

ב"ה  
**Torah**  
**Tidbits**

ISSUE 1500 JAN 14<sup>TH</sup> '23 כ"א שבח תשפ"ג

**פרשת שמות**

PARSHAT SH'MOT

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Torah Tidbits'  
**1500th**  
Issue!



**ותרא את־התבה**  
**בתוך הסוף ותשלח**  
**את־אמתה ותקחה**  
שמות ב:ה



**The Lessons of Exile**  
**Menachem Persoff**  
Special Projects Consultant,  
OU Israel Center  
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**New Column! Haftorah Insights**  
**Rebbetzin Dr. Adina Shmidman**  
Founding Director Of The Orthodox Union  
Women's Initiative  
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**YERUSHALAYIM IN/OUT TIMES FOR SHABBAT PARSHAT SH'MOT**  
CANDLES 4:20PM • HAVDALA 5:36PM • RABBEINU TAM 6:14PM

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# CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



## OTHER Z'MANIM



### JERUSALEM

Ranges 11 days Wed - Shabbat  
Jan. 11-21 / 8-28 Tevet

Earliest Tallit and Tefillin	<b>5:45 - 5:44</b>
Sunrise	<b>6:40 - 6:38</b>
Sof Zman Kriat Shema	<b>9:13 - 9:14</b>
Magen Avraham	<b>8:35 - 8:36</b>
Sof Zman Tefila	<b>10:04 - 10:06</b>
<small>(According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)</small>	
Chatzot (Halachic Noon)	<b>11:47 - 11:50</b>
Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha)	<b>12:17-12:20</b>
Plag Mincha	<b>3:49-3:57</b>
Sunset (Including Elevation)	<b>4:59-5:07</b>



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CANDLES	SH'MOT	HAVDALA	VA'ERA	
			Candles	Havdala
4:20	Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	5:36	4:26	5:42
4:38	Aza area (Netivot, S'derot, Et al)	5:39	4:45	5:45
4:39	Beit Shemesh / RBS	5:37	4:45	5:43
4:36	Gush Etzion	5:37	4:42	5:43
4:36	Raanana / Tel Mond / Herzliya / K. Saba	5:37	4:42	5:43
4:36	Modi'in / Chashmona'im	5:37	4:42	5:43
4:36	Netanya	5:37	4:42	5:43
4:38	Be'er Sheva	5:39	4:44	5:44
4:37	Rehovot	5:38	4:43	5:43
4:20	Petach Tikva	5:37	4:26	5:43
4:35	Ginot Shomron	5:36	4:41	5:42
4:24	Haifa / Zichron	5:35	4:30	5:41
4:34	Gush Shiloh	5:35	4:41	5:41
4:36	Tel Aviv / Giv'at Shmuel	5:37	4:43	5:43
4:35	Giv'at Ze'ev	5:36	4:46	5:42
4:36	Chevron / Kiryat Arba	5:37	4:42	5:43
4:38	Ashkelon	5:39	4:44	5:45
4:37	Yad Binyamin	5:38	4:43	5:44
4:27	Tzfat / Bik'at HaYarden	5:33	4:33	5:39
4:32	Golan	5:33	4:38	5:39

Rabbeinu Tam (J'lem) - 6:14PM • next week - 6:20pm

Times According to MyZmanim (20 min. before sundown in most cities, 40 min. in Yerushalayim and Petach Tikva, 30 min. in Tzfat/Haifa)



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# DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY



**RABBI AVI BERMAN**  
Executive Director, OU Israel



This Shabbat we will begin reading the book of *Sh'mot* after concluding the book of *Breishit*, during which we learned about the creation of the world, our *Avot*, *Imahot*, and the 12 tribes. An underlying theme throughout the book is, "*Ma'aseh avot siman lebanim*," (the actions of our fathers guide our actions) meaning that the deeds of the *Avot* serve as signs for their descendants. And while we might not find ourselves tested with the schemes of a talking snake, building an ark during troubling times or navigating our way out a pit filled with snakes, the stories of our *Avot* demonstrate how to live as servants of *HaShem*.

However, while stories can be an impactful educational tool, nothing can replace seeing values in practice. While my wife and I thoroughly vet the schools we send our children to, we know that formal classroom education alone will not be sufficient in

imbuing our children with the values we hold dear. Fortunately, both Pnina and I saw the *mitzvah* of *Kibud Av v'Em* (honoring parents) exemplified by our parents, who have continued to serve as role models for our children.

I was *zoche* to grow up with all four sets of grandparents - a *zechut* I didn't fully appreciate until I made *aliyah* and was the only boy in my eighth grade class to have living grandparents on both sides. As part of a multi-generational family, I grew up with parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents, each of whom served as exemplary models of *Kibud Av v'Em*.

I was even fortunate to know my great grandmother who passed away when I turned 10 at the age of 97. My Grandpa's devotion to his mother remains etched in my mind. Despite working long days as a roofer, Grandpa always stopped by his mother's apartment on his way home, bringing her groceries and taking care of anything else she



needed. Of course, the model Grandpa set for his family was upheld by his own children whom I watched honor both him and my Grandma with the utmost respect.

My wife Pnina was blessed to grow up with two grandmothers in her life. One grandmother passed away 20 years ago. The other, Esther (Lisette) Kahn, survived the Holocaust with her sister after being miraculously taken off a transport to Auschwitz. Our children have been *zoche* to know their great grandmother, whom we fondly called Grand maman, and saw their grandparents exemplify the *mitzvah* of *Kibud Av v'Em* - particularly over the last 15 years when Grand Maman moved in with them. Despite the growing difficulty in her battle with Alzheimer's, my children saw the devotion with which their grandparents took care of Grand Maman, and how Pnina and her siblings did the same.

On the sixth night of *Chanukah*, Pnina's grandmother passed away, leaving behind a dignified legacy and flourishing family. 82 years ago Esther Kahn did not know if she would survive the Holocaust. Despite the horrors she faced and the family she lost in the war, Esther lived on to build a modest, meaningful life, and returned to her Maker at 97 years old. She left behind four children, 35 grandchildren, 207 great-grandchildren, and 9 great-great grandchildren. This is a tremendous blessing we do not take for granted. May the merit of our good deeds serve as an *aliyah* to her *neshama*. We miss her terribly.

Beyond the impact Grand Maman had on our family, we were blown away by the people who flooded the *shivah* house to pay their respects to the life she led - both in



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Paris and in Israel. We were also surprised and deeply moved to meet people who lived in Grand Maman's home in Paris, which she had opened up to Jews of all backgrounds once her children moved out of the house.

As Jews, we are taught to value the wisdom and guidance of our elders and must always remember the importance of *Ma'aseh avot siman lebanim*. My wife's family was tremendously fortunate to have five living generations to learn from. I too was fortunate to learn from my grandparents, and great grandmother, and am grateful for the *zechut* I have to continue learning from my parents. As human lifespan extends with the advent of medicine, multi-generational families will become more common, providing us with a beautiful opportunity to learn from the values of our elders.

Whether we ourselves are personally blessed with these role models in our families, we can all learn and respect those

May the Torah learned from this issue of Torah Tidbits be in loving memory of and לעילוי נשמת

My dear husband, our father, grandfather and great grandfather

**HAROLD CHIOTT ז"ל**

**צני בן דוב שלום ז"ל**

On his third Yahrzeit – יח טבת

*Norma Chiott*

*Iris and Shimon Felix and family*

*Irv and Debbie Chiott and family*

*Pammy and Glenn Graber and family*

*Very much missed by family and friends*

תהא נשמתו צרורה בצרור החיים

around us. For our role models, thank you so much. We don't take you for granted and recognize that the way you lead your lives full of value and worth emulating serves as a tremendous model for the younger generations.

May we see the opportunities put before us by the *Borei Olam* (Creator of the world), embrace the values we hold dear and live by them fully. May we be fortunate to build generations steeped in *Torah*, connected to one another and to our beautiful shared heritage.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman

Executive Director, OU Israel

[aberman@ouisrael.org](mailto:aberman@ouisrael.org)



OU Israel's Torah Tidbits  
extends its boundless gratitude to  
**Menachem Persoff**  
for well over a decade of writing  
a weekly Dvar Torah in our pages.

Your wisdom, original insights and inspirational messages brought meaning and joy to countless Shabbat tables and to tens of thousands of Jews throughout the world each week.

We wish you continued bracha and hatzlacha in all your endeavors and Avodat HaKodesh. Your commitment and devotion to OU Israel will be cherished for generations to come.

With love and appreciation,  
The staff of OU Israel's Torah Tidbits



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## FROM THE DESK OF RABBI MOSHE HAUER



OU Executive Vice President

# Representatives of Hashem

At the beginning of the Parsha (1:8), our slavery in Egypt is described as beginning with the rise of a new king over Egypt, “who did not know Yosef.” Later in the Parsha, when Moshe approaches Pharaoh in G-d’s name to ask him to release the Jewish people (5:2), Pharaoh refuses, saying, “I do not know of Hashem.” The Midrash (Shemos Rabba 1:8) bridges these two verses, saying, “Today he does not know Yosef, tomorrow, he will not know Hashem.

The message is clear. Yosef as a person always represented G-d and the G-dly. His initial success in the house of Potiphar came because G-d was visibly with him (Bereishis 39:2, 23). His ascension to the throne was a result of the Egyptians’ realization that they would not find anyone filled with G-d’s spirit quite like him (41:39). And when he governed, he did it as a G-d-fearing person (42:18).

One who knew Yosef, knew G-d.

As time went on in Egypt, we did not represent G-d as well and as consistently as Yosef had. The king that arose observed Yosef’s descendants but did not learn from them and did not see G-dliness in their ways. The king did not know Yosef.

When we, the children of Yosef, live our lives in a manner that represents Hashem properly, we will ensure that through our actions the world around us will come to know G-d. Each of us can and must live up to that standard of true faith, faithfulness, integrity, kindness, and pleasantness that will bring awareness and glory to G-d and fill the world with Kiddush Hashem.

Let each of us make sure that the world that will know us will thus come to know Hashem, allowing Him to liberate us from all the pain and the chaos that surrounds us. כן יהי רצון. ■

לעיני

On this 10th yearzeit of  
**DAVID STAR ז"ל**

Navy veteran, public school teacher,  
became shomer mitzvot, Aliyah in '84  
to Maale Adumim, incredibly proud of  
scores of grandchildren learning Torah  
& in Sherut Leumi & the IDF

and on this 29th yearzeit  
of his first-born

**GLENN ז"ל (1952-1993)**

who through 25 years of serious  
illness was a special-ed teacher  
and beacon of chessed

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the Chupp, Feldbaum, Saracik  
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# SH'MOT

## ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY



**Rabbi Reuven Tradburks**  
Director of  
RCA Israel Region

The Jewish people are in Egypt. A new Paro is concerned with the size of the Jewish people. He decrees hard labor, infanticide and then actively drowning the male babies. Moshe is born, raised in Paro's daughter's home. After seeing the Jews mistreated, he flees to Midian, marries and settles there. At age 80, Moshe encounters the burning bush. G-d instructs him to go to Paro and demand, in G-d's name, to free the Jewish people. Moshe, after attempting to refuse this mission, goes to Paro. Paro increases the burdens. The people complain.

 **1<sup>st</sup> Aliya (1:1-17)** 70 Bnei Yisrael descend to Egypt. They grow exceedingly numerous, filling the land. A new king who knew not Yosef arises. Afraid that the Jews would join with enemies of Egypt, he seeks to weaken their numbers. A labor tax is followed by oppressive labor. Then the midwives are instructed to kill the Jewish babies. The midwives fear G-d and do not heed Paro's directive.

The book of Sh'mot, of Exodus is radically different than Bereshit. Bereshit was the story of people: Avraham, Yitzchak

and Yaakov, Sarah, Rivka, Rachel and Leah. Then Yosef and his brothers. And overlaid to the story of people is the Divine refrain, "I give to you the Land promised to Avraham". It is almost like a song with a chorus; each person is the verse, with the chorus of G-d's promise of the Land repeated. Avraham and his life, with G-d's promise repeated. Yitzchak and his family, with G-d's promise repeated. Yaakov and then the Yosef story, with G-d's promise repeated. In Bereshit the people are center stage, with G-d ever present but of few words; the repeated promise.

In Sh'mot G-d and man switch places. It is the story of Divine control of Jewish destiny. He is the Main Director, the Jewish people the mere stage actors. He no longer lurks, with repeated promises. He acts, dominates, controls, manipulates. He

In memoriam

ברוך דיין האמת



**Muriel (Buchman) Goldman** ז"ל

widow of Louis Goldman ז"ל

London, Hartford CT, USA,  
Ramat Eshkol & Alon Shvut

Passed away, thanks to 'ה, In fullness of years.

*Sadly missed by her children*

*Rika & Zalman Deutsch, Simone & Matthew Simpson  
and Ian & Donna Goldman.*

*Also her grandchildren*

*David & Tzippy Deutsch, Aaron & Ilana Factor,  
Nechama Vairogs, Shoshi & Menachem Tennenboim,  
Meir & Adina Deutsch, Sari & Kobi Stein,*

*Devorah & Elchanan Levi*

*Also her many great-grandchildren.*

בבניין ירושלים ננוחם

*[I want to thank Helen Buenaobra my devoted caregiver who  
I love as a daughter for helping 'ה to keep me going]*

*\* the message above was written by the deceased in advance*

Levaya was on Wednesday Jan 4th

initiates, communicates, commands. Later, at Sinai, He reveals Himself.

But His appearance begins only when we hit bottom.

Paro acts to weaken the Jewish people. Vicious actions, including murder. The midwives fear G-d, refuse to murder. There is no mention of G-d's actions. We have seen this before. G-d's name is absent from the sale of Yosef, as it is here. Spiraling downward we can do on our own. Man does a mighty fine job of cruelty all on his own. G-d appears when we hit bottom.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Aliya (1:18-2:10)** The midwives defend their actions to Paro. Moshe is born, placed in

the water in a basket. Paro's daughter rescues him. Miriam arranges for Moshe's mother to nurse him. He is returned to Paro's daughter and named Moshe.

When Moshe was born his mother "saw that he was good". And he was placed in the water, albeit in a basket. Those 2 elements, water and "it was good", immediately remind us of the first day of creation. In the beginning "the spirit of G-d hovered over the waters" (Genesis 1:2). And when light was created, "G-d saw the light and it was good." Moshe's being placed in the water and his mother "saw that he was good" could be the Torah's way of saying there is a new creation story taking place: with Moshe's birth, a new world dawns for the Jewish people.



**3<sup>rd</sup> Aliya (2:11-25)** Moshe matures. He goes out to see the travails of his brothers. He

defends a Jew by killing his Egyptian aggressor, and then saves a Jew from a Jewish aggressor. He flees for his life to Midian,

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aids Yitro's daughters, is welcomed by Yitro, marries Zipporah, has a child Gershom. "For I am a stranger in a strange land". G-d sees the suffering of the Jews and remembers his covenant with Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov.

Moshe names his son Gershom, for "I am a stranger". Which strange land is he referring to? Being a Jew in Egypt? Or being an Egyptian in Midian? Where is Moshe's home?

The story to this point is the story of people; G-d has yet to appear. In a world without G-d's presence, there are good people and bad people. Paro, evil. Midwives, good. Moshe's parents, brave. Paro's daughter, good. Moshe's sister, altruistic. Egyptian slave master, cruel. Jews struggling, violent. Yitro, welcoming.

And Moshe? Goes out. Concerned. Helps those who need help. Feels angst; a stranger.

G-d appears. His name appears 5 times in 3 verses. Everything changes now. Or perhaps not. All the human activity to this point; has He orchestrated it, or is it people doing what people do? Some good, some not? Or

mere puppets in the Hand of the Puppeteer?



**4<sup>th</sup> Aliya (3:1-15)** Moshe and the burning bush. Moshe, Moshe, Hineni. G-d speaks,

Moshe cowers. G-d tells him: I have seen the suffering of My people. I will save them from Egypt and bring them to the Land of milk and honey. I am sending you to go to Paro and he will release my people from Egypt. Moshe objects: who am I to go to Paro? And the Jewish people will question who sent me. G-d says: tell them the G-d of their forefathers, Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov sent you.

The entire story of the Torah changes here. G-d moves from the unseen force behind human action to directly dictating human activity. He tells Moshe that He will take the Jewish people out of Egypt and bring them to the land of Israel. Up until now, the Jewish people have been promised the Land but have lived only with the promise, not with its fulfillment. They have not seen the Hand of G-d but have rather detected it behind the events. As Yosef said "G-d has brought me to Egypt to save the family." He never heard that. He peered behind the veil and detected it.

Now the veil is drawn. Moshe is told in vivid detail exactly what will transpire. The Jews will be sent out by Paro. The story of the Exodus from Egypt is a pillar of Jewish belief because it is a blatant, direct display of G-d's Hand in our history. It is His Hand in full display, not behind the veil.



**5<sup>th</sup> Aliya (3:16-4:17)** G-d continues: Gather the people. Tell them that I will take them to the

Land. They will listen. Go to Paro. I know he will not listen. I will smite the Egyptians.

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You will be loaded with gold, silver and clothing from the Egyptians. Moshe is still convinced that the people will not believe him. G-d gives him signs: staff turns to snake and then back, hand turns leprous and then back. And water to blood. Moshe objects: I am not a good speaker. G-d says: I give speech to man. I will send Aharon with you. He will speak. Take your staff.

Moshe's reluctance is striking. Avraham did not demur from a pretty rough command to sacrifice his son. Noach didn't either when given a command that would bring derision. Moshe is a very begrudging leader. But that itself is instructive. Moshe is not a man driven by a mission, a great, charismatic leader who leads his people from oppression to freedom, displaying the power of human will in the face of injustice. And after all, he is 80, a rather late start on leading his people.

The charismatic leader leading his being from slavery to freedom would be a great story. But it is not our story. Our story is of the Divine Hand guiding human events through a reluctant leader. This is not Moshe's story. It is the Divine's. And even that great refrain "let my people go" is not Moshe speaking. It is rather "let My people go". It is Moshe quoting G-d to Paro – he is but the messenger.



**6<sup>th</sup> Aliya (4:18-31)**

Moshe gets Yitro's blessing to return to

Egypt. G-d tells Moshe that those seeking his death have died. G-d tells him to tell Paro: G-d says Israel is my first born. Send out



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My son, for if you do not, I will slay your first born. Zippora circumcises her son. Aharon greets Moshe. They gather the people. The people believe that G-d will redeem them.

G-d adds one more thing to Moshe; Israel is My first born. As if to say – “Moshe, this is a story of love. I view the Jewish people as my beloved first born.” And. Refusal by Paro will result in Divine punishment. Our western ethos is uncomfortable with these central principles of Judaism: G-d’s Hand in history, G-d’s love for the Jewish people, and Divine punishment. As Rabbi Sacks, z”l, said; Radical then. Radical now.



7<sup>th</sup> **Aliya (5:1-6:1)** Moshe and Aharon approach Paro, requesting a 3-day journey to the desert to celebrate. Paro refuses. He increases the workload. Conflict arises between the Jewish workers and the Egyptian supervisors. The Jews criticize Moshe for increasing their burden. Moshe complains to G-d. G-d reassures him that through a strong hand, Paro will send them out.

What a great lesson: even when G-d promises, don’t think it is all clear sailing. His promises run smack into the uncomfortable reality of human beings. The plan

for the Jews to leave runs into the reality of Paro and his resistance. Paro derails the plan, at least in part. That is the lesson: man meanders as the Divine plan unfolds, up and down, forward and back. But resistance need not dull the end. The end will come. Maybe later than sooner. But a Promise is a Promise.

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## HAFTARAH SH’MOT

### YESHAYAHU 27:6-28:13; 29:22-23

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This week’s haftorah echoes the reading of this week’s parsha of Sh’mot on a number of levels.

One of the connections to the parsha is the message of redemption which is stated by the prophet Yeshayahu - “and you shall be gathered one by one, O children of Israel.” This sounds very similar to the message of Hashem to Moshe, communicated at the Burning Bush.

Although the haftorah emphasizes the future redemption of Israel, it also spotlights certain admonitions concerning the Jew’s wayward behavior and disloyalty to God.

On a positive note the prophet exclaims: “And it will come to pass on that day that



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a great shofar will be sounded, and those lost in land of Assyria and those exiled in the land of Egypt will come, and they will prostrate themselves before the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.”

The haftarah ends on a soaring note: “Now Jacob will no longer be ashamed, and now his face will not pale. For when he sees his children, the work of my hand, in his midst, who shall sanctify My name... and the God of Israel they will revere.” ■

## STATS

13th of 54 sedras; 1st of 11 in Sh'mot  
 Written on 215.2 lines in a Torah (18th)  
 7 parshiot; 6 open, 1 closed  
 124 p'sukim - 15th (tied with Emor)  
 1763 words - 14th (Emor: 22nd)  
 6762 letters - 16th (Emor: 23rd)  
 2nd in Sh'mot in those three categories

## MITZVOT

No mitzvot are counted from Sh'mot. One of 17 sedras without mitzvot.



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## A SHORT VORT | BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES

Rav, Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

In this week's parsha we learn about certain episodes in Moshe's early life before the Exodus. From all that is described in the text, we are told 3 circumstances that took place.

- 1/ "And he saw an Egyptian man smiting a Hebrew man ..and he smote the Egyptian (2:11,12)
- 2/ "And he said to the wicked one: why do you smite your fellow?" (2:13)
- 3/ " And the shepherds came and drove them away; but Moshe stood up and he helped them, and he watered their flock." (2:17)

Why must we learn of these three different interventions?

Rabbi Avraham Sabah (1440-1508 Spain during Expulsion) claims that in these three instances we see Moshe intervening to stop injustice to prove a CHAZAKAH – a "tenure" of always stopping exploitation and therefore truly worthy to become our leader.

The Yalkut Shimoni is quoted that the three cases are necessary to illustrate Moshe's character. The first instance Moshe reacts saving a fellow Israelite. One would think Moshe only protects a Jew from a non-Jew. The second instance Moshe reacts between two Jews. Perhaps, Moshe gets involved when a Jew is involved. Finally, we are told that even in a case of two non-Jews fighting, Moshe still intercedes to protect from abuse. This is our Moshe Rabbeinu. Shabbat Shalom



THE PERSON

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IN THE PARSHA

## Spiritual Time Management

The two old men couldn't have been more different from each other. Yet they both taught me the identical life lesson.

The first, a cagey old Irishman, was one of my mentors in the postgraduate psychotherapy training program in which I was enrolled many years ago. He wrote quite a few books in his day, but they are all out of print now and nearly forgotten, like so many other wise writings

The other was an aged Rabbi, several of whose Yiddish discourses I was privileged to hear in person. He was moderately famous in his lifetime, but is much more well-known nowadays because of the popularity of his posthumously published writings.

The lesson was about the importance of time management. Neither of these two elderly gentlemen used that term, which is of relatively recent coinage. Yet their words, while far fewer than the words of the numerous contemporary popular books on the subject of time management, made a lifelong impression upon me.

It was long after my encounter with these elderly gentlemen that I first realized that their lesson was implicit in a verse in this week's Torah portion, *Parshat Shemot*.

The Irishman, we'll call him Dr. McHugh, was a master psychotherapist with fifty years of experience under his belt. A small group of us gathered in his office every Tuesday evening. We went there not only for his wisdom, but for the warm and comfortable furnishings and splendid view of the city of Washington, D.C.

Dr. McHugh was an existentialist philosophically. He was heavily influenced by his encounters with Martin Buber, and because of this, he felt a special affinity to me, thinking that since Buber and I were both Jewish, we must have had much in common. He wasn't aware that my Judaism was very different from Buber's, but I wasn't about to disabuse him of his assumption.

He was a diligent and persistent teacher and, true to his philosophical perspective, doggedly encouraged us to appreciate the human core of the patients we were treating. He was convinced that he had a foolproof method of comprehending that

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human core. “Tell me how the patient uses his time, how he organizes his daily schedule, and I will tell you the secret foundation of his soul.”

Dr. McHugh firmly believed that you knew all you needed to know about a person if you knew how he used his time. Or, as he put it, “if *he* used his time, and how *he* used it.” He would then make his lesson more personal, and would ask, carefully making eye contact with each of us, “How do *you* busy yourself?”

In the summer following that post-graduate course, I took advantage of the rare opportunity of hearing the ethical discourses, the *mussar shmuessen*, of the revered Rabbi Elya Lopian. He too spoke of the fundamental importance of one’s use of time, and he too, though he did not even know the term, was quite an existentialist.

“A man who goes through life without taking the time to consider his ways is like a blind man who walks along the edge of a river...”

He began his remarks quietly, almost in a whisper. Gradually his voice reached its crescendo, and when it did, he uttered the words I will never forget: “*Der velt sagt*,” he said in Yiddish, “the world says that time is money. But I say time is life!” I was a young man then, but not too young to appreciate the profound meaningfulness of that simple statement. Time is life.

He went on to say that we all allow ourselves to become busy, and busyness

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detracts from life.

It was quite a few years later that it dawned upon me that the Irish psychiatrist and the Jewish spiritual guide were preceded in their teaching by the 18<sup>th</sup> century ethicist and mystic, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato, known by the initials of his name as the Ramchal. Furthermore, the Ramchal was preceded in antiquity by none other than the Pharaoh himself.

In the second chapter of his widely studied ethical treatise, *Mesillat Yesharim, Path of the Upright*, Ramchal writes of the tactics of the *yetzer*, the personification of the evil urge which is buried within each of us:

“A man who goes through life without taking the time to consider his ways is like a blind man who walks along the edge of a river... This is, in fact, one of the cunning strategies of the evil *yetzer*, who always imposes upon men such strenuous tasks that they have no time left to note whether they are drifting. For he knows that, if they would pay the least attention to their conduct, they would change their ways instantly...

“This ingenuity is somewhat like that of Pharaoh, who commanded, ‘Let the heavier work be laid upon the men, that they may labor therein, and let them not regard lying

words’ (*Exodus* 5:9). For Pharaoh’s purpose was not only to prevent the Israelites from having any leisure to make plans or take counsel against him, but by subjecting them to unceasing toil, to deprive them also of the opportunity to reflect.”

To become so busy and have no time to reflect, no time to really live, is bondage. Ramchal’s insight into Pharaoh’s scheme epitomizes the essential nature of our years of exile in Egypt. To have no time, that is slavery.

How prescient were the words of Rav Elya Lopian. Time is life. And how germane is his teaching for contemporary man, who despite the “time-saving” technological devices which surround him is even busier than those who came before him. Contemporary man has no time for himself, certainly no quality time, and thus no life.

Time is life.

Millennia ago, an Egyptian tyrant knew this secret.

Centuries ago, an Italian Jewish mystic was keenly aware of it.

Decades ago, I learned it from a Gentile existentialist psychiatrist and a gentle and pious rabbi.

It is the secret of spiritual time management, and it is the secret of life. ■

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## Turning Curses into Blessings

Genesis ends on an almost serene note. Jacob has found his long-lost son. The family has been reunited. Joseph has forgiven his brothers. Under his protection and influence the family has settled in Goshen, one of the most prosperous regions of Egypt. They now have homes, property, food, the protection of Joseph, and the favour of Pharaoh. It must have seemed one of the golden moments of Abraham's family's history.

Then, as has happened so often since, "There arose a new Pharaoh who did not know Joseph" (Ex. 1:8). There was a political climate change. The family fell out of favour. Pharaoh told his advisers: "Look, the Israelite people are becoming too numerous and strong for us"<sup>1</sup> – the first

<sup>1</sup> Ex. 1:9. This is the first intimation in history of what in modern times took the

time the word "people" is used in the Torah with reference to the Children of Israel. "Let us deal shrewdly with them, so that they may not increase" (Ex. 1:9–10). And so the whole mechanism of oppression moves into operation: forced labour that turns into slavery that becomes attempted genocide.

The story is engraved in our memory. We tell it every year, and in summary form in our prayers, every day. It is part of what it is to be a Jew. Yet there is one phrase that shines out from the narrative: "*But the more they were oppressed, the more they increased and the more they spread.*" That, no less than oppression itself, is part of what it means to be a Jew. The worse things get, the stronger we become. Jews are the people who not only survive but thrive in adversity.

Jewish history is not merely a story of Jews enduring catastrophes that might have spelled the end to less tenacious groups. It is that after every disaster, Jews renewed

---

*form of the Russian forgery, The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. In the Diaspora, Jews – powerless – were often seen as all-powerful. What this usually means, when translated, is: How is it that Jews manage to evade the pariah status we have assigned to them?*

themselves. They discovered some hitherto hidden reservoir of spirit that fuelled new forms of collective self-expression as the carriers of God's message to the world.

Every tragedy begat new creativity. After the division of the kingdom following the death of Solomon came the great literary prophets, Amos and Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Out of the destruction of the First Temple and the Babylonian exile came the renewal of Torah in the life of the nation, beginning with Ezekiel and culminating in the vast educational programme brought back to Israel by Ezra and Nehemiah. From the destruction of the Second Temple came the immense literature of Rabbinic Judaism, until then preserved mostly in the form of an oral tradition: Mishnah, Midrash, and Gemara.

From the Crusades came the Hassidei Ashkenaz, the North European school of piety and spirituality. Following the Spanish Expulsion came the mystic circle of Safed: Lurianic Kabbala and all it inspired by way of poetry and prayer. From East European persecution and poverty came the hassidic movement and its revival of grass-roots Judaism through a seemingly endless flow of story and song. And from the worst tragedy of all in human terms, the Holocaust, came the rebirth of the State of Israel, the greatest collective Jewish affirmation of life in more than two thousand years.

It is well known that the Chinese ideogram for "crisis" also means "opportunity." Any civilization that can see the blessing within the curse, the fragment of light within the heart of darkness, has within it the capacity to endure. Hebrew goes one

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better. The word for crisis, *mashber*, also means “a child-birth chair.” Written into the semantics of Jewish consciousness is the idea that the pain of hard times is a collective form of the contractions of a woman giving birth. Something new is being born. That is the mindset of a people of whom it can be said that “the more they were oppressed, the more they increased and the more they spread.”

Where did it come from, this Jewish ability to turn weakness into strength, adversity into advantage, darkness into light? It goes back to the moment in which our people received its name, Israel. It was then, as Jacob wrestled alone at night with an angel, that as dawn broke his adversary begged him to let him go. “I will not let you go until you bless me,” said Jacob (Gen. 32:26). That is the source of our peculiar, distinctive obstinacy. We may have fought all night. We may be tired and on the brink of exhaustion. We may find ourselves limping, as did Jacob. Yet we will not let our adversary go until we have extracted a blessing from the encounter. This turned out to be not a minor and temporary concession. It became the basis of his new name and our identity. Israel, the people who “wrestled with God and man and prevailed” (Gen. 32:28), is the nation that grows stronger with each conflict and catastrophe.

I was reminded of this unusual national characteristic by an article that appeared in the British press in October 2015. Israel at the time was suffering from a wave of terrorist attacks that saw Palestinians murdering innocent civilians in streets and bus stations throughout the country.

It began with these words: “Israel is an astonishing country, buzzing with energy and confidence, a magnet for talent and investment – a cauldron of innovation.” It spoke of its world-class excellence in aerospace, clean-tech, irrigation systems, software, cyber-security, pharmaceuticals, and defence systems.<sup>2</sup>

“All this,” the writer went on to say, “derives from brainpower, for Israel has no natural resources and is surrounded by hostile neighbours.” The country is living proof of “the power of technical education, immigration, and the benefits of the right sort of military service.” Yet this cannot be all, since Jews have consistently overachieved, wherever they were and whenever they were given the chance. He goes through the various suggested explanations: the strength of Jewish families, their passion for education, a desire for self-employment, risk-taking as a way of life, and even ancient history. The Levant was home to the world’s first agricultural societies and earliest traders. Perhaps, then, the disposition to enterprise was written, thousands of years ago, into Jewish DNA. Ultimately, though, he concludes that it has to do with “culture and communities.”

A key element of that culture has to do with the Jewish response to crisis. To every adverse circumstance, those who have inherited Jacob’s sensibilities insist: “I will not let you go until you bless me.” That is how Jews, encountering the Negev, found

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<sup>2</sup> Luke Johnson, ‘Animal Spirits: Israel and its tribe of risk-taking entrepreneurs,’ *Sunday Times*, 4 October 2015.



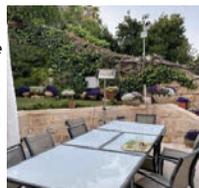
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ways of making the desert bloom. Seeing a barren, neglected landscape elsewhere, they planted trees and forests. Faced with hostile armies on all their borders, they developed military technologies they then turned to peaceful use. War and terror forced them to develop medical expertise and world-leading skills in dealing with the aftermath of trauma. They found ways of turning every curse into a blessing. The historian Paul Johnson, as always, put it eloquently:

Over 4,000 years the Jews proved themselves not only great survivors but extraordinarily skilful in adapting to the societies among which fate had thrust them, and in gathering whatever human comforts they had to offer. No people has been more fertile in enriching poverty or humanising wealth, or in turning misfortune to creative account.<sup>3</sup>

There is something profoundly spiritual as well as robustly practical about this ability to transform the bad moments of life into a spur to creativity. It is as if, deep within us, a voice was saying, “You are in this situation, bad though it is, because

<sup>3</sup> Paul Johnson, *The History of the Jews*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987, p. 58

there is a task to perform, a skill to acquire, a strength to develop, a lesson to learn, an evil to redeem, a shard of light to be rescued, a blessing to be uncovered, for I have chosen you to give testimony to humankind that out of suffering can come great blessings if you wrestle with it for long enough and with unshakeable faith.”

In an age in which people of violence are committing acts of brutality in the name of the God of compassion, the people of Israel are proving daily that this is not the way of the God of Abraham, the God of life and the sanctity of life. And whenever we who are a part of that people lose heart, and wonder when it will ever end, we should recall the words: “The more they were oppressed, the more they increased and the more they spread.” A people of whom that can be said can be injured, but can never be defeated. God’s way is the way of life. ■

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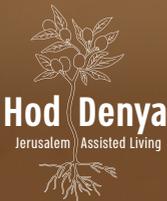
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Over these years, I have endeavored to uncover the less obvious messages and themes found in the haftarah reading and, by doing so, reveal more subtle connections between the parasha and its haftarah. There are times, however, that simply understanding the text itself can be the most challenging task. That is certainly true of this week's haftarah.

Attempting to understand what the navi Yishayahu was trying to relate to the people in the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> prakim (setting aside the last two p'sukim that are taken from chapter 29), is a rather difficult undertaking. Even the opening words are hard to comprehend. The first pasuk reads as follows (translation by Rabbi A.J. Rosenberg of the Judaica Press):

*"Those who came, whom Jacob caused to take root, Israel flourished and blossomed, and they filled the face of the world with fruitage."*

Yes. A most difficult challenge.

And so, we will try to find the meaning of these verses, based primarily upon the approach of Rav S.R. Hirsch and, hopefully, uncover the message that the navi shared with Israel.

The haftarah, which begins in the middle of the 27<sup>th</sup> perek of Sefer Yishayahu and continues into the 28<sup>th</sup> chapter (before its closing message from the 29<sup>th</sup> perek) delivers Hashem's message to the suffering Israel. In its opening section (perek 27) the navi explains how the punishments that the nation received were, in reality, a path to their return and growth. The opening verse that appears so difficult to comprehend, is actually a promise to Ya'akov that she would recover from Hashem's chastisements, telling the people that, in the future, Jacob would take root and blossom, filling the world with her "fruits". The navi points out that Israel's punishments of exile and oppression were less harsh than those visited upon her enemies, whom G-d had completely destroyed. Yishayahu goes on to comfort the nation by explaining that their suffering would atone for their sins.

It is, perhaps, this very message that our Rabbis saw as a connection to the parasha, where we read of Israel's bondage in Egypt, a suffering would lead to their entry into the Promised Land. In fact, that connection is made clear in the final verses of the 27<sup>th</sup> perek which depicts the future gathering

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of the exiles from the Diaspora and their return to the land.

The second part of the haftarah, the first 13 p'sukim of the 28<sup>th</sup> perek, is a section of contrast. Rather than continue on the previous theme of comfort and hope, this section opens with condemnation, censuring the sinful northern kingdom of Ephrayim and predicting its downfall. Continuing that same theme, the navi also denounces the southern kingdom for their sinful ways and argues that their infantile understanding of Hashem, viewing the Torah as a simple list of one command following another and, therefore, failing to see the mission of the Jew makes it impossible to properly educate the people in the ways of G-d.

I would surmise, that Rav Hirsch saw in this depiction of the sinful nation, a nation condemned by Yishayahu, as being similar to the ancient Israelites who, while enslaved in Egypt - and even during their early years in the desert - were unable to fully believe in G-d or completely understand Hashem and His commandments.

This approach would certainly help us understand why our Rabbis chose to end the haftarah with the comforting words in the following perek, words of reassurance, telling Israel that, just as they overcame the doubts of their early years and, trusting in G-d, erased the shame of their past and marched triumphantly into their land –so too would the Israel of the future erase the shame of their exile and, trusting in G-d, would return triumphantly to their land.

And, hopefully, we too may soon see that. ■

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# Leadership and Humility

In this week's parsha we are introduced to Moshe Rabbeinu, of whom we are told: לא קם בישראל כמשה עוד – *no one ever reached Moshe's stature*. Aside from being a great leader, we are told in Parshat Beha'alotcha: *This man Moshe was exceedingly humble, more so than any person on the face of the earth.* (Bamidbar 13:3). At Moshe's first encounter with Hashem we witness his modesty. In Parshat Shemot when God first appears to Moshe, out of humility Moshe covers his face (וַיִּסְתֵּר מֹשֶׁה פָּנָיו שְׁמוֹת ג':ו).

There is a dispute in the gemara (Berachot 7) whether Moshe's reaction of covering his face was commendable. According to Rav Yehoshua Ben Karcha Moshe was later punished for his reaction. When Moshe requests to understand God's ways (Shemot 33:13) Hashem declines and states when I appeared to you, you covered your face, now that you want to see me, I will cover my face – וּפְנֵי לֹא יִרְאוּ (Shemot 33:23). Rav Shmuel Bar Nachmani argues that Moshe's reaction is praiseworthy, and he was rewarded by Hashem revealing

himself to Moshe in a manner that no other profit merited. פה אל פה אדבר בו (Shemot 12:8).

We can derive an important lesson from this dispute. Although it is important to be humble, there is a time when one ought to step up to a challenge and refrain from unjustifiable humility. Perhaps Moshe quickly internalized this message as well. Although he felt he was not worthy of leading the Jewish people, after Hashem convinced him to accept the task, he did so wholeheartedly. Moshe confronted Pharaoh with confidence and conviction. Although he thought little of himself, when it came to representing the Jewish nation, he stood with prowess and pride.

**Once in that position, one should constantly evaluate whether they are acting for the good of the people they are representing or out of any self-motivation**

Some interpret a humble individual as someone who is quiet, unassuming and someone who minds his own business. Moshe proves his thesis false! One can be modest and very much involved, and in fact even serve in a leadership position.

רפואה שלמה  
יעקב מאיר בן לבנה

Humility is perhaps defined not by the feeling of self-worth but rather by the **impetus** of one's action. Moshe acted out of humility because his motivation was solely for the benefit of the nation, and not for any personal gain or recognition.

At times people decline offers to serve as leaders of Jewish institutions, claiming that they are not worthy or qualified to serve in such prestigious positions. As with Moshe Rabbeinu, one should carefully contemplate whether they are fit to serve in such a capacity and if they indeed are the most suitable to fill such a position, they should accept the offer in a respectful manner. Once in that position, one should constantly evaluate whether they are acting for the good of the people they are representing or out of any self-motivation.

May all our leaders, in the political, religious and communal realm act with true humility without any selfish agenda or personal gain. May all those capable of serving in that manner step up to the plate with the proper humility and use their God given talents to serve Hashem and the community. As we recite each Shabbat during teffilat Musaf באמונה הקב"ה וכל העוסקים בצרכי צבור – All who engage in communal activity, will be rewarded by the Almighty. ■

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## Names of Nobility

The beginning of *Sefer Shemot* is quite perplexing. The Torah lists the names of Yaakov Avinu's children of who accompanied him down to Egypt, information that we already know from *Sefer Bereisheet* 46:8-26. What is the significance of recounting the names once again? Further, why is the entire second book of Torah titled *Shemot*, referencing **names**?

Rav Munk offers an explanation based on the well-known Midrash which teaches that the Jewish people merited redemption since they maintained their Hebrew names. A name is not merely a technical detail to distinguish one person from another. A name reflects one's essence and serves as a connection between an individual and Hashem. Rav Pincus notes that a boy is named at his *brit*, a covenant between the child and Hashem. Similarly, a girl is traditionally named after her father

gets an *aliyah* to the Torah, also called "*Sefer Habrit*." Here too, this deep connection between the child and Hashem is reflected in her naming.

A finer look at the story of the two Hebrew midwives gives us a deeper insight into the power of a name as a means of spiritual connection. Rabbi Brazil in *Bishvili Nivra Haolam*, posits that Paroh insisted that the midwives be called by Egyptian names. He hoped that having an arbitrary identification would allow them to look at themselves, as well as the infants they delivered, as random numbers, not as individuals with meaning and purpose. Paroh calculated that this attitude would enable the midwives to kill the babies as they were born since they would relate to the babies as dispensable and meaningless. A Jew, however, is always a name and never a number. The Torah begins listing the names of the *Shevatim* before mentioning how many they were, highlighted this

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integral element of Jewish identity. Rabbi Brazil adds that connecting to the spiritual essence of one's name protects him or her from outside influences. Thus, we have *Sefer Shemot*. The book of redemption is predicated on faith and loyalty to the power and implication of a name.

It is noted in Midrash Rabbah, that the names of the *Shevatim* foreshadowed the process of redemption. For example, the name Shimon reflected, "Hashem heard their cries." (*Shemot* 2;24) Listing the names of the *Shevatim*, says Rav Elyashiv, echoes the people's hope and faith that they would be redeemed. Preserving their Jewish names, then, demonstrated their firm belief in the power of those names, the deeper belief in their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, that they were forever bound to the Guardian of Israel.

Names have multiple meanings that allow every individual to draw out their different strengths depending on the situation. Rav Gifter in *Pirkei Torah* uses this concept to explain the repetition of Yaakov's family at the end of *Sefer Bereisheet* and the beginning of *Sefer Shemot*. The list in *Bereisheet* were the names of the *Shevatim* as they thrived in Eretz Yisrael. Recording their names once again in *Shemot* illustrates that they developed singular, extraordinary strengths that allowed them to survive in galut as well.

Each of us is challenged to develop ourselves through the various circumstances that we face in life, continually drawing out deeper aspects of self. When we continually grow and develop, we find that we can access redemption. ■

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## Firgun

From its humble beginnings in the shtetl of Mir, Belarus, to fleeing to Shanghai and relocating in Yerushalayim — for more than 200 years — the Mirrer Yeshivah has been a center of Torah learning and personal development. A scion of the Mirrer Yeshivah leadership, Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, *zt'l*, had arrived there as a teenager from Chicago. After thirty years of learning, he finally assumed the position of Rosh Yeshivah in 1990. He was an unparalleled *masmid* and showed almost superhuman resilience and determination in learning and spreading Torah, even while facing the challenges of severe Parkinson's disease for much of his adult life.

Through his efforts, guidance and care the Yeshivah grew five times larger, becoming the largest center of Torah in the world. Today, a visitor to the Yeshivah will be met by the roar of thousands of voices of learning, recital and holy debate, like an enormous lion of fierce spiritual power. In addition to teaching and maintaining personal relationships with countless talmidim, the Rosh Yeshivah shouldered the financial responsibility of the entire enterprise, and became one of the greatest builders of Torah and Yidishkeit in modern Jewish history.

Once, while at a wedding of a talmid at a hotel in Bayit Vegan, Jerusalem, Rav Nosson



Tzvi heard that the hotel's rooftop lounge offered a sweeping view of the entire city. Excitedly, he asked to go upstairs and take a look. Although in his advanced stages of Parkinson's disease, each and every step was a challenge, he threw incredible effort into walking, and after much time he arrived exhausted at the elevator. As he rested, a student accompanying the Rosh Yeshivah sought to understand his Rebbe's intent: since when was he so interested in the view?

Smiling ear to ear, Rav Nosson Tzvi explained, "Didn't you hear? Yeshivas Knesset Yisrael, 'the Chevron Yeshivah', is expanding their campus in Givat Mordechai! I've been davening for its successful completion for so long. I want to see their progress!"

At the time, Rav Nosson Tzvi was wrestling with heavy debt from his own ambitious building projects and expansions — on top of the overwhelming financial burden of the many Mirrer institutions. Yet, he rejoiced triumphantly at the sight of another yeshivah's success.

After the tragic fratricide story of Kayin Hevel, *Sefer Bereishis* goes on to detail the

heart-wrenching conflicts between Yishmael and Yitzchak, Eisav and Yaakov, and Yosef and his brothers. Only after leading us through these painful, adversarial and dysfunctional sibling rivalries, the Torah brings us to *Sefer Shemos*, the account of our redemption. Here begins the account of *tikun*, the antidote to all those negative patterns and broken family relationships.

In our *sedra*, as Moshe ascends to the leadership of Am Yisrael, he feels uncomfortable; perhaps his older brother, Aharon, would feel slighted. But the *Ribbono shel Olam* assured Moshe that he need not be concerned:

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי אֲדֹנָי שְׁלַח נָא בְיָד־תַּשְׁלַח:

But he said, “Please, My God, send through whomever You will send...make someone else Your agent...”

וַיִּחַר־אֵפָי ה' בְּמֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא אָהֳרֹן אָחִיךָ הֲלֹי יִדְבְּעֵנִי כִּי־יִבָּר וַיִּבָּר הוּא וְגַם הִנֵּה־הוּא יֵצֵא לְקִרְיַתְךָ וְרָאָךְ וְשָׂמַח בְּלָבֹב:

Hashem became angry with Moshe and said, “There is your brother Aharon...He, I know, speaks readily. Even now he is setting out to meet you, **and he will be happy to see you.**”

(*Shemos*, 4:13-14)

A literal translation of the last phrase is “He will see you, and rejoice in his heart.” Rashi confirms that Aharon was genuinely happy for his brother, and celebrated his success. *Midrash Rabba* says, *הוּוּ* “They would both rejoice in one another’s greatness (achievements).”

Together, Moshe and Aharon are role models of brothers who complement one another and work together. They had the admirable *midah* of *firgun* — a trait of

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genuine, unselfish delight and pride in the accomplishments of the other.

הִנֵּה מִה־טוֹב וּמִה־נְעִים שָׁבַת אֲחִים גַּם יָחַד

“Look, how ‘good’ and how ‘pleasant’ it is when brothers dwell in unity!”

(*Tehillim*, 133)

Here, טוב, “good”, refers to Moshe, as when he was born, his mother “saw that he was good.” Likewise, נְעִים, “pleasant”, refers to Aharon, who reconciled alienated spouses and friends. As the *Kohein*, Aharon blessed all with *Shalom*, leaving a trail of pleasantness wherever he went.

Moshe wished for his older brother Aharon to lead, while Aharon deferred to his younger brother, Moshe. They covered for one another and wished one another success. Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai reveals that in merit of Aharon’s *firgun*, rejoicing over his brother’s achievements, he

merited to wear the *Urim v’Tumim*, the breastplate of the Kohein Gadol: הלב שמחה בגדולת אחיו יבוא וישמח, ‘The heart that rejoiced over the greatness of his brother was given the joy of being adorned with the breastplate upon which was inscribed the names of all of Am Yisrael.’

It is no mistake that our Redemption from Egypt manifested through two brothers who worked together in harmony. They had different roles but they considered each other equals, not competitors. And this is a lesson for us as well: when we are confident in ourselves and comfortable with our role in the world, we can be *m’far-gein*, happy that our brothers and friends are successful. Rambam, in *Sefer haMitzvos* (206), defines *firgun* as a core Jewish value: “Whatever I wish for myself, I should wish the same for that person.”

Reb Yerucham Levovitz in *Da’as Chochmah u’Mussar*, notes that the greatest among us can be swept up in jealousy and stink-eye. Indeed, how challenging it is to not become ensnared in some subtle form of rivalry, and to fully and sincerely rejoice in one another’s success. But this points to the exalted level of Aharon and why he is one of the most beloved holymen in our history.

May we be elevated above the perception of inner lack which drives jealousy and competitiveness, and may we climb to see the awesome panoramic view of the ‘goodness’ and ‘pleasantness’ of our people. May we celebrate one another’s achievements and successes, and in this way wear the ‘breastplate of Aharon’, inscribed with the name of every Jew, upon our hearts. ■



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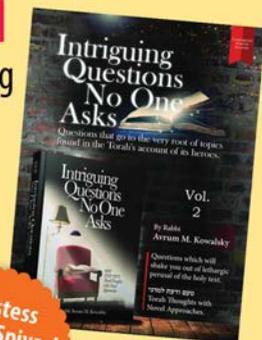
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**WEDNESDAY, JAN. 18, 8:00PM**

OU Israel Center, 22 Keren Hayesod Street  
Rav Schachter will offer insights about  
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MONDAYS, STARTING JAN. 16, 8:00PM

Choose your Track:



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1/16-2/27



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**Rebbetzin Ilana Milevsky, M.S.**

1/16-3/27

Register at: [www.ouisrael.org/atid-chaburas](http://www.ouisrael.org/atid-chaburas)

Soup will be served!

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## Women's TANACH TIYULIM



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For more info and to register:  
[Ou.org/women/nach23](http://Ou.org/women/nach23)

**STREET PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR** Jan 20  
**FULL DAY TANACH TOUR** Jan 23

# SAVE THE DATE

ROSH CHODESH SHEVAT WOMEN'S LEARNING SEMINAR



Wednesday Jan. 25, 3 Shevat, 9:15AM - 1:00PM

In loving memory of Mrs. Linda Pruwer-Brachfeld a"h

מרת חיה סאשא בת ר' יוסף הלל

For full schedule and to register:

[www.ouisrael.org/shevat2023](http://www.ouisrael.org/shevat2023)



Cost:  
40nis

Please note that this  
is an on-site event

Brunch will  
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OU Israel L'Ayla presents the:

# YOUNG MOTHERS' CLUB!



SUN. JAN 29, 9:30AM-12:45PM



- 9:30 Coffee and Refreshments
- 9:40 Parsha and Parenting **Rebbetzin Zemira Ozarowski**
- 10:00 Musical Mommy-and-Me with **Liya Lewis**
- 10:45 Nurturing your Marriage as you Nurture your Children  
**Rebbetzin Rachel Rudman**
- 11:45 Art Studio with **Adena Yonit**

On-site babysitting included

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Soup will be served!

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OU Israel's The Bais,  
In memory of Mrs. Charlotte Brachfeld a'h presents:

## THURSDAY NIGHT MISHMAR FOR MEN FEATURING

THURSDAY, JAN. 26, 8:00PM

**Rabbi Dovid Schoonmaker,**  
Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Darchei Noam/Shapell's

### Shiur topic:

Retaining Your Learning,  
Opportunity to purchase Rabbi Schoonmaker's new book:  
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## Are We on the Same Page?

A Dialogue Exploring the Relationship Between North American Jewry & Israel



SUNDAY, JAN. 22, 8:00PM



**Rabbi Moshe Hauer,**

Executive Vice President, Orthodox Union  
in Conversation with



**Rabbi Shai Finklestein,**

Mara D'Atra of Kehilat Nitzanim, Yerushalayim

Moderated by Stuart Hershkowitz, President of OU Israel

Bet Knesset Nitzanim, 3 Asher Street, Baka, Yerushalayim

Light  
refreshments  
will be served

OU ISRAEL | WWW.OUISRAEL.ORG

# INSPIRATIONAL TORAH LEARNING AT OU ISRAEL

SUN, JAN 15

**9:15 AM**

Journey Through the  
Siddur **Rabbi David  
Walk**

**10:20AM**

Mishnah with Rambam's  
commentary  
**Rabbi Dr. Aaron Adler**

**11:30 AM**

Shivat Tzion in Tanach:  
Daniel, Ezra, Nechemia  
**Rabbi Yitzchak  
Breitowitz**

**2:00 PM**

Men's Talmud-Mesechta –  
Bava Basra  
**Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld**

**7:30-9:30PM**

Hashkafa & Gemara in  
Depth (The Bais) with  
**Rabbi Azarya Berzon**

**SPECIAL EVENT**

**7:00 PM**

Keshet Senior Singles  
Lecture with Rabbi Avrum  
Kowalsky

MON, JAN 16

**9:15 AM**

Divre Hayamim  
**Rebbetzin Pearl  
Borow (L'Ayla)**

**10:30 AM**

The Thought of Rav  
Kook on Eretz Yisrael: A  
study of the sefer Eretz  
Chefetz  
**Rabbi Aaron  
Goldscheider**

**8:30 PM**

Semichat Chaver  
Program **Rabbi  
Elyada Goldwicht**  
(The Bais)

**SPECIAL EVENT**

**8:00PM**

Atid  
(single Olot ages 18-30)  
Chabura Night

TUE, JAN 17

**9:15 AM**

**Rebbetzin Smiles**  
Torah Tapestries (L'Ayla)

**9:30AM**

Minchat Chinuch-Meaning  
in Mitzvot **Rabbi Yitzchak  
Breitowitz**

**10:30AM**

Parshat HaShavua  
**Rabbi Shmuel Goldin**

**12:15 PM**

Jewish National Revival:  
The Infant State Matures  
**Dr. Deborah Polster**

**2:00 PM**

Men's Talmud-Mesechta – Bava  
Basra **Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld**

**7:30PM (The Bais)**

Men's Safrus course with  
**Rabbi Tzvi Maurer**

**8:00PM**

Sefer Shmuel **Rabbi  
Mordechai Machlis**

**THE BAIS CLASSES  
AND PROGRAMS ARE  
FOR MEN ONLY**

**Schedule Subject to change, please check website for updates**  
[ouisrael.org/events/](http://ouisrael.org/events/)

WED, JAN 18

9:00 AM

Medina and Halacha  
**Rabbi Shimshon Nadel**

10:15 AM

Contemporary Halachic  
Issues **Rabbi Anthony  
Manning**

11:30 AM

Great Jewish Thinkers  
**Rabbi Alan Kimche**12:30 PM- Trailblazing the  
Text of Tanach- Lunch and  
Learn **Rabbi Neil Winkler**

8:30 PM

Halachic Controversies  
**Rabbi Aschi Dick** (The Bais)  
(Resumes Jan. 25)

SPECIAL EVENT

8:00PM

Special Guest Shiur with  
HaRav Herschel Schachter

SPECIAL EVENT

8:00PM

Atid (single Olot ages  
18-30) Parsha Plus

THURS, JAN 19

9:00 AM

Parshat HaShavua  
**Rabbi Ari Kahn**

10:15 am

Parshat HaShavua  
**Rabbi Baruch Taub**

11:30 AM

Unlocking the Messages  
of Chazal  
**Rabbi Shai  
Finkelstein**

2:00 PM

Men's Talmud-Mesechta –  
Bava Basra  
**Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld**\*L'AYLA CLASSES  
ARE FOR WOMEN ONLY

## VIRTUAL SCHEDULE

(Zoom Only Classes):  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88363420460>  
Password: OU Israel**Rabbi Taub**Parsha, 7:00PM Mon  
Halacha, 7:00PM Wed**Rebbetzin Shatz**(L'Ayla)-Insights of  
Chazal- Tues, 5:00PM**Rabbi Goldwicht**Parshat HaShavua  
Wed. 8:30PM  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2244321902>  
Password 18

FRI, JAN 20

SPECIAL EVENT

8:45AM

L'Ayla- Tanach in Focus-  
Street Photography  
Walking Tour**MISSED A CLASS?**View shiur recordings at: [ouisrael.org/video-library/](https://ouisrael.org/video-library/)



# ALL'S QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT:

A full day Tiyul with Guide Eitan Morell

THURSDAY JAN.26, 8:45AM-5:00PM



Jews throughout history have struggled with Western culture. On this tour we will visit two important ancient cities that offer two different models of this struggle.

- ◆ CAESARIA- Roman capitol and port city of Judea
- ◆ BET SHEARIM- Home of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi and the Sanhedrin
- ◆ What can the story of these two ancient sites teach us about issues we still face as Contemporary Jews?

Please pack a lunch and water bottle

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per person

Register: <https://www.ouisrael.org/events/all-quiet-on-the-western-front/>

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# Coffee & Conversation for Senior Women

**TUESDAYS, 3:00 PM**

OU Israel invites senior women to join us for a weekly social hour

Belinda's Cafe (Mehadrin), 9 Diskin St., 2nd Floor

Organized by OU Israel Volunteer **Erika Braun**

22 nis minimum purchase (coffee & pastry)

Questions? Contact OU Israel Volunteer

**Erika Braun 054-659-5418**

**OU ISRAEL CENTER | WWW.OUISRAEL.ORG**



**Motzei Shabbos Parshas Shemos,  
January 14, 2023 8:30pm**

Kehilla Kedosha Beis Shlomo (Zucker's)  
Ramat Eshkol  
(off of Paran, in Gan Chamisha Asar)

A Kashrus Seminar for  
English speaking men with poskim:

**Rav Hershel Schachter shlita**

**Rabbi Menachem Genack shlita**

**Rabbi Moshe Elefant shlita**

Opening remarks by  
**Rabbi Akiva Dershowitz shlita**



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**March 17, 2023**  
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Fundraising goal: 1,200₪  
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**menpmp@gmail.com**

## SHIUR SPONSORS

**Monday, January 9** - Rabbi Goldscheider's shiur is sponsored in loving memory of a dear son L'fuli nishmat **Yisrael Radin ben Avraham z"l**

**Tuesday, January 10** - Rabbi Goldin's shiur was sponsored by Malka Abrahams in memory of her late mother, **Chaya Rachel bas Mordechai v' Masha a"h** and in memory of Malka's late aunt **Chava bat Avraham v' Sara a"h**

**All learning Wednesday morning, Jan. 18** is sponsored by Estelle Harris in gratitude to Hashem for her improved health

### Rabbi Goldscheider's shiur

has been sponsored for the 2023 Academic Year לעילוי נשמת מרים בת אברהם ע"ה ושם טוב בן שלמה ז"ל

**Rebbetzin Shira Smiles shiur** is sponsored for the 2023 academic year by Dr. & Mrs. Menachem Marcus in memory of their parents, Rose & Dr. Emanuel Marcus z"l -

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 Rosi and Ernest Strauss z"l -

לימוד בת אברהם ודניאל בן דוד שטראוס ז"ל

**Rabbi Breitowitz's Tuesday Shiur** - Minchat Chinuch is sponsored for the academic year 2023 by Rabbi Refoel & Sharon Auman in memory of their parents Edith & Reiner Auman z"l

יונה בן צדוק ז"ל ואסתר ע"ה בת רפאל הי"ד  
 and their son Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu Auman z"l  
 הרב שמואל אליהו ז"ל בן הרב רפאל נ"י

**Rabbi Goldin's shiur** is sponsored for the 2023 academic year by Dr. & Mrs. Menachem Marcus in memory of beloved aunts Irma Haas a"h and Hilde Myer a"h

### Rabbi Manning's shiur

has been sponsored for the 2023 academic year לעילוי נשמת ברנה בת ברנדית ע"ה וזליג בן קלמן ז"ל

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ט"ב

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**Wednesday, January 18th, 7:30pm**

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# SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

Program Director, OU Israel Center

Our sedra introduces us for the first time to Moshe Rabbeinu. The Torah describes Moshe's birth, his clandestine early weeks of infancy, and his being sent down the Nile to be adopted by Paroh's daughter, to be raised in the palace of Egypt.

The Torah describes in unusual language the birth of Moshe Rabbenu :

וַתֵּהֵר הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתְּרָא אֹתוֹ כִּי-טוֹב הוּא וַתְּצַפְּנֵהוּ שְׁלֹשָׁה יָרְחִים:

*The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was good, she hid him for three months.*

Rashi, quoting the Gemara in Sota, explains the words *Vateira Oto Ki Tov Hu - And She saw that he was good - When he was born the whole house became filled with light.*

The great Chasidic Master, the **Yismach Moshe zy'a**, offers a further insight into the meaning of our verse. The Rebbe explains from the time of his birth it was clear that he was *kulo tov*, only good, and that he was destined for greatness.

However, it is easy to see from the various *pesukim* describing the early years of *Moshe Rabbeinu's* life, that very little detail is given to those formative years in the royal court of Egypt.

The *Ibn Ezra*, in a brilliant insight points out that Moshe's trajectory for young lad on the Nile, to royalty, to redeemer all come to demonstrate that Hashem's ways are truly deep and beyond our comprehension, but perhaps Hashem orchestrated these

events so that indeed Moshe would grow up as a nobleman rather than a slave, in order that he should be prepared for his sacred task! Not only would it instill Moshe, with knowledge and confidence, but so too had he grown up a slave, among his brethren, perhaps Klal Yisrael might have been unable to accept him as a leader, if he had simply been a slave as everyone else.

What looks at first glance to be the complete opposite course of preparation one might imagine for the greatest of Jewish leaders, in reality sets the stage perfectly for *Moshe Rabbeinu* to become who he is truly destined to be.

There is a dual *musar haskel* inherent in this insight from the *Ibn Ezra*. First and foremost, that *Hashem's* ways are truly beyond our comprehension, and that ultimately *Hashem* orchestrates the course each of us are destined to traverse. But equally important is the notion that Moshe's seemingly less than conventional journey to assume the mantle as our greatest leader and teacher, should inspire within each of us- that no matter our background, no matter our individual journeys, we too can achieve greatness, we too can excel and reach the highest echelons of *Limud HaTorah* and *Avodat Hashem*.

May we each merit to learn from this powerful teaching from the *Ibn Ezra* , and may each of us indeed be inspired to see the potential for greatness innate within each of us. ■



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## GEULAS YISRAEL

BY RABBI MOSHE TARAGIN

Ram, Yeshivat Har Etzion

# Looking Forward And Backward

Initially hesitant to accept such an ambitious mission, Moshe was finally persuaded by Hashem that, despite his speech impediments and his unusual humility, he was best suited to release the chosen people from their brutal Egyptian servitude.

Invigorated by his assignment, Moshe gathers his possessions, assembles his small family, and begins the arduous journey back to Egypt. Suddenly, the unexpected occurs, and it almost ends in tragedy. Hashem *encounters* Moshe in his hotel ויפגשוהו ה' ויבקש המיתו and intends to kill him. Hastily, his wife Tziporah circumcises their son, saving both her husband and child from becoming “spouses of death” or חתן דמים למולות.

The Torah doesn't specify Moshe's error but, evidently, it was related to his son's milah. The gemara in Nedarim (31b) elaborates by documenting the difficult quandary Moshe faced, which caused his almost-fatal error. Appreciating the urgency of his historical mission, Moshe realized that any delay in his arrival to Egypt would result in additional casualties. Yet, Moshe hadn't circumcised his son, and

the recovery process from milah would ground him for a few days, since a post-milah baby would be too weak to travel. Moshe was torn by the severe dilemma whether to advance redemption at the cost of his child's milah, or proceed with milah, thereby delaying the liberation and costing Jewish lives. He could not be in two places at once, and he found himself in a bind.

Facing this critical dilemma, Moshe delayed milah and began his journey to Egypt. Though his decision to delay milah was approved, his behavior upon arrival at a hotel could not be justified. A stayover at a hotel presented him an opportunity to expedite the neglected mitzvah of milah. His wife and children could remain in the hotel for a few extra days to recover from milah, and subsequently, they could rejoin him in Egypt. Though presented with a golden opportunity, Moshe still postponed the Milah until he had settled his family, and for this procrastination he was almost punished...until his wife corrected his error, took quick action, and avoided catastrophe.

Surprisingly, Moshe doesn't receive a free pass for a slight delay in attending to his son's milah. After all, Moshe was preoccupied with a great historical mission and his slight postponement could be rationalized based upon his focus upon the grand mission. Yet, despite the apparent “excuse”, Moshe's mission screeches to a halt and is

only relaunched once his child is circumcised. Redemption cannot proceed without milah.

### Redemptive Fervor and Mitzvot

By introducing new features to religious identity, redemptive experience can become disorienting. The panoramic process of partnering with Hashem in shaping Jewish history can shift attention away from mitzvah observance and halachic integrity. It is more pleasant to view ourselves as partners of Hashem than servants who submit to divine commandments. Partnership with Hashem in history-building is enchanting and empowering, while compliance with mitzvot and obedience to the divine will requires submission of human freedom, which is always less appealing. Tantalized by redemptive fervor, we become enthralled with our historical role, but less attentive to our traditional profile of “eved Hashem” or servant of G-d. Redemptive euphoria must be coupled with halachic fidelity.

The midrash portrays a similar issue facing us on the eve of our ultimate redemption from Egypt. Primed for Exodus we were, nonetheless, bereft of mitzvot, and redemption could not advance without core commandments to brace religious identity. Correcting this imbalance, Hashem delivered several Pesach-night mitzvot such as korban Pesach, matzo, and marror, to provide halachic scaffolding for our euphoric flight of freedom. The exultant march from Egypt in the morning could not have proceeded without an earlier nighttime submission to mitzvot.

For this same reason, Moshe’s delay of the mitzvah of milah can’t be overlooked,

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simply because he is advancing redemption. Condoning this oversight would set a terrible precedent, that mitzvah observance can be waived or reduced to meet the larger and more important goals of redemption. Delaying milah to save a child's life is excusable, delaying because of redemptive preoccupation is not. The process must be halted to assure proper calibration between geulah and halachic observance.

Our generation is struggling with that very balance. We have all tasted the sweet toxin of redemption and, for many, it has expanded religious consciousness and imbued Torah study and mitzvah performance with added historical resonance. This is redemptive energy at its best.

For some, however, redemption has distracted from mitzvah observance, as historical opportunity has become too inspiring and too exhilarating. Lightheaded with redemptive excitement and endowed with historical influence, it has become more difficult to self-define as servants who dutifully worship and who are completely dependent upon a Higher being. It may take some time until our people learn to fully calibrate between the seductive whisper of redemption and the heavy but glorious yoke of mitzvot. Even Moshe had a momentary lapse in his own calibration.

### **Looking Backward**

Slavery isn't just physically abusive but is also psychologically destructive. Slavery dehumanizes individual identity and scrubs away historical legacy. Decades of slavery left us with only a faint recollection of our Avot, unhinging us from their legacy.

Facing this vacuum of identity, Moshe

was worried how to describe Hashem to a historically ignorant population. Responding to his concern, Hashem instructed Moshe to portray Him as אקיה אשר אקיה- the G-d of their past who will continue to supervise their welfare in the present and future.

Before they can be redeemed, the historically dismembered slaves must reconnect with their past heritage and view redemption not as an isolated political revolution but as part of a larger historical arc. They must learn that the same Being who forged a covenant with their ancestors has now returned to redeem them. They must learn that redemption is part of an ancient covenant between Hashem and the Avot, centered upon our national mission to represent Him in our world. Sometimes that mission requires exile in a foreign land under taxing conditions, but the covenant also guarantees ultimate redemption. Redemption, unframed by history, is hollow.

### **The Icon of Covenant**

What could possibly reconnect a band of dispirited slaves with their larger history of covenant? Obviously, the mitzvah of milah, the most vivid symbol of our covenant. Sadly, though, this symbol of Jewish covenant had fallen into neglect under the dreadful conditions of Egyptian persecution. Most of the population were unable to circumcise, and slowly, the Jews became unaware of the covenant, historically disengaged, and therefore unsuited for redemption.

Ironically, Moshe's own milah was clouded in ambiguity. Even though he was born into the tribe of Levi, which maintained milah, it is unlikely that his milah

was a public event. Survival under the genocidal regime of Pharaoh, depended upon secrecy, and public milah ceremonies were, obviously, out of the question. Chazal mention that Moshe was born circumcised, meaning he did not undergo any milah procedure. Either way no one was aware that this man, who had been raised in an Egyptian palace, had been circumcised. It was therefore crucial that Moshe perform a public milah to associate the people with their historical covenant. They cannot be redeemed until their consciousness of covenant is restored. Awareness of their covenant must be generated by a public milah ceremony. Redemption cannot begin until Moshe circumcises his son.

### Looking Forward..and Backward

By fixating our vision upon the future, redemption sometimes obscures the past. We look forward with excitement, and forget to look backward for legacy. The abrupt shift from exile to triumph and redemption can shade the past in pathetic terms. Sadly, many original secular Zionists were embarrassed by the “Jews of exile” who were seen as weak and pitiful. 1948 was a radical shift in history and it wasn’t easy to look backward when moving forward so quickly.

As the generation is invited to the era of redemption, we must “look back” to our covenant, its founders and the people who preserved it during darker times. As we emerge from the tunnel of history, we must deeply identify with those who traveled through the tunnel never seeing the radiant light at its end but preserving our faith and courage. Without the past, history is nonexistent. Without history redemption is hollow. ■



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## DIVREI MENACHEM

BY MENACHEM PERSOFF

Special Projects Consultant, OU Israel Center  
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# The Lessons of Exile

A recurring question when reviewing our Parsha is why we suffered in Egypt some 3,500 years ago. Nechama Leibowitz summarizes several approaches to this thorny issue, not so much from a geopolitical perspective but from a theological, moral stance.

1. **The calamity resulted from sin**, the people's desire to assimilate. Bnei Yisrael had arrived in Egypt as temporary dwellers – but no! “*Yayeshuv*” – ‘they settled there’; “*Vaye’echazu*” – ‘they secured a permanent foothold!’ (Bereishit 47:27).

Moreover, following the Midrash, the people abrogated Brit Milah. They also left Goshen to settle the entire country (“*the land was filled with them*” - Shemot 1:7) – so much so that Hashem had to look for the blood smeared on the Jewish doorposts during the plague of the Firstborn! For the Midrash, the punishment was not so much a consequence of the Egyptians resenting the Israelites invading their economic and cultural life as Hashem's turning his love for the people to hatred for their not wishing to be a people apart.

2. **The exile and suffering were didactic tools**. The punishment was corrective in the spirit of “*He who spares the rod hates his*

*son...*” (*Mishleh 13:24*), suggestive of what happened to King David's son Avshalom who rose against his father. Perhaps this would explain why David further declared, “*Happy is the man you chaste and instruct in Your Torah*” (Tehillim 94:12).

3. **Exile and suffering refine and purify one's character**, as declared by Yeshayahu (48:10): “*Behold I have refined you not with silver; I have chosen you out of the furnace of affliction.*”

4. **The exile in Egypt taught us a long-standing moral lesson**, as indicated in the following: “*Do no wrong to the stranger and do not oppress him for you were strangers in the land of Egypt*” (Shemot 22:20). Before the formation of our nation, it appears that we were to experience the taste of slavery and humiliation that would everlastingly refine our ethical and moral compass.

Finally, Baruch Hashem, we are no longer slaves to Egypt or any other nation. But we nevertheless recall that Bnei Yisrael “*are My servants... whom I brought out of the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God*” (Vayikra 25:55).

\*\*\*

*And with this thought, dear readers, I conclude over a decade of “Divrei Menachem” to make way for the new generation of writers in Torah Tidbits.*

Shabbat Shalom. ■

Menachem Persoff



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# REBBETZIN DR. ADINA SHMIDMAN



*Join me as we explore themes and ideas of our prophets through their words in the weekly Haftorah. Each week we will take a closer look at a particular verse or theme, taking messages from our past to impact our tomorrow.*

## YESHAYAHU 27:6 - 28:13 29:22-23

This week's Haftorah is not connected to the parsha in an obvious way. Our parsha primarily focuses on the descent of the Jewish people into Egyptian slavery and the rise of Moshe as their leader. The navi's major emphasis is on the downward spiral of the kingdoms of Ephraim and Yehuda.

The Navi Yeshaya describes how the Jewish people will fail to properly study, observe and live the Torah. He famously decries a time when the Torah will have to be taught to them:

"צו לצו צו לצו קו לקו זעיר שם זעיר שם"

*“Commandment by commandment and commandment by commandment, measuring line by measuring line and measuring line by measuring line, a bit here and a bit there.”*

Prima facie, this seems positive, not negative. It would seem that for us to learn the Torah commandment by commandment, line by line and bit by bit, would be a way to assure that we study the Torah in its

entirety and get to know all of its minutiae.

Rav Kook observes that the Torah is supposed to be understood, appreciated and lived in a holistic manner. When we engage in halachic reductionism and slice and dice the Torah into teeny bits we fail to appreciate the scope of its grandeur and the depth of its eternal truth. Yeshaya bemoans a generation that is not only ignorant of Torah information, but more importantly of its beauty.

The connection of Yeshaya to Shemos is now more obvious. The Jews in Egyptian times had not yet received the Torah and had nothing to turn to for inspiration and encouragement. The generation of Yeshaya had it, but did not look to it for guidance.

We are blessed to have the Torah. We must study and observe it carefully. We must also look at its greatness to guide us in times of difficulty and despair. May we always value the magnificence of the Torah and merit to see the fulfillment of the beginning of the Haftorah:

"הבאים ישרש יעקב יציץ ופרח ישראל ומלאו פני תבל

תנובה"

*“Days are coming when Yaakov will take root, Yisroel will bud and blossom and fill the face of the earth like fruit.”* ■

Rebbetzin Dr. Adina Shmidman is the founding director of the Orthodox Union Women's Initiative and the rebbetzin of the Lower Merion Synagogue in Bala Cynwyd, PA.

## QUESTION

Hello, I'd appreciate your professional response. Do you think that a secular professional who performs a psycho-dyagnostic evaluation on a chareidi young man may receive inaccurate results (on a cognitive or emotional level) because of his distance from the cultural world of the boy?

## ANSWER

In general it is hard for me to properly address this broad question since you didn't include any descriptive information regarding the boy, his age, and the purpose of the evaluation, obviously without disclosing the boys identity. There is no one right answer for all such cases. One can say that sometimes a secular psychologist is preferable and in other cases a chareidi one is more appropriate.

I'll try to address the general dilemma. It's a complex issue. The components of our minds are similar, as we are all human beings, whether chareidi or secular. A lot of research has been done regarding the influence of cultural differences on results of research. One can say that generally the evaluation tests are supposed to be objective and not culturally biased.

Nonetheless, since we are human and the evaluation is after all performed by humans and not by computer, there certainly can be an influence of the evaluator's identity, his cultural background and more. This influence may be expressed in a number of aspects:

1. Interpreting the test results. I'll explain through an example of an intelligence test. This test includes, in addition to other things, questions involving worldly knowledge which a chareidi boy may not be aware of. As that is the case, knowledge or lack of knowledge of this information may influence the intelligence mark this boy may receive and may convey an inaccurate picture of even

deeper levels involving more inner, mental levels of the boy.

2. Different norms and manners of interaction. During the evaluation, one's thought process is expressed and evaluated as well. The manners of interaction in the chareidi world in often different and in order to understand the meaning of the content and manners of interaction one must understand the way these differ in the chareidi world. Only then may one apply it to the inner mind of the subject.

3. The evaluation's significance. The connection between the evaluation's results and the reality of the person tested, meaning the environment in which the chareidi subject grew up and to which he continues to need to adapt himself, is different from that of the secular subject. The required strengths and skills, and pressures encountered, are different. Being acquainted with the culture allows a proper connection to be made between the inner world revealed through the evaluation and the real world. It would also obviously have a direct influence on the concrete recommendations given; for example, regarding a question about suitable educational settings, and more.

4. The connection between the evaluator and subject. There may be an advantage or disadvantage to having a secular evaluator in such a context. It is possible that a secular evaluator may allow the chareidi subject to feel more open and free about sharing his inner world, though the opposite can be true as well.

In summary, the human mind is complex and every specific question may have various answers. I believe there are others who may view this difference differently. In any case, have a lot of your endeavors and may the evaluation propel you forwards in the direction that is right for you!



RABBI AARON

GOLDSCHIEDER

Editor, Torah Tidbits

# An Enhanced Soul in the Land

*‘In Eretz Yisrael the letters of our souls enlarge, expose the light, draw nourishment from the splendor of life of Knesset Yisrael.’ (Eretz Chefetz 2:3)*

The topic of the holy letters is one of the deepest subjects of the “secrets of Torah” and enjoys a special place in the writings of Rav Kook. In 1917, while he was stranded in London during the First World War, Rav Kook wrote a volume entitled *Reish Millin* on the letters of the *Aleph-Beit*. It is known as one Rav Kook’s most esoteric works. It is overtly Kabbalistic in nature. It is a treatment of deeper meanings within the Hebrew letters.<sup>1</sup>

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1 One example from this volume is the analysis of the meaning of the letter *chet*. It is made up of two *zayins* (weapons). These two letters symbolize a face off with one another. However, the letter *chet* also consists of a bridge that connects the two. The letter *chet* is equal to the number eight. In the world of perfection (eight) competing values and perspectives are synthesized and connected as a unified whole. (See *Rosh Milin*, Samson, pp. 50-51)

Perhaps the following citation from the Talmud can help us elucidate the obscure idea of “letters”: ‘When I [Rav Meir] came to Rabbi Yishmael, he said to me, ‘My son, what is your occupation?’ ‘I told him, ‘I am a scribe’, and he said to me, ‘Be meticulous in your work, for your work is the work of heaven - perhaps you will omit one letter or add one letter; you would thereby destroy the entire world’ (*Eruvin* 13a).

Rashi elucidates the meaning of this passage above. Rashi explains that if one were, for example, to leave off the letter *aleph* in the phrase, “The Lord our God is true (*emet*)” - rendering it as *met*, dead, - this would be a blasphemous statement like no other.”

With the aforementioned teaching in mind perhaps, Rav Kook is asserting that the soul of the Jew living in the Land is suited to perceive more perfect and all encompassing truths. “Letters” symbolize the basic structure and underpinnings of an elaborate system.

The notion that the letters represent the very composition of the Torah is conveyed in a penetrating teaching in the Talmud. The episode of Moshe smashing the tablets is generally understood as a deliberate, premeditated act on the part of Moshe. However, the Talmud Yerushalmi offers an alternative explanation. It was not Moshe’s will to throw down the tablets. We are told that the letters engraved upon the tablets miraculously vivified and flew up into the

air. Unable to support the deadweight of the stones, Moshe dropped them, causing them to shatter:

“Rabbi Ezra in the name of Rabbi Judah of the house of Rabbi Simon: The tablets weighed forty *se’ah* and the writing supported them. Once the writing flew off, the tablets became heavy upon the hands of Moshe, and fell and shattered.” (*Yerushalmi Ta’anit* 4:5)

Apparently, the letters represent the essence of Torah. When the Jewish people had turned aside, the letters, so to speak, had no place to reside on earth and therefore ventured back to heaven.

Rav Kook may also be alluding to another facet regarding the notion of “letters of the soul.” Namely the notion of simplicity. In Chassidus the letters of the *Aleph-Beit* symbolize purity and innocent faith. The following tale is a beautiful example of this: Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk spent his younger years in the town of *Gorah* and *Tomoshav* before settling in Kotzk. Once, after he had already achieved a level of renown, the Rebbe had occasion to return to his hometown. Many of the town’s scholars and saints, as well as its simple folk, came out to greet the revered Kotzker Rebbe. Much to the chagrin of some of the older scholars, upon his arrival, the Kotzker decided to take up lodging with his cheider rebbe. Feeling slighted, one of the rabbis who had taught Talmud to Reb Menachem Mendel asked in a derogatory tone why the tzaddik had chosen to stay “at his kindergarten teacher.” Kotzker answered: “Everything I learned from my Talmud teacher is but one possible reading of a given passage.

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The only thing I am absolutely certain about is that the letters of the Aleph- Beit are indeed the letters of the Aleph-Beit.” (Oros HaTorah, Vol. 1, Weinberg pp. 375-376)

Rav Kook writes in Orot HaTorah (5:2): “The joy that Torah study engenders in a person derives from the abundant light contained within the letters of the Torah...”

The midrash on *Shir Hashirim* associates the letters of the *Aleph-Beit* with joy:

“Rabbi Avin began, “This is the day that the Lord made, we exult and rejoice in it (*bo*) (Tehillim 118:24). We did not know over what to rejoice...until Shlomo Hamel-ech came and specified, “Let us exult and rejoice in You (*bach*)” (*Shir Hashirim* 1:4)... Rabbi Yitzchak said, “In You (*bach*) refers to the twenty two letters of the *Aleph-Beit* that You wrote for in the Torah: *beit*=2, *kaf*=20 , this is *bach*.”

To encounter the letters is to encounter Hashem. Perhaps the midrash above is accentuating complimentary ideas regarding our relationship with Hashem. The simplicity of a child who can only read the letters and the one who descends into the depths of the mysteries of God’s existence. For Rav Kook, the Land of Israel has the singular qualities that are most beneficial for such sacred encounters.

An “enlarged soul” is apt term to describe the soaring spirit and aliveness of Rav Kook’s essence. The following story

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accentuates this quality. Rabbi Charlop, his trusted friend related this experience: “In the summer of 1921, the Rav went to rest in Har Tov. I visited him there and our private conversation extended to the wee hours. The next morning I noticed that the Rav did not arrive immediately to *Shacharit*. What’s more, totally out of character of the Rav (who was punctilious not to engage in any activity before prayer), I saw him approach the innkeeper and begin to discuss with him botanical matters, such as which trees to plant in the vicinity. Only after concluding the conversation, did he proceed to pray.

The delay and the incongruous conversation made me wonder, and I plucked up the courage to ask the Rav to explain the curious behavior.

This was his response: “This morning there burnt in my mind such a thirst for the Living God, I feared that in prayer my soul would be consumed (“*kelot ha-nefesh*”). I was forced to dampen my enthusiasm by lowering my thought to practical, mundane matters. (Rabbi Moshe Zevi Neriya, *Orot ha-Tefillah* (Jerusalem, 2004), The Koren Rav Kook Siddur pp. 28-29) ■

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# FROM THE VIRTUAL DESK OF THE OU VEBBE REBBE

RAV DANIEL MANN



לעילוי נשמת  
יואל אפרים בן אברהם עוזיאל זלצמן ז"ל

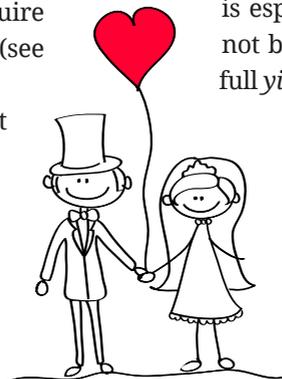
## Differences of a Second Marriage

**Question:** At a second marriage for both *chatan* and *kalla*, what is different from a regular wedding?

**Answer:** The following is an overview, regarding a second marriage for both *chatan* and *kalla*; some differences depend only on the *kalla*'s status. Some issues are affected by details or sensitivities, especially regarding issues that are less halachic or are the subject of *machloket*. A couple would discuss these matters with their *rav/mesader kiddushin*.

**Tenaim** – Many do not require a written *tenaim* document (see Hanisuin K'hilchatam 17:8).

**Ketuba** – A *kalla* who is not a *betula* receives half of what a *betula* receives for all three of a *ketuba*'s monetary elements (Shulchan Aruch, Even Haezer 67:1), and her status is referenced in certain places in the *ketuba*.



Certain variables, especially not widely known facts (e.g., adoption, conversion), raise sensitivities during the public reading of the *ketuba* between the *kiddushin* and *nisuim* parts of the ceremony. The *minhag* of many is to not read the *ketuba* at a second time marriage (see opinions in Hanisuin K'hilchatam 17:24 and Nitei Gavriel 51:7).

**Veil** – The *kalla* going to her *chupa* with a veil is the sign of the wedding of a *betula* (Ketubot 15b), and the *chatan* covers her at “*badekin*.” There is no *badekin* at a second marriage (see Rama, EH 55:1; Chelkat Mechokek 55:8), although some have the *minhag* that someone else puts the veil on her under the *chupa* (Nitei Gavriel 51:3).

**Chupa Location:** The *chupa* is done inside and not under the sky (see Pitchei Teshuva, EH 62:1; Aruch Hashulchan, EH 55:24).

**Yichud** (the couple's seclusion) – According to many (see Rama, EH 55:1), the *nisuin* is accomplished by *yichud*. Therefore, it is especially important that the *kalla* not be a *nidda*, which would prevent full *yichud* (Nitei Gavriel 51:10).

**Minhagim** that are *unchanged*: *chupa*, breaking of the glass, ashes on the *chatan*'s head; *kalla* circling the *chatan*.

**Level of Revelry:** The recommendation of *poskim* and the *minhag* is that, while joyous, the second wedding is less

The Orthodox Union - via its website - fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and OU Israel's Torah Tidbits.



elaborate, which can find expression in several areas – Many do not have a band (Aruch Hashulchan ibid.); the food is less extensive (Hanisuin K'hilchatam 17:29); the *kalla's* dress is less elaborate (Nitei Gavriel 51:2). These are general guidelines, not halachic dictates.

Participation of the couple's children – Many have the *minhag* that their children not take part in the *chupa* (Nitei Gavriel 51:9). The decision should be left to the children (if old enough), without the couple's pressuring or reading into their decisions.

Sheva Berachot – *Sheva Berachot* under the *chupa* are standard, but at meals, it is complicated. The *gemara* (Ketubot 7a) says that for such a couple there are *sheva berachot* for only one day. There are three feasible and supported possibilities what one day means (see Rosh, Ketubot 1:13 and its analysis in Chelkat Mechokek 62:6 and Beit Shmuel 62:5): 1) the first meal; 2) any meal eaten the first day; 3) it must be both the first meal and on the first day. The main differences are: A. After a night wedding, can there be a party with the *sheva berachot* recited the next day? B. If the *chupa* takes place at the end of the day and the meal takes place at night, are there

*berachot* at the end of the wedding meal?

The general approach is that there is doubt in these test cases, and we do not make *berachot* in a case of doubt (Beit Shmuel ibid.). Therefore, it is best to time things wisely. The Pitchei Teshuva (ad loc. 10) and Aruch Hashulchan (EH 62:33) cite opinions that if the *yichud* is at night, then even if the *chupa* was before, they can recite *sheva berachot* at night. The Ezer Mikodesh (to EH 62:6) is unsure if this is correct. If the meal was well underway during the day, *sheva berachot* can be recited at its conclusion at night (Aruch Hashulchan ibid.; Hanisuin K'hilchatam 17:35).

Time together – The couple is supposed to spend happy time together, as opposed to going to work, for three days (Ketubot 7a). The *kalla* is able to allow the *chatan* to return to work early (Rama, EH 64:2). ■

## Having a dispute?



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# What Do We Take Away From The Book Of Bereshit?

It's difficult to part from the book of Bereshit. So here are three ideas taken from it, a little food for thought as we move on to the book of Shemot:

1. The Torah devotes approximately 30 verses to the creation of the physical universe. Yet 1,500 verses are devoted to the creation's central subject – the human being. **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”** – and the human being. Our principle challenge until today is to be recognized as God's creations in all we do.

2. It is customary to conclude that the book of Bereshit has a happy ending. Yosef and his brothers are reconciled, Ya'akov Avinu arrives in Egypt, the family reunites. But not all is well. At the end of Bereshit, Ya'akov requests to be buried, sometime in the future, in the Land of Israel and reminds his children: **Our exile is temporary since our ultimate destination is the Land of Israel.** It's nice that the family is reunited but we must also reunite with our Homeland. We have a home, and it's not Egypt.

3. This would appear to be the most influential book of all time. **If a poll were taken of the most influential people in human history, Avraham Avinu and**

**Sarah Imeinu would come out on top.**

Not because of financial success or military victories or fame; indeed, when they lived, there were empires far more powerful than their household and group of followers, and they were largely anonymous. Yet, until today, they have influenced billions since they founded a family known for its faith, lovingkindness, and radiant light. ■



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## Be'er Tziporah a"h - Bottled Water Gemach



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Yoni thanks Hashem for having the opportunity of having Tziporah in his life, to learn of her caring, patience and happiness, to overcome her challenges. May Tziporah's Neshama be a light onto the world, in a time of darkness, and may her Neshama shine to Gan Eden. Yoni misses Tziporah with tears in his eyes, as Hashem gave him a gift, a crown jewel, now he returns her to Hashem.

With thanks and Toda. Love, Yoni

To help refill the supply - send tax deductible donations for Be'er Tziporah a"h Bottled Water Gemach to Chabad of Rechavia - Rabbi Yisroel Goldberg email

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**RABBI GIDEON**

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## Inheriting Halachic Status

Last time we discussed the case of Sofia the baby born after the mix up in the fertility clinic. In the meantime, the woman who delivered the baby girl is raising the child together with her husband, even though it is clear that they are not the genetic parents.

We raised the question last time as to whether there is a halachic obligation to continue to search for the father, by performing genetic testing on everyone who underwent treatment in that clinic, since they are all the potential parents. The reason we would promote this is due to the concern that the father is disqualified to marry a Jewish woman, since he is in the halachic category of *mamzer* which would determine that his children would also not be permitted to marry Jews.

The Ramban (Vayikra 18:20) explains that the reason why the Torah prohibits adultery is that children will be born without knowing who their parents are and terrible situations could arise. The Sefer Hachinuch (Mitzvah 35) elaborates that God wants each being to bear offspring of their own and not that there would be mix

ups and no one would know who their children are.

It appears to be that, according to this explanation, beyond the prohibition of illicit relations, the problem is that children will be born with an unclear lineage. The Satmar Rebbe wrote (Divrei Yoel, Even Haezer 107) we can deduce from this that the halachic status of *mamzer* is conveyed even if the child was conceived with relations, such as is the case in in-vitro fertilization.

According to this, if Sofia's father was a *mamzer* then she would also be a *mamzer*, as this halachic status was transmitted through the IVF.

However, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein disagreed (Igrot Moshe, Even Haezer Vol. II 11) and proved from other sources that unless there were illicit relations the child is not a *mamzer*. The Gemara (Chagigah 15a) does discuss a case of conception without relations and the child is considered kosher. Therefore, Rabbi Feinstein was of the opinion that even the genetic father was a *mamzer* a child conceived through IVF would not be considered a *mamzer*.

If so, even if the genetic father had a halachically problematic status, Sofia would not inherit this and would be permitted to marry. Accordingly, there is no halachic obligation to continue to search for Sofia's father, as this has no bearing on her halachic status. More on this next time. ■



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## Otzar Beit Din Grape Juice

Unfortunately, Otzar Ha'aretz will not be providing *otzar beit din* grape juice this year. There will be a few kinds of *otzar beit din* wines. We will provide details in future articles. Rabbi Nissim Karelitz's *otzar beit din*, however, does offer the holy juice. **Mishnat Yosef** is the *otzar beit din*'s main distributor.

The *otzar beit din* grape juice is 100% natural, without any additives, and is not *mevushal* (it is pasteurized, though). The juice is truly delicious and natural tasting, the price is excellent (especially in light of the spike in grape juice prices), and it's holy! They offer red and white grape juice.

Grape juice can be ordered in a box of 9 bottles, (1 L each) at NIS 99 per box (they do not sell individual bottles). According to their website, they have 400 products (including *shemita* produce), 249 distribution stations, and approximately 400,000 customers. The delivery arrives at the station once a week at a certain time and needs to be picked up at certain hours.

Note that grape juice is not available every week, but generally every other week. Also then, sometimes there is white grape juice and sometimes red grape juice. So even if

you check their website and it's not listed, check again the next week and it will hopefully be. Mishnat Yosef delivers primarily, but not exclusively, to haredi areas.

Some of the boxes come with a list of halachic guidelines for the proper care for grape juice with *kedushat shevi'it*. The majority of these guidelines are identical to those of the rabbis of Otzar Ha'aretz and Torah VeHa'aretz Institute (there are a few minor differences, however).

The website is open for orders only from Thursday till Sunday. Register and order here (you need to register in order to enter the system and see their products):

<https://new.mishnatyosef.org/>

### Additional distributors

**Mechirah LeKehillah**, similar to Mishnat Yosef, also distributes *shemita* fruit and holy grape juice at cost price as determined by Rabbi Karelitz's *otzar beit din*: <https://www.sales.org.il/login.aspx>. This organization distributes exclusively to haredi areas.

**Shenat Hasheva** also distributes the same juice in organized group orders. If you are interested in coordinating a group order for your neighborhood or locality (minimum order is 30 boxes), and for additional details, call or send a WhatsApp to this number: 058-6123777.

Soon these three distributors will also be carrying sparkling sweet wine (Moscato). ■



# Too Jewish for Pakistan - Not Jewish Enough for Israel

- \*Mother, Father and 3 teenage children
- \*Persecuted in Pakistan for practicing Judaism
- \*The mother's father traces his Judaism back to his grandmother
- \*Having escaped Pakistan, Israel refuses to allow them to stay here
- \*The Israel Conversion Court doubts their sincerity to convert in spite of testimony from several Rabbis and others who know this family.

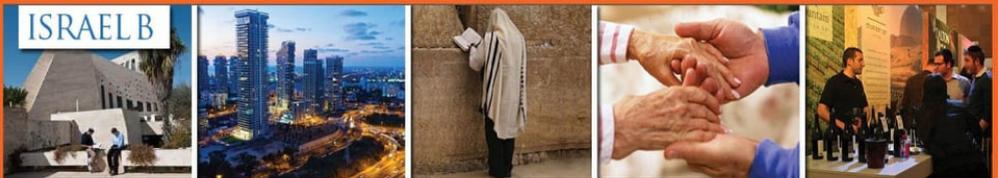


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**Dear OU parenting,**

*My teenage daughter demands a lot of my attention. She likes to talk to me but sometimes it's too much. No matter how much time I give her, she always wants more. I end up feeling drained and losing my patience. Please help me!*

M.T.

**Michal Silverstein, MS**

Dear M.T.,

Children demand a lot of their parents and express those needs in different ways. By recognizing the way in which your child needs to receive love will allow you to connect more profoundly and understand the root of her needs. Clearly, the way your child feels full and loved is by spending quality time with you. The fact that your teenage daughter wants to talk to you and spend time with you is a good thing. That connection is an important part of maintaining a good relationship throughout the teenage years. How can you nurture this relationship without feeling drained?

Firstly, having the awareness that this is

Michal Silverstein has a MS in educational psychology and counseling. She facilitates parenting workshops in and around Jerusalem and maintains a private practice.

your child's particular mode of connection may ease your feelings of being drained. When you listen to your child, it makes her feel loved. It is also important to set boundaries to protect you and your child from this negative cycle. You may want to allot a certain amount for that child. Be consistent and don't be bullied into feeling guilty if she wants to push the amount of time.

Try to be fully present when you are with her but when the allotted time is up then continue with your other responsibilities. This will teach your child a very important life skill. As she moves through life, she will have to learn to regulate her needs. Also, this will allow you to give happily to your child without the dread of battling for more time. Clear communication and coordinating expectations is essential.

If your daughter is unusually needy, this may be a cry for help. You should ask her if anything else is bothering her. There may be underlying issues such as feeling socially isolated. So it's important to check in.

Hopefully, these tips will help you enjoy your time together!

Behatzlacha ■

Feel free to send in any parenting questions you may have to [parenting@ouisrael.org](mailto:parenting@ouisrael.org) (Details will be changed to preserve anonymity).

# Real Life Rescues



## Ashkelon Man Who Suffered A Cardiac Arrest and Severe Head Trauma Saved By EMTs

Last Thursday, early in the morning, a 63-year-old man was riding his bicycle when he began to feel pain in the middle of his chest. The man lost consciousness, collapsed, and fell onto the pavement. As a result of the fall, the man suffered serious head trauma and massive bleeding. Worried eyewitnesses called emergency medical services for help.

Hanan Kadosh, a United Hatzalah volunteer EMT, recently returned from a late night shift at work and had just gotten to bed when his proximity alert went alerting him to the emergency. The incident took place less than 1 km away from Hanan's home. The dedicated volunteer got back out of bed and immediately got on his ambucycle, and drove to the scene. Hanan was the first responder at the scene.

Hanan initiated chest compressions on the man. As the mobile intensive care ambulance (MICU) arrived, he began to alternate compressions with medical personnel from the MICU. When Hanan wasn't performing compressions he provided assisted ventilation to the man while the paramedics attached a defibrillator and provided the man with 4 electrical shocks.

The man regained a pulse but was still breathing through assisted ventilation. Hanan bandaged the man's head injury and attached a cervical collar to his neck to immobilize him and prevent possible cervical spinal cord injuries. After the man was stabilized Hanan and the paramedics checked the man's vital signs, which thankfully were returning to normal. They then put him on a stretcher and the man was transferred to the nearby hospital for further care.

After the incident was over Hanan recounted; "I'm very glad that today's incident ended successfully. Being an EMT isn't easy when the patient passes away, it's never obvious the patient will live. I always go above and beyond to try to save an individual's life even when I'm exhausted from my late-night shifts. Today's incident brought me great satisfaction when the man's pulse returned and he began to regain consciousness. It is for moments like this that I put myself out there as a volunteer and respond to as many emergencies as I can. I hope to visit the man in the hospital in the coming days and check on his situation."





WHAT A NIGHT. HARDLY SLEPT A WINK BECAUSE I WAS WORRYING WHICH LOCATION TO REPORT FOR THIS WEEK'S SHOW...

HEY, BENTZ, I THINK THE BABY'S COMING... COULD BE TOMORROW... COULD BE TODAY...

GOOD SONG...



I MEAN, WE COVER PLACES IN ISRAEL WITH SOME RELEVANCE TO THE PARSHA, BUT AS OF THIS WEEK, IT'S ALL EGYPT-BASED... SO HOW CAN WE...?

...BUT THEN I THOUGHT MAYBE WE COULD GO FOR A PLACE THAT RELATES TO A TOPIC IN THE PARSHA... LIKE... I DUNNO... BRICKS...?



OH, WAIT! I HAVEN'T REGISTERED AT ANY HOSPITAL YET! WE SHOULD GET ON TO THAT... TODAY!

AND THEN WHEN I FELT ASLEEP EVENTUALLY... HAD ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE "HELP! I'M A FISH!" DREAMS AGAIN, EXCEPT THIS TIME I SEEMED TO BE WRAPPED IN NEWSPAPER AND SURROUNDED BY SOME MEAN-LOOKING CHIPS...



**BENTZ!**  
WE SHOULD GO TO THE HOSPITAL DELIVERY ROOMS!

INGENIOUS!  
BRILLIANT!  
WHAT A SPECTACULAR BRAINWAVE, SWEETHEART! IT'S PERFECT...!



...THIS WEEK'S PARSHA INDEED SALUTES THE MIDWIVES! WHY, A TOUR OF YERUSHALAYIM'S VARIOUS DELIVERY ROOMS WOULD BE AN IDEAL THEME FOR THE SHOW!

HOWEVER DID YOU THINK OF IT?!



OH, I DON'T KNOW, BENTZ... SURELY IT CAN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH ME BEING ABOUT TO HAVE A BABY ANY DAY NOW?

NO NEED TO BE SO MODEST, DEAR, THESE FLASHES OF RESOURCEFUL INSPIRATION MUST FAVOUR YOU FOR A REASON...

OY, KID! GET IN!

WHAT?!

OH, NO, DUDE, I'M NOT ACCOMPANYING YOU TO THE DELIVERY ROOM AGAIN!



FINE, BE LIKE THAT! I'LL USE THE CAR-CAMERA, THEN!

HOWDY THERE, FANS! TODAY WE'LL BE GIVING YOU AN IN-DEPTH TOUR OF THE HOLY CITY'S ARRAY OF FIRST-CLASS BABY-DELIVERY CENTRES.

TODAY, I AM ACCOMPANIED BY THE LOVLIEST OF WOMEN, MY OWN PRECIOUS BATZI, WHO...



...WHO IS USUALLY A VERY EASY-GOING AND UNDERSTANDING WIFE, AND WHO LOVES HER HUSBAND VERY MUCH, BUT THIS TIME WILL NOT HESITATE TO TIE HIM IN A KNOT BY HIS OVER-ACTIVE TONGUE, AND SHOVE HIM HEADFIRST INTO A FOOD-PROCESSOR IF HE DOESN'T STOP HIS ENTHUSIASTIC RANT AND REALISE HOW VERY IMPORTANT IT IS THAT WE FOCUS ON GETTING US TO A MATERNITY HOSPITAL SO WE CAN REGISTER IN GOOD TIME.

GOT THAT, DARLING?

ERM... WELL! WHEN YOU PUT IT LIKE THAT...!



SORRY, SWEETHEART, FOR NOT LISTENING TO YOU PROPERLY BEFORE! MY EARS ARE USUALLY THE LAST PART OF ME TO WAKE UP IN THE MORNING! ALL MY ALARM CLOCKS HAVE RESIGNED IN DISGUST, YOU KNOW...

WOW, BABY-DELIVERING TIME! DON'T WORRY, HONEY! I'LL MAKE SURE YOU GIVE BIRTH IN THE FINEST POSSIBLE CONDITIONS IN TOWN, NO COMPROMISE!

WELL, VIEWERS, EACH OF YERUSHALAYIM'S HOSPITALS HAS ITS OWN SPECIALITY - WHICH ONE OF THEM WILL BE WORTHY OF MY BATZI? STAY TUNED...

FIRST CANDIDATE - MISGAV LADACH, KATAMON NEIGHBOURHOOD. FOUNDED IN 1854 IN THE OLD CITY, ORIGINALLY NAMED "THE MEIR ROTHSCHILD HOSPITAL", IT OPERATED UNTIL IT FELL INTO JORDANIAN HANDS IN 1948, WHEREBY IT REOPENED LATER, HERE IN KATAMON.

THE HOSPITAL INTRODUCED ITS OWN METHOD OF CESAREAN SECTION DELIVERIES, DEVELOPED BY MICHAEL STARK (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH TONY STARK, AS IRON-MAN, DESPITE HIS MANY ABILITIES, WAS NOT FAMED FOR HIS MIDWIFERY SKILLS...) NOW USED AROUND THE WORLD.

75 BEDS, AND MEDICAL PERSONNEL OF SEVERAL DOZEN...

REGRETTABLY, SINCE ITS CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP, DUE TO FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES, THEY NO LONGER DO MATERNITY WARDS...

WELL, THAT WAS ENLIGHTENING. NOW COULD WE GO SOMEWHERE THAT DOES, PLEASE?

YOU'RE RIGHT, THAT IS A MINOR DRAWBACK... HOW ABOUT THIS OPTION: HADASSAH HAR HATZOFIM - FOUNDED IN 1934 BY HENRIETTA SZOLD AND CHAIM YASSKY, THE HOSPITAL WAS CLOSED AFTER THE HADASSAH CONVOY MASSACRE IN THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AND REOPENED IN 1975.

TODAY, IT BOASTS THE MOST ADVANCED DELIVERY ROOMS IN ISRAEL, AND A WIDE RANGE OF ASSOCIATED DEPARTMENTS...

30 DEPARTMENTS, 300 BEDS, MEDICAL PERSONNEL OF SEVERAL HUNDRED...

WELL, THAT SOUNDS GOOD... WHY NOT?

"GOOD" YOU SAY?! SPEAK NOT THAT OFFENSIVELY MIOCRE WORD, WHILE SEARCHING FOR THE BOUTIQUE CONDITIONS YOU DESERVE!

PERHAPS THE INCOMPARABLE HADASSAH EIN KAREM? THE ORIGINAL IDEA OF DAVID BEN-GURION TO HAVE A HOSPITAL WITH FRESH MOUNTAIN AIR AND SCENERY, WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1961, AND NOW HOUSES OVER 1100 BEDS AND IS INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED FOR ITS MEDICAL ADVANCEMENT.

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OK, LOOK, IT SOUNDS NOT "GOOD", IT SOUNDS "FANTAST-"

"NOT GOOD", YOU SAY?!

NO, NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT I...

WELL, IN THAT CASE, HOW ABOUT: SHAARE TZEDEK - STATISTICALLY SPEAKING, THE LEADING NUMBER OF BIRTHS IN YERUSHALAYIM, WITH OVER 21,000 BABIES BORN, MEDICAL STAFF: 1000 DOCTORS AND OVER 1700 NURSES...

YEAH, FINE! I MEAN, BRAIN-DAZZLINGLY AMAZING...

ALTHOUGH IF YOU WANT TO GO FOR EXPERIENCE - THERE'S BIKUR CHOLIM - IN THE CITY CENTRE, ESTABLISHED IN 1826, ITS MATERNITY WARDS ARE SO RENOWN, THEY EVEN SURVIVED THE HOSPITAL'S CLOSURE...

STUPENDOUS! INCREDIBLE! BE STILL, MY BEATING HEART...

HOW CAN WE JUST REGISTER SOMEWHERE..?

RIGHT YOU ARE, MY LOVE! INDEED WE MUST FOCUS SOLELY ON THE REGISTRATION, AND NOT BE SIDE-TRACKED BY ANY...

OH, LOOK, THERE'S THE WONDEROUS PUAH INSTITUTE! APTLY NAMED AFTER THE COURAGEOUS MIDWIFE IN EGYPT, THEY OFFER THE MOST ADVANCED MEDICAL AND HALACHIC RESEARCH IN TERMS OF FERTILITY DIFFICULTIES AND MANY OTHER...

WELL, THANK YOU, BUT I THINK YOU'LL FIND WE'RE RATHER BEYOND THAT STAGE RIGHT NOW...

MAZAL TOV, MRS. YERUSHALMI.

THANK YOU! YOU GUYS WERE TRULY AMAZING! I'LL BE SURE TO RECOMMEND THIS PLACE!

REMIND ME WHICH OF THE HOSPITALS WE'RE IN, IN THE END?

NO IDEA... HANG ON, I'LL GO AND COUNT THE BEDS...



**Elisheva Wolovitz**  
**Hometown:**  
South Africa  
**Community:**  
Jerusalem JLIC

The Jewish people throughout history have had this frustrating and definitive pattern whereby we get comfortable in a place, with a certain king or leader, become affluent and successful for a very short period of time and then catastrophe hits. The events of this week's parsha are a perfect example. The book of Bereishit ends with Yaakov finding his long-lost son, the family is once again united, Yosef has forgiven his brothers and the family have homes, food and the support of Yosef and Pharaoh. And then already in the 8<sup>th</sup> pasuk of Shemot it says "There arose a new Pharaoh who did not know Joseph."

Yet, if we look into the next pasuk, we read that Pharaoh says "Look, the Israelite people are much too numerous for us."

Rabbi Sacks, zt"l, points out that this is the first time the word "עַמֵּךְ" or "people" is used in the Torah to describe Bnei Yisrael. Here we see how the whole slavery begins with a reference to one of our strongest qualities, our strength in our community and as a nation. In addition, Rabbi David Fohrman, teaches that the name of this week's parsha and in fact the whole book, Shemot, is a reference to the connection between the infinite number of stars and the Jewish people.

Therefore, we can see a very powerful message begin to emerge. The Jewish people are not just capable of picking ourselves up and starting again after difficult times, but it is in fact the hard times that initiate our growth as a nation. Is it not one pasuk straight after the next that describes the start of our slavery in a new Pharaoh and then straight away how Bnei Yisrael began to multiply and become "much too numerous" for the great Egyptians?

Each day, in the morning brachot we thank Hashem for blessing "Israel with strength." We are a strong nation and one of the things that makes us so strong is our ability to thrive not just in the face of, but because of our challenges. Israel is a difficult place and winter is a difficult time especially in Jerusalem! So, going into this week I hope

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we can all remember this lesson as the rain leaks into our boots while our bus drives off 2 seconds too early and we forget that we left wet laundry in the machine. ■

The OU's Jewish Learning Initiative on Campus (JLIC) is creating and nurturing vibrant religious communities in Israel to support English-speaking college students and young professionals. JLIC Israel's goals include: building a warm and welcoming Jewish community for students and young professionals; providing engaging and dynamic Jewish education; providing a supportive home environment for Olim; providing resources for personal and religious growth, including personal mentoring, Aliyah support, religious guidance and leadership development. Current JLIC programs in Israel include: Reichman University - Herzliya; Bar Ilan University - Givat Shmuel; Tel Aviv University; Tel Aviv for Young Professionals; and Jerusalem. Contact: Rabbi Jonathan Shulman, Director of OU-JLIC in Israel [shulmanj@ou.org](mailto:shulmanj@ou.org)



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# TORAH 4 TEENS

## BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



**Shlomo Rayman**  
Beit Shemesh  
Chapter Director

### Moshe's Missing Origin Story

Every superhero has an origin story, describing the events and circumstances that lead them to discover and embrace their powers. There is one figure who stands out as not having an origin story: Moshe.

All we know is that Moshe grew up in Pharaoh's house. Suddenly he is eighty years old, leading the Exodus as history's greatest prophet. Why doesn't Moshe have an origin story?

In standard superhero narratives, we often hear of individuals who gain their powers through some unexpected event - perhaps an accident involving radiation, or an experiment gone awry. These tales serve to underscore the idea that not everyone has the potential to be a superhero, as such events do not happen to everyone.

The Rambam writes (Teshuva 5:2) *"every person has the ability to be righteous like Moshe Rabbeinu."* Moshe serves as an example of someone who grew up in the worst possible spiritual and moral circumstances and worked on himself, achieving greatness. The lack of an origin story emphasizes the idea that anyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, can be righteous. We do not have to wait

for something extraordinary to happen to us to become a leader or make a difference.

The true secret to greatness, leadership, and righteousness is not fate, but faith - faith in God and in ourselves. Moshe teaches us that we must take our lives into our own hands and strive for greatness through this faith. Unlike superheroes, we are not simply the objects of fate, but active agents in shaping our own destinies.



**Raphael Roshwalb**  
11th grade,  
Raanana

### "More Than Just a Name"

שמות פרק א

א וְאֵלֶּה, שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַבָּאִים, מִצְרָיִם: אֶת יַעֲקֹב, אִישׁ וּבֵיתוֹ בָּאוּ.

Names are superficial labels that are attached to a person, but they are also handles to a person's essence. When someone is called by their name, they respond as a whole, not just as a certain aspect of their personality.

This is why the portion of the Torah that deals with exile, a state that is foreign to a Jew's true self, is called "Names" in Hebrew

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(Shemot). Exile evokes the deepest reserves of a person's soul, reserves that would otherwise remain hidden.

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lubavitcher Rebbe know as the Tzemach Tzedek, once shared a story about his grandfather, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, and his own childhood. When he was three years old, Menachem Mendel's mother died, and he was raised by his grandfather. One day, Menachem Mendel was sitting on his grandfather's lap and pulling on his beard, calling him "Zeideh." However, Rabbi Schneur Zalman corrected him, saying that the beard was not the zeideh, but rather just a part of him. The child then pointed to his grandfather's head, eyes, hands, and body, but the



Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi

Rebbe kept asking, "Where is zeideh?"

Finally, Menachem Mendel hid behind the door and called out, "ZEI-DEH!" When his grandfather turned towards him, the child exclaimed, "There is the zeideh!"

This story illustrates that a person's essence, or true self, is not

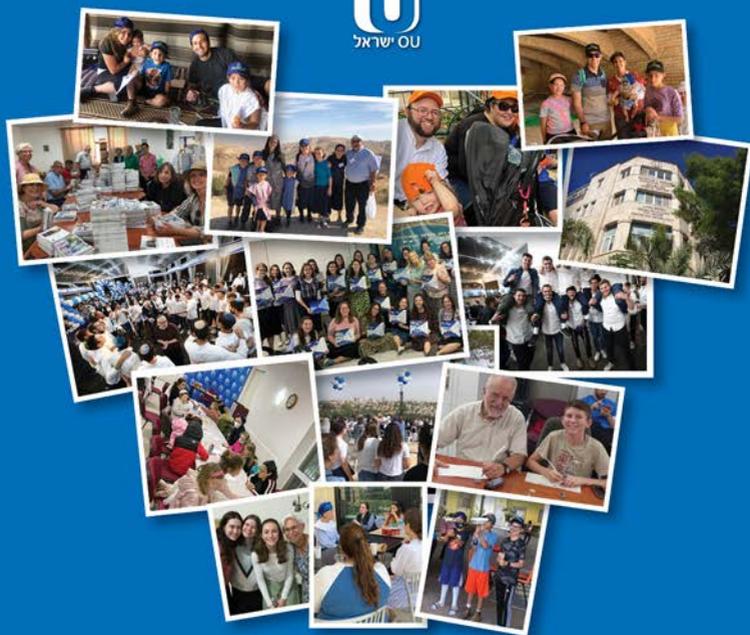
just their appearance or physical attributes, but rather something that is more abstract and difficult to define.

Every teen throughout his life comes to a point of standstill, a 'what to do now?' kind of situation where they get to decide what their name represents and to try to always pick the right choice and further not only their name but the name of Am Yisrael in this world and in the one to come. ■

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