



# Noteworthy Names

*“Eileh shemot ha’anashim asher shalach Moshe lator et ha’aretz, Vayikra Moshe le’Hoshea bin Nun Yehoshua -These are the names of the men Moshe sent to explore the land, and he gave Hoshea son of Nun the name Yehoshua.” (Bamidbar 13;16)* Why is this verse necessary after the Torah just listed the names of the spies? The phrase, “these are the names” seems to carry a specific significance.

A name is the greatest treasure one can ever receive. A person’s name in our physical world parallels the essence of his soul found in heaven. Indeed, the Arizal teaches that when one wants to wake someone up, it is usually sufficient to just mention their name. More than just providing a stimulus to get out of bed, it awakens the inherent soul within. A name also has a direct impact on the trajectory of one’s life. The name Avraham or Sara may influence the bearer of that name to be more inclined toward chessed and righteousness. Rabbi Dovid Hofstadter notes that a child is affected not only by the intrinsic meaning of the name he is given, but also by the personality and character of the person they are named for in addition to the thoughts and intentions of the parents

at the time of naming. Although everyone has free will, our name plays a major role in informing who we will become.

Rabbi Moshe Weinberger relates that he learned a priceless lesson from Rav Pam *zt”l* about the power of names when he was starting out as a young teacher. Rav Pam asked the group of new rabbeim what they think the most beloved word would be for a teacher to tell his students. Some offered, “recess!” others said, “no homework!” still others said, “summer vacation!” Rav Pam responded, “A child’s name is the most beloved word he can hear.” Calling each student by his name creates a crucial connection and builds the child’s sense of self and worth.

Rav Moshe Wolfson explains that a person’s name is a way of reminding him of his mission in this world. In contrast, angels don’t have one specific name since their tasks are continuously changing. When Yaakov Avinu asked the angel who fought with him to tell him his name, the angel responded, “Why do you ask my name?” Our tradition teaches us that this angel is synonymous with the *yetzer hara*, whose job is to make sure people don’t ask “what is my name?” meaning, “what is my essence and calling?” When people fail to focus on their mission and their special qualities, the *yetzer hara* scores a victory. Thus, says Rav Wolfson, the Torah repeats once again, “these are

the names..." to emphasize the directive for these men to focus intently on their mission and relay an accurate report. Interestingly, the Midrash interprets each spies' name unfavorably after they returned with a negative report of the land. Each person can live up to the greatest levels inherent in their name or unfortunately, can distort or pervert the power given to them in their name.

We now appreciate the compelling advice of the Shelah HaKadosh to recite a *passuk* at the conclusion of the *Shemoneh Esrei* that begins with the first letter of one's name and ends with the last letter of one's name. The verse that we choose can inspire each one of us as we step away from our communion with Hashem, to focus on our life's goals and lean into a life with direction, motivation and enthusiasm. ■

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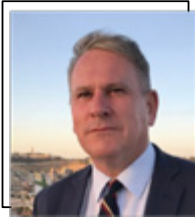
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Norman Blaustein and Kathy Poodiack will be  
 receiving the Volunteer Appreciation Award.

Eve Harow, director of tourism and education for The One Israel Fund, will be our Master of Ceremony.

"From the heART" a silent art auction. Created works by the lone soldier/lone b'not sheirut community will be on display to be auctioned off.

June	Botanical Gardens	6:00
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