Only" around 400 out of 7,000 structures were directly hit – about 6%. But in terms of the quantity of structures that must be rebuilt, this is a staggering four times the number of Metulla. And, many of these structures are larger and more complex than a small house.

Shimon Amsalem, an engineer from Kiryat Shmona, rattled off the names of several schools that were directly hit, along with rebuilding projects that will be more expensive and complex than a house. The Post can verify that the damage to some of these schools is substantial.

Other larger structures were hit as well, like the Nehemia Mall, which has a hole in its ceiling. The only store that was operating in the mall on Monday was the pharmacy, one of a short list of "essential" shops, along with several food stores.

Kfar Giladi and other towns with fewer direct hits have had a trickle of returnees, said Candice Ormerod, who showed a hit to the town's well-known hotel. She described to the Post strikes and fires around many parts of the town that have completely changed the landscape – but at least do not prevent residents from returning. Around 30 residents have come back to join another 25 of the town's security team, who were there throughout the war.

But, those numbers are still relatively tiny compared to the approximately 1,000 people who had been living in Kfar Giladi before the war.

Like Caspi from Metulla, Ormerod is also struggling with her future of whether to stay in Kfar Giladi or move elsewhere, as she balances wanting to be with her daughter and the economic realities of owning a residence in a town which suddenly has become less desirable.

To summarize, the Post found that almost no one has returned to the North, families will not return before the summer or fall, if at all, and a delay in building safe rooms could also hold up people returning. Additionally, residents are worried about Hezbollah attacking both after the 60 days of the current ceasefire run out and in a few years, and many have made new lives in areas where they spent the last 14 months.

If Israel wants to save the northern border cities and towns, it will be a monumental, long-term, complex, and creative effort.

HOW ISRAEL DESTROYED THE SYRIAN ARMY (Yishai Elmakies, Makor Rishon 12/11/24)

The IDF announced last night the conclusion of the strategic phase of Operation "Arrow of Bashan" in under 72 hours. Despite this, control over the buffer zone and key positions along the Syrian border remains ongoing. The goal of these maneuvers is to prevent the rebels' empowerment – by confiscating weapons and military equipment and denying their proximity to the Israeli border, which could endanger Israeli communities and IDF forces.

The operation's significance cannot be overstated. The destruction of such a large percentage of an advanced military force like the Syrian army is an event unparalleled globally for decades.

As with all major IDF operations, this impressive achievement rests on three pillars:

1. Unprecedented coordination

For the first time during the war, there was complete consensus between the Chief of Staff, senior military leaders, the Prime Minister, and other members of the political echelon. Israel had long anticipated the collapse of Assad's regime but underestimated the speed of events. Despite the surprise, Israel was the first to act. While Iran hesitated, the IDF recommended airstrikes and entering the buffer zone, effectively convincing a receptive cabinet. Plans from Military Intelligence, the Operations Directorate, the Air Force, and the Navy were swiftly prepared over the weekend, presented to commanders and policymakers, approved, and implemented.

2. Targeting strategic weaponry and military assets

Within the first 24 hours, air defense systems and numerous fighter jets were neutralized. This allowed 350 Israeli Air Force fighter jets to operate without interference in Syrian airspace, targeting 320 strategic objectives.

The targets were prioritized by their importance. Missile boats launched numerous simultaneous strikes on two Syrian naval bases – Al-Bayda and Latakia – causing significant damage and destroying 15 vessels. These vessels carried sea-to-sea missiles with ranges of 80–190 kilometers and explosive payloads of dozens of kilograms each. Anti-aircraft batteries, Syrian Air Force bases, and dozens of manufacturing facilities in Damascus, Homs, Tartus, Latakia, and Palmyra were also struck. These facilities housed Scud missiles, cruise missiles, coastal defense missiles, surface-to-air missiles, drones, fighter jets, combat helicopters, radar systems, tanks, hangars, and more.

These strikes followed years of intelligence gathering by the IDF, and the execution was described as flawless. The Defense Ministry estimates that 70-80% of the Syrian army's strategic capabilities have been destroyed.

3. Iran's diminished role

For years, Syria served as Iran's primary base for stockpiling weapons, training countless jihadist forces, and distributing armaments across the Middle East with Assad's cooperation. Exploiting the power vacuum in Syria and Iran's lack of response to Assad's downfall, the IDF has significantly undermined Iran's foothold in the region. The scope and ambiguity of the strikes have deterred Iran from retaliating.

What Comes Next?

The buffer zone and key positions captured by the IDF will remain under Israeli control for the foreseeable future due to tactical considerations. How long this situation will persist is uncertain – weeks, months, or even years. Residents of the Golan Heights are calling for the border fence to be relocated to the far edge of the buffer zone.

On the other side are the rebels, who, despite their attempts to project a "clean" image to the West, are unequivocally jihadist in nature. Once they are done with Damascus, their sights will turn to Al-Aqsa, following the same path as their Sunni Islamist counterparts in Hamas. It is no coincidence that the leader of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, Ahmad Hussein al-Sharaa, is nicknamed "al-Julani," a reference to his connection to the Golan Heights. Someone bearing such a name will not relinquish the area without a fight.



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Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Director

Yaakov was very afraid and he was distressed... (32:8)

When Yaakov hears that his brother, Esav, is approaching with four-hundred men, he becomes afraid. The Midrash (Bereishis Rabba 76:2) explains that despite Yaakov's piety, he still feared that Esav might overcome him because of two merits that Esav possessed but Yaakov lacked. Firstly, for the last twenty-plus years, Esav had been dwelling in the Land of Israel while Yaakov had not. Secondly, while Yaakov was away, Esav had continued to be engaged in honoring his parents, while Yaakov could not be.

Our Sages teach us that Esav was guilty of the worst of sins; Yaakov, on the other hand, was the epitome of piety. Why would Yaakov be concerned over two merits that Esav had, that he did not?

Rav Yaakov Niman (Darchei Mussar) suggests that Yaakov, in this case, was exercising his extreme humility and exemplifying the character trait identified by the Ramban in his famous letter (Iggeres HaRamban) to his son: "In everyone that you meet, find a positive trait that you don't have and then humble yourself before them." A person of elevated character like Yaakov is never satisfied with what they have accomplished; they never become complacent and assume that they've already "made it." Yet, when looking at others, they take note – not of their shortcomings, but of their successes and accomplishments. In his constant pursuit of perfection, Yaakov's attention was immediately drawn to Esav's most positive traits and in Yaakov's humility, led him to question if his own merits could truly outweigh those of Esav. This left him fearful and moved him to take all necessary precautions.

Every person we encounter has something positive for us to learn from. Rather than focusing on the shortcomings of others, if we find those positive traits, it will not only improve our relationships, but also propel us forward in our own personal journey towards perfection.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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Point to Ponder

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

Then he (the angel) said, "Let me go, for dawn has broken." (32:27).

The angel told Yaakov, "I am an angel and from the day I was created until today I have not sung praise to Hashem until this morning" (Chulin 91b).

What prompted the angel to sing praise to Hashem this day? Rav Chaim Volozhiner explained that an angel is not permitted to sing praise to Hashem until he has fulfilled his mission. Since the angel of Esav had fulfilled his task, he was able to sing praise to Hashem.

In truth, the angel lost his struggle with Yaakov (32:29). If so, why is it considered as if he had fulfilled his mission?

How does this parsha help us determine the age for Bar Mitzvah?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

In which two places in this week's parsha do we see the power of prayer?

Answer: 1) Leah davened that she should not marry Esav. 2) Leah davened that her fetus, which was destined to be a boy, should become a girl (although generally speaking, we are not supposed to daven for miracles of this sort). The purpose of her request was in order that Rachel should have two boys.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayishlach* (35:16-20), the Torah relates:

They [Yaakov and his family] journeyed from Beth-el and there was still a stretch of land (*kivras erez*) to go to Ephrath, when Rachel went into labor and had difficulty in her childbirth. ... And Rachel died, and was buried on the road to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. Yaakov set up a monument over her grave; it is the monument of Rachel's grave until today.

The commentaries disagree over the location of Rachel's death and burial. Some understand that the phrase "*kivras erez*" denotes a substantial distance, which implies that Rachel's grave is a substantial distance from Bethlehem, whereas others maintain that the phrase denotes a minimal distance, which implies that the grave is quite close to Bethlehem. This latter group includes Ramban, who retracted his earlier endorsement of the former view upon emigrating to the Land of Israel and observing "with [his] own eyes" that the site of Rachel's Tomb was less than a *mil* (somewhat less than a modern mile) from Bethlehem (Ramban *ibid.*).

There is considerable *halachic* discussion of the permissibility of *kohanim* visiting the graves of the righteous in general, and Rachel's Tomb in particular. While there are some opinions that the graves of the righteous, or at least of certain superlatively righteous individuals, do not convey ritual impurity and thus may be visited by *kohanim* (see *Tosafos Kesubos* 103b. s.v. *Oso ha-Yom*, Ramban *Bamidbar* 19:2), the preponderance of *halachic* authority does not follow this view (see *Tzitz Eliezer* 15:68).

Others have considered whether those who lived before the giving of the Torah, including even the Patriarchs and Matriarchs, have the status of Jews or non-Jews, and while it might seem odd to not consider such illustrious figures to have been Jewish, this technical consideration could potentially serve as grounds for leniency with respect to *kohanim* visiting sites such as Rachel's Tomb and the Cave of the Patriarchs (*Me-aras ha-Machpelah*). Once again, however, the preponderance of *halachic* authority does not accept this leniency (see *Zayis Ra'anan* YD 26).

An additional consideration with respect to Rachel's Tomb in particular is a rumor that the current structure was built in a manner that would permit the entry of *kohanim* therein; a discussion of the details, provenance, and reliability of this claim is beyond the scope of this article (see *Tzitz Eliezer ibid.*).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. We were equal to the "double's" purchase.
2. We caused division.
3. We were the 'Red army'.
4. We instilled fear.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I am not a sin for you rather a...
2. I am a limping prohibition.
3. I was an angelic grip.
4. The sun was my remedy.

Last Week's Answers

#1 The word "Vayifga" (28:11) (I could be meet, I could be pray, I hint to quick travel, I referenced Yaakov's Maariv.)

#2 Leah (I was the older, I was a weeper, I had half, I was soft eyed.)

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