

# Torah Tidbits

ISSUE 1418 MAY 8<sup>TH</sup> '21 כ"ו אייר תשפ"א

פרשת בהר - בחקתי

PARSHAT BEHAR - BECHUKOTAI  
SHABBAT MEVARCHIM - PIRKEI AVOT 5



**A PERSPECTIVE ON THE MERON TRAGEDY**  
**Rabbi Avi Berman**  
Executive Director, OU Israel  
page 4



**SPECIAL FOR YOM YERUSHALAYIM**  
**Rabbi Chaim Brovender**  
Rosh Yeshiva, Web Yeshiva  
page 56



**IM ESHKACHECH YERUSHALAYIM**  
**Rebbetzin Lori Palatnik**  
Founding Director of Momentum  
page 54



**YERUSHALAYIM - A TALE OF TWO CITIES**  
**Rabbi Anthony Manning**  
Co-Director, Midreshet Tehillah  
page 60



**YERUSHALAYIM IN/OUT TIMES FOR SHABBAT PARSHAT BEHAR BECHUKOTAI**  
Candles 6:48PM • Earliest 5:58 • Havdala 8:04PM • Rabbeinu Tam 8:42PM

# This week's Torah Tidbits cover image!

**Photo By:** Judah S. Harris, American-born photographer and filmmaker living in Jerusalem

**Meaning:** I created this painterly rendition of the Kotel in 2008, working in Photoshop and using a scan of a photographic slide I had taken a few decades ago on a Chol Hamoed Sukkot.

The scene is real, but the impression is imagined, including the color, the contrast, and more.

If Yom Yerushalayim celebrated (28th of Iyar) marks the reunification of Jerusalem, it also prods us to reunite with this holy city and the site where the Temple existed in times so long ago.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**04** *A Perspective On The Meron Tragedy*  
Rabbi Avi Berman

**08** *Aliya By Aliya Sedra Summary*  
Rabbi Reuven Tradburks

**14** *Bullying*  
Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

**18** *Believe in.... Moshe?*  
Rabbi Shmuel Goldin

**22** *We the People*  
Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l

**28** *Probing The Prophets*  
Rabbi Nachman Winkler

**30** *Eemunah*  
Rebbetzin Shira Smiles

**40** *OU Israel*  
Virtual Schedule

**64** *The Prohibition of Dam (Blood) #2*  
Rabbi Ezra Friedman

**66** *He's My Brother*  
Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider

**68** *The Return To The Land*  
Menachem Persoff

**70** *Giving Ma'aser Years Later*  
Rabbi Daniel Mann

**72** *The Surplus of Eggs*  
Rabbi Gideon Weitzman

**74** *Preparing The Garden For Shemittah, #3*  
Rabbi Moshe Bloom

**76** *Towards Meaningful Tefilla*  
Rebbetzin Zemira Ozarowski

**78** *Torah 4 Teens By Teens*  
Rabbi Yosef Ginsberg // Liat Sanders

## YOM YERUSHALAYIM SECTION

**32** *In the Merit of the Land of Israel*  
Rabbi Shalom Rosner

**34** *Komemiyus!*  
Rabbi Judah Mischel

**46** *Jerusalem - City of Magnets*  
Rabbi Moshe Taragin

**50** *Simchat Shmuel*  
Rabbi Sam Shor

**54** *Im Eshkachech*  
Rebbetzin Lori Palatnik

**56** *Yom Yerushalayim*  
Rabbi Chaim Brovender

**58** *I'm Coming Home...*  
Oren Sapir

**60** *Yerushalayim- A Tale of Two Cities*  
Rabbi Anthony Manning

**SHABBAT MEVARCHIM: Rosh Chodesh Sivan will be on Wednesday May 12**

המולד יהיה ביום שלישי, שלשים ואחת דקות ושבעה חלקים אחרי שמונה בלילה  
ראש חדש סיון יהיה ביום רביעי הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה.

# CANDLE LIGHTING AND HAVDALA TIMES



## OTHER Z'MANIM



### JERUSALEM

**RANGES 11 DAYS / WED - SHAB  
MAY 5 - 15 / 23 IYAR - 4 SIVAN**

Earliest Talit and Tefilin	4:58 - 4:46am
Sunrise	5:53 - 5:42am
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema (Magen Avraham: 8:35 - 8:28am)	9:14 - 9:09am
Sof Z'man T'fila (According to the Gra and Baal HaTanya)	10:21 - 10:18am
Chatzot (Halachic noon)	12:36pm
Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha)	1:10pm
Plag Mincha	5:56 - 6:03pm
Sunset (counting elevation)	7:24 - 7:34pm

CANDLES	EARLIEST	BEHAR BECHUKOTAI	HAVDALA	BAMIDBAR		
				Candles	Earliest	Havdala
6:48	5:58	Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	8:04	6:53	6:02	8:10
7:05	6:01	Aza area (Netivot, S'derot, Et al)	8:06	7:10	6:04	8:12
7:06	5:59	Beit Shemesh / RBS	8:05	7:11	6:03	8:11
7:03	5:59	Gush Etzion	8:04	7:08	6:03	8:10
7:05	6:01	Raanana / Tel Mond / Herzliya / K. Saba	8:07	7:10	6:04	8:12
7:04	6:00	Modi'in / Chashmona'im	8:05	7:09	6:03	8:11
7:05	6:01	Netanya	8:07	7:10	6:05	8:13
7:04	6:00	Be'er Sheva	8:05	7:09	6:03	8:10
7:05	6:00	Rehovot	8:06	7:10	6:04	8:12
6:48	6:00	Petach Tikva	8:06	6:53	6:04	8:12
7:04	6:00	Ginot Shomron	8:06	7:09	6:03	8:11
6:56	6:01	Haifa / Zichron	8:08	7:01	6:05	8:13
7:03	5:59	Gush Shiloh	8:04	7:08	6:02	8:10
7:05	6:01	Tel Aviv / Giv'at Shmuel	8:07	7:10	6:05	8:12
7:03	5:59	Giv'at Ze'ev	8:05	7:08	6:03	8:10
7:03	5:59	Chevron / Kiryat Arba	8:04	7:08	6:02	8:10
7:05	6:01	Ashkelon	8:07	7:10	6:05	8:12
7:05	6:00	Yad Binyamin	8:06	7:09	6:04	8:11
6:59	5:59	Tzfat / Bik'at HaYarden	8:06	7:05	6:03	8:12
7:03	5:58	Golan	8:05	7:08	6:02	8:11

**Rabbeinu Tam (J'lem) - 8:42 PM • next week - 8:47 pm**

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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Headquarters: 11 Broadway, New York, NY 10004 ♦ 212-563-4000 ♦ website: www.ou.org

**Torah  
Tidbits**

Editor Emeritus: Phil Chernofsky  
Editor: Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider | aarong@ouisrael.org  
Advertising: Ita Rochel | 02-5609125 or ttads@ouisrael.org  
Website: www.ou.org/torah/tt | www.torahtidbits.com

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22 Keren HaYesod ⇄ POB 37015 ⇄ Jerusalem 91370  
phone: (02) 560 9100 | fax: (02) 566-0156

email: office@ouisrael.org

website: www.ouisrael.org

Founders and initial benefactors of the OU Israel Center:  
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Torah Tidbits and many of the  
projects of OU Israel are assisted  
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# DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY



## Rabbi Avi Berman Executive Director, OU Israel

On Motzei Shabbat I had the heart-wrenching experience of attending two levayas for Kedoshim of the Meron tragedy. The first was a sweet boy by the name of Yedidya Fogel z”l who was a classmate of one of my son’s in elementary school and Yeshiva. The second levaya was Eliezer (Azi) Koltai z”l the 13 year old son of a man that I spend many hours speaking with on flights to the US, and he is my in laws’ next door neighbor. My former Chavrusa who is a Rebbe in the Mir lost a student. A colleague’s relative. An OU Israel board member’s relative. Donny Morris z”l, the NCSY Kollel alumnus who was learning in Shaalvim. Other Kedoshim are relatives of people that I know as well.

Walking the streets of Givat Zeev this Shabbat, driving the streets Motzei Shabbat, listening to the radio - it’s clear that the whole country is in shock and Aveilut. Nobody can grasp the enormity of this tragedy. 45 of our holiest were taken from us on such a holy day, at such a holy

event, in such a horrible way. This tragedy which took so many, and such young lives in such a short time is a complete shock to everyone.

I was thinking about why the entire country, most of whom don’t have personal connections to these young men, was so affected. When people pass away in car accidents, after an illness, or other reasons it’s tragic. However there is something about this mass tragedy occurring at such a happy event which is striking. This tragedy reminds me of the tragedy of the Versailles wedding hall collapse where I had a similar feeling to what we are experiencing now. In that tragedy, people went from the happiest moment of celebrating a loved one’s marriage to so many suddenly losing their lives. Similarly, the Simcha at the Keiver of Rashbi on Lag BaOmer is currently one of the most uplifting, inspiring, happiest moments on the Jewish calendar. 45 boys and men gave their lives literally at the pinnacle of spiritual joy. What was supposed to be one of the happiest moments of the year turned to tragedy.

Parents, including myself, send their kids to Meron in order for them to have an uplifting experience and connect more to Hashem. Not for one second did anyone imagine that what was supposed to be a happy event would be one that 45 Kedoshim would



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never come back from.

All Friday, I kept asking myself how could it be that davka on Lag BaOmer, the day that we are supposed to come out of Aveilut, we are experiencing a day of national mourning? And not only davka on this day, but davka at the place of Rashbi's Kever. It doesn't get more shocking than this.

The beauty of Rashbi and the incredible experience of Lag BaOmer at Meron is because everyone is dancing there **together**. Rashbi brings everyone together. Lag BaOmer in Meron is the biggest annual event in Israel. Every year, hundreds of thousands come to Rashbi from around the Jewish world to dance together. Looking around the mountain you see Jews of all backgrounds: different Hassidic sects, Litvish, Dati Leumi, Mesorati, secular, Ashkenazi, Sephardi, young and old, men and women, boys and girls – all together; everybody comes to Rashbi. The fact that this tragedy occurred specifically at this moment of unity is hard to fathom.

On Erev Shabbat they released 35 names. After looking at the names, I couldn't stop thinking about these holy individuals over Shabbat. These Kedoshim were from all over: Argentina, Montreal, Monsey, New Jersey, Cleveland, Yerushalayim, Rechasim, Ramleh, Beit Shemesh, Bnei Brak, Givat Shmuel, and so many other places. Where else would you have a gathering like this, of so many Jews from so many places?

Being at two levaya's in one night meant that I needed to leave one early to rush to the second one, and going from one

levaya to another is a horrible feeling. One thing that I noticed at both funerals is that with thousands of people attending each one, most of the people there never met the person whose funeral they were attending or knew the family. And, people from all different backgrounds attended the funerals: Streimels, Kipot Srugot, long Payot, short Payot, Litvish, Hassidic. Everyone was there. I saw so many Jews from all different walks of life. Men and women, all coming to show their love and be part of this terrible mourning.

I was especially touched by the amount of people that said that there are people who were killed that don't have family here and asked everyone to go to those levayas. There's such a feeling of Achdut. Klal Yisrael attending these levayot whether they know the people or not shows how we are really connected. "Kol Yisrael Arevim Ze LaZeh;" when one Jew is in sorrow, another Jew is in pain. Hakadush Baruch Hu is coming and saying, "You are all my children. It makes no difference what you look like, each and every one of you is dear to Me."

On Sunday, I attended two other levayas. The first was Dov Steinmetz z"l from Montreal, and from there I went to Shaalvim for Donny Morris z"l's levaya. Just like the previous night, they were packed with Jews from all different backgrounds, most of whom never met these Kedoshim or their families, but they felt the pain of Klal Yisrael. I was particularly touched that after the Hespeditim for Donny z"l, the thousands of attendees spontaneously began singing "Ani Avdecha Ben Amatecha" (those of

you on Facebook can see the video of this which I posted on my personal Facebook page).

Another emotional encounter I had this week was taking Miriam Peretz to pay a Shiva call to the Morris family in Shaalvim. After bringing Miriam to sit with Mrs. Morris, I saw them having a private conversation. Miriam asked me if the community of Bergenfield where they live is a warm community. I told her yes, “why are you asking?” And she responded that any parent in their situation needs a lot of love. Miriam told me that she shared that the only way to overcome the horrific tragedy of the loss of a child is with the help, encouragement and support of their family and community around them, and I think this is a vital message for each and every one of us.

All of Klal Yisrael went through a tragedy together. Hundreds of thousands, if not a million people, are grappling with the enormity and pain of this tragedy. Some were at Meron and were witness to the horrific scene, others were on their way there but their busses were turned around, others have loved ones that were there, and for others the pain of their brothers and sisters touched them to the core even without having a direct connection to Meron.

While at Shaalvim, I also spent time giving Chizuk to Talmidim whose families I know well. I gave them each a hug and shared some of what got me through similar losses when I was younger. My hope and prayer is that I was able to convey messages that

will help them get through tomorrow, and then the day after that, and the day after that.

In our work with youth we see how even small things can have a major impact on a teen, or anyone for that matter. I recommend that each of us keep our eyes open, especially if we know anyone that was at Meron, on the way there, planning on going and didn’t go, and even those who didn’t go but are hearing about what happened. Let’s keep a finger on the pulse of those around us and allow people to pour out their hearts and speak what’s on their minds. Make sure they know that it’s ok to ask questions and it’s ok to not understand, but keeping their feelings, frustrations, and anger pent up inside will make it harder for them to move on.

It is important for each and every one of us feeling impacted by this tragedy to find someone to share your feelings with, and if we have people around us that we feel are in need of someone to talk to, let’s make sure to be there for them. We can all do something. Listening to a friend, reciting Tehillim, visiting a Shiva home, learning in memory of the victims and for a Refuah Shleima for the injured, or donating blood are just some ideas. There is no end to what we can do. We went through a tragedy as a Klal and the only way we will overcome it is as a Klal.



Avi,  
Executive Director, OU Israel  
[aberman@ouisrael.org](mailto:aberman@ouisrael.org)



## Baruch Dayan HaEmet

**With a very heavy national heart OU Israel mourns the tragedy that befell the Lag B'Omer celebrations at Mount Meron.**

**Our thoughts and our prayers are with the grieving families and we daven for the refuah shleimah for the injured. Please join us in dedicating your prayers and acts of unity and kindness to the families for healing and comfort.**

---

*All shivrim at the OU Israel Center this coming week will be dedicated לעלוי נשמת the 45 pure souls who left this world.*

Ariel Ahdut, 21

R' Yisrael Anakvah, 24

Avrohom Daniel Ambon, 21

R' Moshe Bergman, 24

R' Yonoson Chevroni, 28

Yedidya Chayut, 13

Eliyahu Cohen, 16

R' Simcha Bunim Diskind, 23

Chen Doron, 41

Moshe Mordechai Elchadad, 12

Yosef Dovid Elchadad, 18

Yehoshua Englander, 9

Moshe Natan Englander, 14

Mordechai Fekete, 24

Yedida Asher Fogel, 22

Elazar Gefner, 52

Rabbi Shragi Gestetner, 34

R' Eliezar Mordechai Goldberg, 37

Rabbi Yosef Greenbaum, 22

Rabbi Eliezer Tzvi Joseph, 26

Menachem Knoblowitz, 21

Nachman Kirshbaum, 15

Rabbi Shmuel Zvi Klagsbald, 43

Yossi Kohn, 21

Eliezer Yitzchok Koltai, 13

Rabbi David Krause, 33

Shlomo Zalman Leibowitz, 19

Yosef Yehuda Levi, 17

Moshe Levy, 14

Yosef Mastorov, 18

Rabbi Shimon Matlon, 37

Yishai Me'ulam, 17

Daniel (Donny) Morris, 19

Chaim Rock, 18

Rabbi Yehuda Leib Rubin, 27

Rabbi Chaim Ozer Seller, 24

Moshe Ben Shalom, 21

Elkana Shila, 29

Rabbi Chanoch Solod, 52

Dov Steinmetz, 21

Yaakov Elchanan Strakovsky, 20

Yosef Amram Tauber, 19

Rabbi Ariel Tzadik, 56

Rabbi Moshe Tzarfati, 65

R' Menachem Asher Zeckbach, 24

# ת.נ.צ.ב.ה

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

# BEHAR- BECHUKOTAI



## ALIYA-BY-ALIYA SEDRA SUMMARY



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



### 1<sup>st</sup> aliya (Vayikra 25:1-18) **Shmita:**

The Land of Israel has its Shabbat. Work 6 years, the 7<sup>th</sup> is a Shabbat to G-d. What grows on its own is available to be used. Yovel: 7 cycles of 7 years is followed by Yovel, the 50<sup>th</sup> year, the Jubilee year. It is holy; pronounce liberty throughout the land. Slaves go free; land returns to its original owner. When selling your land, do not abuse the buyer knowing the land will return to you in the 50<sup>th</sup> year. Sell it commensurate with the years the buyer will have until Yovel. Keeping these laws will allow you to be secure in the land.

The theme of holiness is expanded yet again. We have had holiness in the Mikdash, our approach to Him in His home. We have had



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holiness in food. Holiness in relationships; those permitted and those not. Holiness in time; Shabbat and holidays. Now we are introduced to the holiness of the land of Israel.

There are 2 aspects to the holiness of the land of Israel. First, it is the land of the Jewish nation. We have unique laws of kindness in agriculture; leaving parts for the poor, giving support to the Kohanim and Leviim. These laws only apply in our land, where we build our unique Jewish society.

And second, our land is where G-d has invited us to be close to Him. We are closest to Him in His home, in the Mikdash. And in Jerusalem, His city. But the holiness of proximity to Him seeps outward from Jerusalem to the entire land. Hence, the land is holy both in our standing close to the King. And in it being our unique homeland, the place where we live according to our unique laws, reflecting Jewish philosophy.

Shmita tells us that we need realize that all the earth is His. It has its Shabbat – by refraining from work on the 7<sup>th</sup> year, we affirm that the land is ours but temporarily. We are but sojourners on this land; it is His. Slaves go free in Yovel; for we are all His servants.



2<sup>nd</sup> aliya (25:19-28) Don't be concerned that you will not have enough to eat if you rest the land;

I will provide. Let the land not be permanently sold; for the land is Mine, you but sojourners on it. If **one becomes needy and sells his field**, redeem it. The seller may also redeem it according to the years left until it returns to him in Yovel.

After introducing our limited ownership in the land of Israel, the Torah switches to our responsibilities to one another. When people are in trouble, help them out. The sale of a field cannot end well. It's losing a job. In an agrarian society, what will this former landowner do for a living? This is the beginning of a downward spiral. Redeem his field; get it back for him, so he can make a living. This is as the Talmud states; the highest form of tzedaka is giving a person a job. Redeeming the field is returning his way of making a living to him.



**3<sup>rd</sup> aliya** (25:29-38) A house in a city may also be redeemed if sold, but only within the first year.

After that, the sale is permanent. Homes in open towns are considered like fields; they may be redeemed and they return in Yovel. The towns of the Leviim, even if walled, are always able to be redeemed and they too return in Yovel. When one is in need, help him. Do not charge interest; give him life. I am G-d who took you out of Egypt to give you this land and to be your G-d.

The Talmud points out that the progression of stories the Torah presents here is from bad to worse. A forced sale of a field due to poverty. Then the sale of a home. Then the need for a loan. And in the next aliya, sold as a slave. The cheapest tzedaka is the first one; getting the field back, avoiding this whole collapse.



**4<sup>th</sup> aliya** (25:39-26:9) If one is sold to you as a slave, do not oppress him. Treat him as a worker. He

goes free in the Yovel year. For you are My servants. Slaves purchased from the

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surrounding nations are as property that passes to future generations. If a Jew is sold to a non-Jew, a relative shall redeem him, for the Jewish people are servants to Me, My servants that I redeemed from Egypt. (Bechukotai) And if you will do all my mitzvot you will have bounty, peace, unusual success against your enemies. I will turn to you, multiply you and fulfill My covenant with you.

Parshat Bechukotai, though short, is powerful. Following an entire book of holiness, the stakes are laid out. The pursuit of holiness in the land that is holy is a high stakes endeavor. The achievement brings wonderful blessing; food, peace, health. For us, who enjoy walking in this holy place, the blessings are abundant. Though we know from history, so is the .... opposite.



**5<sup>th</sup> aliya** (26:10-46) And I will be in your midst; I, your G-d, You, my people. I will remove the yokes from you and you will walk proudly.

But if you do not do My mitzvot, I too will not pay attention to you. You will be subjected to illness, to enemies, to drought. If you persist in ignoring Me, I will persist in ignoring you, leaving you vulnerable to war, pestilence, famine. Your holy places will be vanquished, your cities destroyed; you will be scattered around the world. Then the land will have the rest of its Shmita. You will be panicked in your exile, afraid of a driven leaf. You will admit your failings; I will remember my promises to you. Even in your dispersion, I will not allow you to be destroyed.

Failure to live up to the demands of this holy place brings desolation and exile. The desolation of the land of Israel without the Jewish people is legendary. Chilling. The Jewish diaspora, Jewish history, is predicted here; who needs a description of its fulfillment? Jewish suffering in exile was taken by other religions to be a sign of the rejection of the Jew. The return to the land of Israel, so unexpected, so unprecedented, and so dynamic is a powerful refutation of that. If the exile was Divine displeasure with our dismissive attitude to Him, the return to the land can only be Divine pleasure in bringing us close. And a charge for us; to never be dismissive of Him, but to engage, to search, to reach. What privileged times we, the undeserving, are fortunate to be a part of. And how vigilant we need be to not again be dismissive of Him in His land.



**6<sup>th</sup> aliya** (27:1-15) When you make a vow of your value to G-d, there are set values for different ages and stations. This value is given to the Mikdash. If you pledge an animal, it is given



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and should not be switched. A pledge of a home may be given or redeemed.

Following the chilling section of the curses, the book of Vayikra ends with a full chapter of laws of vows. Generosity inspires contributions to the Mikdash. That's a good thing. The religious centre of the Jewish people needs contributions. But this section is not only about what is given; but also what is not. When I pledge my value, is my intent to become a monk, giving up my life to serve in the Mikdash? The Torah does not endorse that. Pay money; keep your station in life. The Torah imposes the interpretation of vows of people and their value to be monetary gifts; but not Temple slaves. If you pledge an animal? Fine, let that become a sacrifice. But not you. Or any around you. A home too; the Torah does not want the Mikdash to acquire vast holdings. Homes are for people; the Mikdash is to be splendid, grand, and inspiring. But it is not to become a vast financial empire.

 7<sup>th</sup> **aliya** (27:16-34) If a field is pledged, it's worth until Yovel is calculated. That value is given to the Mikdash to redeem the field. If it is not redeemed, it remains with the Mikdash even after Yovel. Property which becomes owned by the Mikdash may not be redeemed.

Fields are the quintessential means of livelihood. If you wanted the Mikdash to be a financial empire, fields would be the place to start. But the Torah's default is that a donation of a field ought to be redeemed. Fields are for the people to make a living; not for the Mikdash.



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The book of Vayikra, the book of man's approach to G-d, ends with a sober balance. While we approach G-d, dedicate our lives to Him, reach for Him, and He for us, the Torah protects us from going too far, from divesting of our assets, ridding ourselves of our homes and becoming a Temple slave, giving our all to the Mikdash. Our challenge is to be holy in our homes and our fields while reaching for the Divine. ■

**HAFTORAH**  
**BEHAR/BECHUKOTAI**  
**YIRMIYAHU 16:19-17:14**

The theme found in the Torah reading of blessings and curses is echoed in the haftorah which discusses the punishment to those who disregard God's will and the reward to those who follow His will.

The courageous prophet Yirmiyahu scolds the people and warns them of the disaster if they maintain their idolatrous practices. Nothing less than exile from the Holy Land will come as the result of not having faith in God and commitment to the mitzvot.

Moreover, there is the positive outgrowth of obedience and loyalty to the Torah: "Blessed is the man who trusts in God; to whom God will be his trust. For he shall be like a tree planted by the water, and which spreads its roots out into a stream, so it will not be affected when heat comes, and its leaves shall be green, and in the year of drought will not be anxious, neither shall it cease from bearing fruit."

The haftorah concludes with a declaration

of hope and salvation: "Heal me, O God, then shall I be healed; help me, then I shall be helped, for You are my praise!" ■

 **STATS**

	BEHAR	BECHUK	B&B
of 54 sedras in Torah	32nd	33rd	-
of 10 in Vayikra	9th	10th	-
Lines	99	131	230
Rank (Among The 54)	50th	47th	-
Parshiyot	7	5	12
P'tuchot	1	3	4
S'tumot	6	2	8
P'sukim	57	78	135
Rank (Torah/Vayikra)	50/10	46/7	-
Words	737	1013	1750
Rank (Torah/Vayikra)	50/10	47/7	-
Letters	2817	3992	6809
Rank (Torah/Vayikra)	50/10	47/7	-

 **MITZVOT**

	BEHAR	BECHUK	B&B
Mitzvot (pos/prohib)	7+17	7+5	14+22

*My appreciation to  
Rabbi Tradburks for his very clear  
explanations of the weekly parsha-  
it helps me alot and I appreciate it  
very much - Lila Stein*

*Mazal tov to  
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# THE PERSON

BY RABBI DR. TZVI HERSH WEINREB  
OU Executive Vice President, Emeritus

# IN THE PARSHA

## Bullying

It is an old word, and it describes a behavior that has been around since the very beginning of history. Yet the word seems to me to be used more and more frequently these days, and the behavior it describes has gotten out of control.

The word is “bullying,” and it refers to a behavior that victimizes others, that abuses them physically, or more typically, verbally. The old adage “sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never harm me” is simply not true. Words do inflict pain upon others and often cause long lasting damage to them. Lately, we have read of more than one suicide which was the result of bullying.

Whenever the media focuses on some supposedly new phenomenon, I am contacted, usually by a reporter, sometimes by a constituent, with the question, “What

does Judaism have to say about this?” During the past few years, as the public has become more concerned about bullying, I have heard that question many times.

The answer is a simple one. Judaism has a lot to say about bullying. One especially relevant source is in the first of this week’s double Torah portion, *Behar-Bechukotai*. “Do not wrong one another...” (*Leviticus 25:17*) Rashi quotes the Talmud, which states emphatically that this refers to verbal abuse.

Rashi, following the *Midrash*, provides two interesting examples of how words can be used to abuse another. “One should not,” writes Rashi, “tease or taunt another person, and one should not give inappropriate advice to others.” The former is an obvious example of bullying, but the latter is a much more subtle example of the damage that words can cause. Misleading a person by giving him advice which does not fit his personal situation is, in the eyes



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of our Sages, a form of bullying as well.

The *Mishnah* and Talmud in the tractate *Bava Metzia* give numerous examples of verbal abuse which all provide insights into the definition of bullying that was adopted by our rabbinic Sages. By analyzing these examples, we learn of some of the forms that verbal abuse takes.

“One must not say to a repentant sinner, ‘Remember your former deeds.’” The person who speaks to a repentant sinner this way is guilty of cynicism. He is facing a spiritually motivated individual who sincerely wishes to change. But by confronting him with his past deeds, the penitent becomes discouraged and his idealistic commitment is thereby diminished, if not entirely eliminated.

“One must not say to a sick person that his illness must be a punishment for his misdeeds. He who addresses a sick person in this manner is guilty of both pretentiousness and sanctimony. He dares to presume that he knows the workings of the Divine system of reward and punishment, and, in addition, arrogantly proclaims the message, ‘I am holier than thou.’

“One should always be heedful of



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wronging his wife, for because of her sensitivity she is frequently brought to tears.”

How aware our Sages were of the fact that the likeliest targets of bullying are precisely the people who are closest to us. Sensitivity to others must begin with sensitivity to our spouses and family members.

It is apparent just from these examples that our Sages were very familiar with the phenomenon of bullying in all of its diverse forms. They knew that bullying takes many forms, including cynicism, arrogance, condescension and disdain.

They were even aware of the prevalence of abuse within the spousal relationship. This is noteworthy because when I was receiving my graduate education in psychology, the topic of domestic violence was absent from our curriculum. It was much more recently that the gap in my professional education was filled, and the reality of the cruelty which pervades many families became the focus of my clinical work.

In the book of *Genesis*, there is an example of emotional abuse within the context of a loving relationship. It is so shocking an example that I hesitate to mention it. When the barren Rachel bitterly bemoans

her fate to her husband Jacob, he becomes angry with her and says, “Am I in place of God, who has denied you the fruit of the womb?” (*Genesis* 30:2) The rabbis in the *Midrash* disclose the Almighty’s reaction to Jacob’s retort: “Is this how one responds to a person in distress?” The *Midrash* is teaching us that even the patriarch Jacob was once guilty of a callousness that bordered upon emotional abuse and was held accountable for it.

There is a lesson which we all should take to heart whenever we read about flagrant bullying. It is a lesson which must be learned whenever we encounter any prohibition in the Torah. That lesson is that we are all capable of bullying, and in fact, unless we guard against it, may engage in this practice much more often than we realize, and certainly much more frequently than we admit to ourselves. When the Torah tells us, as it does in this week’s *parsha*, that we are not to wrong another person by abusing him or her verbally, we must not think that this is addressed to some villain or scoundrel. Rather, it is a lesson directed to each and every one of us, and it is a lesson we must learn. ■

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## SHABBAT MEVARCHIM

# Believe in.... Moshe?

One particular phrase rooted at Mount Sinai strikes a jarring note...

On the eve of Revelation, as God describes the momentous events about to unfold, He informs Moshe: “Behold, I will come to you in the darkness of a cloud, so that the nation will hear when I speak with you, וגם בך יאמינו לעולם, *and also in you will they believe forever....*”

The questions are obvious.

Belief in God, as a goal of the Sinaitic experience makes clear sense. The encounter at Sinai, after all, is the moment of closest contact between HaShem and His people; the moment that marks the birth of His “Chosen Nation” and launches their Divine mission across the ages.

*But, belief in Moshe?* Why is this belief so important that it deserves mention at this critical juncture? What, exactly, are the contours of belief in Moshe, and how does HaShem’s orchestration of the events at Sinai shape them? Finally, by including

belief in Moshe as part of the experience at Sinai, isn’t HaShem courting disaster? Isn’t He dangerously setting the stage for the sin of the golden calf- by suggesting that belief in a specific mortal leader, albeit one as great as Moshe, is essential to the nation’s ongoing survival?

The most obvious answer to our questions lies in the unique role that Moshe plays, not only as our greatest leader, but as *Moshe Rabbeinu, Moshe Our Teacher*, the progenitor of halachic authority.

From Sinai arises, not only the law that defines us as a nation, but also the process that enables us to interpret and apply that law across the ages. Essential to this process is the acceptance of Halachic authority, the acknowledgement that experts in the law will be charged with its explication and application over time. Moshe, the crucial first figure in this chain of authority, emerges from armed at Sinai with information entrusted only to him; information that he is tasked to share with the people. Belief in *Moshe Rabbeinu*, in Moshe’s “Rabbinic authority,” is thus critical to the success of the divine endeavor launched at Sinai.

Apparently, however, this is not enough. There is yet another powerful layer of belief required of us.



“אני מאמין” the Rambam famously proclaims in his 13 principles of faith, “I believe, with complete faith that the *prophecy of Moshe*, our teacher, peace be to him, was true, and that he was the *father of the prophets*-those who preceded him and those who follow him.

*The highest form of prophetic vision is vision that remains rooted to this world*

A belief- *not only in Moshe, the teacher, but in Moshe, the prophet*- is rooted at Sinai. But what exactly does this belief entail? Why is it so important? And, how does such belief inform and shape our religious outlook?

A powerful answer can be found in the writings of the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century Italian scholar, Rabbi Ovadia Sforno.

Focusing on the Torah’s testimony that Moshe alone possessed the ability to confer with God פנים אל פנים, face to face, the Sforno asks: *What is the actual meaning of פנים אל פנים? What specific aspect of Moshe’s prophetic vision differentiated him from all others?*

The Sforno’s answer is powerfully intriguing...

Moshe, the Sforno suggests, was the only navi who was able to *encounter God while remaining in control of his natural senses*. All other nevi'im were forced to “leave” this earth, to enter a trance or dreamlike state, when facing HaShem’s presence. Not so, Moshe. This great leader experienced



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the highest form of prophecy possible by remaining connected to the world, in full control of his human faculties.

Going one step further, the Sforno applies this understanding of Moshe's נבואה specifically to the phenomenon with which we began, to God's orchestration of a "belief in Moshe" at Sinai. According to the Sforno, HaShem's promise to Moshe, "... and also in you will they believe forever," is to be interpreted as follows:

*Moshe, the Israelites will doubt you no longer. For a few short moments, they, themselves, will experience Moshe-like prophecy. For a few short moments, rooted at the foot of the mountain, they will experience My direct presence, yet remain in "their world." And, as a result of that singular experience, גם בך יאמינו לעולם, also in you will they believe forever. They will forever retain the belief that such vision is possible. They will believe that the attribute you uniquely possess, the ability to function simultaneously in heaven and earth, can actually be achieved.*

The Sforno's approach to the scene at Sinai expresses what, at first, seems to be an astonishing postulate. *The highest form of prophetic vision is vision that remains rooted to this world.*

And yet, upon consideration, this postulate is consistent with a truth that courses through our entire tradition. Even the most mystical experiences achieve their greatest iteration when they somehow connect to the realities of our existence, when they inform and shape our experiences on earth.

What Moshe achieved in prophecy we are meant to achieve through the performance of mitzvot. To find a way to remain simultaneously "apart from and a part of" the world around us remains our greatest challenge. To seek our unique vision, that which sets us apart from all others-but, then, to bring that vision to bear concretely upon our surroundings.

*To believe in the possibility of Moshe's prophecy and in the paradigm it sets for us; to reach for Moshe-like vision; to stand at the foot of Sinai while gazing at the heavens; to experience God's presence while rooted to our world; to actively sanctify this world. That is our eternal mission. ■*

*Rabbi Goldin is the author of the OU press volumes "Unlocking the Torah Text," and "Unlocking the Haggada."*

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## We the People

In the final parsha of the book of Leviticus, in the midst of one of the most searing curses ever to have been uttered to a nation by way of warning, the Sages found a fleck of pure gold.

Moses is describing a nation in flight from its enemies:

Just the sound of a windblown leaf will put them to running, and they will run scared as if running from a sword! They will fall even when no one is chasing them! *They will stumble over each other* as they would before a sword, even though no one is chasing them! You will have no power to stand before your enemies. (Lev. 26:36-37)

There is, on the face of it, nothing positive in this nightmare scenario. But the Sages said: “They will stumble over each other” – read this as ‘stumble *because* of one

another’: this teaches that all Israelites are responsible for one another.”<sup>1</sup>

This is an exceedingly strange passage. Why locate this principle here? Surely the whole Torah testifies to it. When Moses speaks about the reward for keeping the covenant, he does so collectively. There will be rain in its due season. You will have good harvests. And so on. The principle that Jews have collective responsibility, that their fate and destiny are interlinked - this could have been found in the Torah’s blessings. Why search for it among its curses?

The answer is that there is nothing unique to Judaism in the idea that we are all implicated in one another’s fate. That is true of the citizens of any nation. If the economy is booming, most people benefit. If there is law and order, if people are polite to one another and come to one another’s aid, there is a general sense of well-being. Conversely, if there is a recession many people suffer. If a neighbourhood is scarred by crime, people are scared to walk the streets. We are social animals, and our horizons of possibility are shaped by the society and culture within which we live.

1 *Sifra ad loc., Sanhedrin 27b, Shavuot 39a.*

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All of this applied to the Israelites so long as they were a nation in their own land. But what about when they suffered defeat and exile and were eventually scattered across the earth? They no longer had any of the conventional lineaments of a nation. They were not living in the same place. They did not share the same language of everyday life. While Rashi and his family were living in Christian northern Europe and speaking French, Maimonides was living in Muslim Egypt, speaking and writing Arabic.

Nor did Jews share a fate. While those in northern Europe were suffering persecution and massacres during the Crusades, the Jews of Spain were enjoying their Golden Age. While the Jews of Spain were being expelled and compelled to wander round the world as refugees, the Jews of Poland were enjoying a rare sunlit moment of tolerance. In what sense therefore were they responsible for one another? What constituted them as a nation? How could they – as the author of Psalm 137 put it – sing God’s song in a strange land?

There are only two texts in the Torah that speak to this situation, namely the two sections of curses, one in our parsha, and the other in Deuteronomy in the parsha of Ki Tavo. Only these speak about a time when Israel is exiled and dispersed, scattered, as Moses later put it, “to the most distant lands under heaven.” (Deut. 30:4) There are three major differences between the two curses, however. The passage in Leviticus is in the plural, that in Deuteronomy in the singular. The curses in Leviticus are the words of God; in Deuteronomy they are the words of

Moses. And the curses in Deuteronomy do not end in hope. They conclude in a vision of unrelieved bleakness:

You will try to sell yourselves as slaves—both male and female—but no one will want to buy you. (Deut. 28:68)

Those in Leviticus end with a momentous hope:

But despite all that, when they are in enemy territory, I will not reject them or despise them to the point of totally destroying them, breaking my covenant with them by doing so, because I am the Lord their God. But for their sake I will remember the covenant with the first generation, the ones I brought out of Egypt’s land in the sight of all the nations, in order to be their God; I am the Lord. (Lev. 26: 44-45)

Even in their worst hours, according to Leviticus, the Jewish people will never be destroyed. Nor will God reject them. The covenant will still be in force and its terms still operative. This means that Jews will always be linked to one another by the same ties of mutual responsibility that they have in the land – for it was the covenant that formed them as a nation and bound them to one another even as it bound them to God. Therefore, even when falling over one another in flight from their enemies they will still be bound by mutual responsibility. They will still be a nation with a shared fate and destiny.

This is a rare and special idea, and it is the distinctive feature of the politics of covenant. Covenant became a major element in the politics of the West following

the Reformation. It shaped political discourse in Switzerland, Holland, Scotland and England in the seventeenth century as the invention of printing and the spread of literacy made people familiar for the first time with the Hebrew Bible (the “Old Testament” as they called it). There they learned that tyrants are to be resisted, that immoral orders should not be obeyed, and that kings did not rule by divine right but only by the consent of the governed.

The same convictions were held by the Pilgrim Fathers as they set sail for America, but with one difference, that they did not disappear over time as they did in Europe. The result is that the United States is the only country today whose political discourse is framed by the idea of covenant.

Two textbook examples of this are Lyndon Baines Johnson’s Inaugural of 1965, and Barack Obama’s Second Inaugural of 2013. Both use the biblical device of significant repetition (always an odd number, three or five or seven). Johnson invokes the idea of covenant five times. Obama five times begins paragraphs with a key phrase of covenant politics – words never used by British politicians – namely, “We the people.”

In covenant societies it is the people as a whole who are responsible, under God, for the fate of the nation. As Johnson put it, “Our fate as a nation and our future as a people rest not upon one citizen but upon all citizens.”<sup>2</sup> In Obama’s words, “You and I, as citizens, have the power to set this

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2 Lyndon B. Johnson, *Inaugural Address (United States Capitol, January 20, 1965)*.



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country's course."<sup>3</sup> That is the essence of covenant: we are all in this together. There is no division of the nation into rulers and ruled. We are conjointly responsible, under the sovereignty of God, for one another.

This is not open-ended responsibility. There is nothing in Judaism like the tendentious and ultimately meaningless idea set out by Jean-Paul Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* of 'absolute responsibility': "The essential consequence of our earlier remarks is that man, being condemned to be free, carries the weight of the whole world on his shoulders, he is responsible for the world and for himself as a way of being."<sup>4</sup>

In Judaism we are responsible only for what we could have prevented but did not. This is how the Talmud puts it:

Whoever can forbid their household [to commit a sin] but does not, is seized for [the sins of] their household. [If they can forbid] their fellow citizens [but do not] they are seized for [the sins of] their fellow citizens. [If they can forbid] the whole world [but do not] they are seized for [the sins of] the whole world. (Shabbat 54b)

This remains a powerful idea and an unusual one. What made it unique to Judaism is that it applied to a people scattered throughout the world united only by the terms of the covenant our

ancestors made with God at Mount Sinai. But it continues, as I have often argued, to drive American political discourse likewise even today. It tells us that we are all equal citizens in the republic of faith and that responsibility cannot be delegated away to governments or presidents but belongs inalienably to each of us. We *are* our brothers' and sisters' keepers.

That is what I mean by the strange, seemingly self-contradictory idea I have argued throughout this series of essays: that *we are all called on to be leaders*. One may fairly protest: if everyone is a leader, then no one is. If everyone leads, who is left to follow? The concept that resolves the contradiction is covenant.

Leadership is the acceptance of responsibility. Therefore if we are all responsible for one another, we are all called on to be leaders, each within our sphere of influence - be it within the family, the community, the organisation or a larger grouping still.

This can sometimes make an enormous difference. In late summer of 1999 I was in Pristina making a BBC television programme about the aftermath of the Kosovo campaign. I interviewed General Sir Michael Jackson, then head of the NATO forces. To my surprise, he thanked me for what "my people" had done. The Jewish community had taken charge of the city's 23 primary schools. It was, he said, the most valuable contribution to the city's welfare. When 800,000 people have become refugees and then return home, the most reassuring sign that life has returned

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3 Barack Obama, *Second Inaugural Address (United States Capitol, January 21, 2013)*.

4 Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes, New York, Washington Square Press, 1966, 707.

to normal is that the schools open on time. That, he said, we owe to the Jewish people.

Meeting the head of the Jewish community later that day, I asked him how many Jews were there currently living in Pristina. His answer? Eleven. The story, as I later uncovered it, was this. In the early days of the conflict, Israel had, along with other international aid agencies, sent a field medical team to work with the Kosovan Albanian refugees. They noticed that while other agencies were concentrating on the adults, there was no one working with the children. Traumatized by the conflict and far from home, the children were lost and unfocused with no systems of support in place to help them.

The team phoned back to Israel and asked for young volunteers. Every youth movement in Israel, from the most secular to the most religious, immediately formed volunteer teams of youth leaders, sent out to Kosovo for two-week intervals. They worked with the children, organizing summer camps, sports competitions, drama and music events and whatever else they could think of to make their temporary exile less traumatic. The Kosovo Albanians were Muslims, and for many of the Israeli youth workers it was their first contact and friendship with children of another faith.

Their effort won high praise from UNICEF, the United Nations' children's organization. It was in the wake of this that "the Jewish people" – Israel, the American-based "Joint" and other Jewish agencies – were asked to supervise the return to normality of the school system in Pristina.

That episode taught me the power of *chesed*, acts of kindness when extended across the borders of faith. It also showed the practical difference collective responsibility makes to the scope of the Jewish deed. World Jewry is small, but the invisible strands of mutual responsibility mean that even the smallest Jewish community can turn to the Jewish people worldwide for help, and they can achieve things that would be exceptional for a nation many times its size. When the Jewish people join hands in collective responsibility, they become a formidable force for good. ■

#### AROUND THE SHABBAT TABLE

- Do you feel that the Jewish people still share a collective sense of fate?
- Would you agree that we live in a covenantal society nowadays - especially during the COVID pandemic - where we are "all in this together"?
- There is a famous Jewish saying, "*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh bazeh*", meaning "All Israel are responsible for one another". How does this idea impact your thinking about the Jewish peoplehood?

*Covenant and Conversation 5781 is kindly supported by the Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation in memory of Maurice and Vivienne Wohl z"l. These weekly teachings from Rabbi Sacks zt"l are part of the 'Covenant & Conversation' series on the weekly Torah reading. Read more on [www.rabbisacks.org](http://www.rabbisacks.org).*



## PROBING

BY RABBI NACHMAN (NEIL) WINKLER  
Faculty, OU Israel Center

## THE PROPHETS

The message that the navi Yirmiyahu imparts to us in this week's haftarah is a difficult one. It is difficult to read, difficult to hear and difficult to understand. Like the Tochacha read this Shabbat in Parashat B'chukotai, the prophet's message is one of warning, admonition and rebuke. But unlike the Torah's reprimand that is prefaced by the many blessings that await the righteous and is followed by Hashem's comforting promise never to abandon His nation, we find no such blessings and no such words of comfort in the admonishment delivered by Yirmiyahu. In fact, were we to read through the earlier messages that precede the haftarah, we would find equally powerful condemnations of Israel.

The very opening of the 16<sup>th</sup> perek tells of G-d's command to the navi not to marry or have children because, Hashem promises, all those in this land, young and old, will be destroyed, never to be eulogized or mourned, and the bereft would never be comforted. He continues to guarantee that all joy and celebration would be gone from the land and never again would the sound

of joy and gladness, bridegroom and bride ("Kol sasson v'kol simcha, kol chatan v'kol kalah"), be heard. And these frightening promises are merely a continuation of the theme from the earlier perek (15) that opens with G-d's guarantee that, even if Moshe Rabbeinu and Shmuel HaNavi were to plead the case for Israel-Hashem would not heed their prayers.

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Hashem dwells on both Har HaBayit, the Temple Mount, as well as upon His heavenly throne

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Given these chapters of prophetic warnings of the dire consequences of Israel's sins against Man and G-d, warnings that include the eventual destruction of both the Holy Land and the Holy Temple, it is clear that the absence of kedushah, sanctity, would lead to churban, destruction. Indeed, Rav Soloveitchik posits that kedushah and churban would seem to be two extremes that negate one another. He writes: "The

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remnants of anything elevated and holy would appear to evaporate in the face of ruin and destruction.”

But the Rav continues to argue that this is not necessarily so. Rather, he adds, kedushah ‘tolerates’ churban, for Hashem dwells on both Har HaBayit, the Temple Mount, as well as upon His heavenly throne. And when He finds it necessary to destroy the Temple below, he retains its sanctity in the Temple on high. This approach, he argues, is based upon Chazal’s interpretation of the phrase (Vayikra 26: 31) “Vahashimoti et Mikd’shechem” as meaning that, even when desolate, the sacred places retain their holiness. Churban does not remove Kedushah.

But upon what source do the Rabbis in Masechet Megillah (25a) base their claim? Rav Soloveitchik says that it is the verse found in our haftarah: “Kisei Kavod marom merishon, m’kom Mikdasheinu, “As the Throne of Glory-exalted from the very beginning-so is the place of our Sanctuary.” As the heavenly throne of G-d remains sacrosanct, so too is our Sanctuary on a hill in Jerusalem.

Even in the midst of the words of rebuke and admonition we find promise and hope. That is the way of the navi.

And that, too, is the story of our nation. ■

*Rabbi Winkler's popular Jewish History lectures can be viewed by visiting the OU Israel Video archive: <https://www.ouisrael.org/video-library>*

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# Emunah

**P**arashat Behar speaks almost entirely about the laws of *Shemittah* and *Yovel*. It is therefore surprising that we find laws of social justice interspersed throughout the *parashah*. We find laws pertaining to honesty in business and laws forbidding charging interest. One would think that *parashat Mishpatim* would be the appropriate place for these *halachot*. What is the commonality between all these topics?

The *Gra* points out that the first word in the Torah, ***Bereishit***, forms the acronym of six fundamental middot that a person needs to serve Hashem. ***Bitachon, ratzon, ahavah, shetikah, yirah, torah***. The *Chovot Halevavot* understands *bitachon* as the tranquility one experiences when he completely relies on Hashem to take care of all his needs. In developing *bitachon*, one deepens his confidence in Hashem's total guardianship and thus can acquire the remaining attributes becoming a more complete *oved Hashem*.

Rav Milevsky in *Ner Uziel* understands our *parashah* as expressing the theme of *bitachon*. Particularly in the year preceding *Yovel* as well as in the *Yovel* year itself, leaving one's field fallow and forfeiting financial stability takes a tremendous amount of *bitachon* that Hashem will provide sufficient food and livelihood for this period. Cheating in business and taking interest displays the exact opposite middah, lack of trust that Hashem provides each person with his exact needs. Based on this idea, Rav Hofstedter in *Dorash Dovid* explains the following Gemara (*Shabbat 31a*). After 120 years at the Final Judgement, a person will be asked “*nasata venatata b'emunah*”, did you deal honestly and faithfully in business? *B'emunah* can also be understood “with *emunah*”. Did you lead your life with the clear understanding that Hashem is in charge? Did you live with the total conviction that everything you received was a Divine gift and did you appreciate it as such? A person living with this level of *bitachon* will invariably conduct his business with integrity because cheating others just does not fit into his ethos.

After 120 years at the Final Judgement, a person will be asked “*nasata venatata b'emunah*”, did you deal honestly and faithfully in business?

There is an added fascinating psychological insight that Rav Schlesinger shares in *Eleh Hadevarim*. He explains that in *shenat shemittah*, the seventh year, a farmer may go to other fields and pick produce from his neighbor's land. Throughout the year he becomes accustomed to take freely from wherever he chooses, whenever he wishes. Habit, as a rule, becomes embedded in one's behaviorism and has the power to dictate a person's actions. Here the Torah is concerned that one should not become accustomed to taking in ways that are not permitted. Thus, the paramount importance of honesty with other people's possessions is underscored in this section.

Rav Kaufman in *Mishchat Shemen* observes that the majority of the *bircot hashachar* are expressed in the plural except "*sheasa li kol tzarki*". This *brachah* is meant to remind us that Hashem sustains every person and provides their exact individual needs. Each morning we solidify our *midat habitachon* framing our behavior throughout the entire day. ■





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# In the Merit of the Land of Israel

זכרתי את בריתי יעקוב ואף את בריתי יצחק ואף את בריתי אברהם אזכור והארץ אזכור. (ויקרא כו:מב)

And I will remember My covenant [with] Yaakov, and also My covenant [with] Yitzhak, and also My covenant [with] Avraham I will remember. And I will remember the land. (*Vayikra* 26:42)

*Parshas Behukosai* contains the *tochaha*, the terrible and tragic curses that will befall the people of Israel if they fail to observe the commandments. Toward the end of the *tochaha*, we find the verse above, which offers hope and reminds us that eventually, Hashem will recall His covenant with the *Avos* and redeem us.

The pasuk above lists the covenant in reverse chronological order, perhaps building up to Avraham, the first Jew and the greatest merit to which the Jewish people can refer. Then, after invoking the covenant with Avraham, there is what seems to be an unrelated addition – “and I will remember the land.” If the verse is ordered from least to greatest merit, then

*Eretz Yisrael* must be the greatest merit of all!

Rabbi Yissachar Shlomo Teichtal, in *Eim HaBanim Semeiha*,<sup>1</sup> quotes a letter from the Baal HaTanya to Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev, on the day he was released from jail – the tenth of Kislev. He wrote in the letter that he had been released from prison in the merit of *Eretz Yisrael* and its inhabitants, which stands to our merit and protection at all times. Rabbi Teichtal admits that he learned something new from the Baal HaTanya’s letter. Whenever a Jew is in trouble, he can be saved in the merit of *Eretz Yisrael* and its inhabitants. The source of this idea is the pasuk cited above.

The Torah confirms that the *zechus*, the merit, of *Eretz Yisrael* is greater even than the merit of our *Avos*. *Eretz Yisrael*

1 Rabbi Teichtal wrote *Eim HaBanim Semeiha* during the Holocaust. Originally, he was against the Jewish movement to return to *Eretz Yisrael*, but after experiencing the Holocaust, he changed his mind. This entire *sefer*, which was written while he was in hiding and from memory (although he quotes hundreds of sources), is about the importance of and love for *Eretz Yisrael*, even as it was being rebuilt by people who were not religiously observant.

protects us when we are in dire situations. However, to merit this protection, one must be connected to *Eretz Yisrael*. A person who rejects the *Avos*, who disconnects from our forefathers, will not be protected by their merit; likewise, only if we recognize the centrality of *Eretz Yisrael* will we merit this protection.

Rabbi Teichtal quotes the *Mechilta* on *Parshas Beshallah*. Moshe turned to Hashem and asked for help as the Jews were being chased by the Egyptians, and Hashem responded, “*ma titzak elai?*” – “Why are you crying out to Me?” Just continue on your journey. The Midrash adds: “Rabbi Yishmael says: ‘In the merit of **Jerusalem**, I will split the sea for them.’”

What is Jerusalem doing in middle of the splitting of the sea? They were in a dire situation, and like the Baal HaTanya, Am Yisrael were worthy of the *zechus* of *Eretz Yisrael* (*Eretz Yisrael* is referred to as Jerusalem here). It is from *Eretz Yisrael* that Hashem’s direct providence emanates to the entire world, and to any Jew who is in a dire situation.

He continues: Since this is true, and since the Jewish people today (he was writing this in 1941 or 1942) are in the most desperate situation, where each day is worse than the day before, every hour worse than the previous hour, the one thing that can be done is to strengthen our connection to *Eretz Yisrael*.

Rabbi Teichtal did not survive the Holocaust, but his words of Torah will forevermore connect Jews to their land. As we celebrate Yom Yerushalayim and are

able to freely walk the streets of the old city of Jerusalem, we should take a moment to reflect on the magnificent gift that we were privileged to obtain in our generation. May we strengthen our connection to *Eretz Yisrael* and conduct ourselves in a way that will merit a complete redemption, in our lifetime. ■

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# Komemiyus!

A revolutionary educator and builder of Torah, the famed Alter of Slabodka, Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, zt'l, reoriented the focus of avodas Hashem on *gadlus ha-adam*, the inherent greatness of the human being. The Alter's son-in-law and successor Rav Yitzchak Eizik Sher zt'l, transmitted the *derech* of Slabodka to the post-War generation of *bnai Torah* in Eretz Yisrael. A role model in *midos* development and *gaon* in Torah, "Reb Eizik" provided inspiration, instruction and spiritual guidance to students throughout the land.

Among those drawn to Reb Eizik was a young student at Yeshivas Chevron who had the privilege of escorting Reb Eizek home from yeshiva after davening each day.

One morning, as they reached the door of Reb Eizek's apartment, the Rosh Yeshivah shook his head and declared, "*Nisht azoi*, not like that..." Reb Eizek then turned around and began to make his way back to the yeshivah. When they arrived, Reb

Eizek nodded to the young man and said "*noch amohl*, again", and began to walk back home, following the very same route as they always took. The young man looked quizzically at the Rosh Yeshivah.

Rav Eizik then adjusted his frock, rolled back his shoulders, stood up straight and tall, and looked the bachur in the eye: "*Azoi*, like this... *geit a general*, the way a general walks..." Standing tall and proud, together the Rebbe and talmid walked home.

.....

Our sedra describes the 'posture' in which Hashem took us out of our constricted state of slavery in Egypt:

אני ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִהָיִית לְהֶם עֲבָדִים... וְאִלֹךְ אֶתְכֶם קוֹמְמִיּוֹת:

"I am Hashem, your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt from being slaves to them; and I broke the pegs of your yoke and led you *upright*." (26:13)

Rashi quotes Midrash Toras Kohanim and says that *komemiyus*, upright, means *erect in stature*, 'erect in stature', due to your relief from bondage. After generations of suffering and slavery Hashem delivers us from exile, and not just physically, but by restoring our posture, our 'stature'.

Rebbi Meir interprets the word *komemiyus*

as ‘two *komos*’ or levels: קומות אמה כשתי קומות: של אדם הראשון (Bava Basra, 75a), implying that in the future, the Jewish people will have the stature of two hundred *amah*, cubits — equivalent to two times the height [*komos*] of *Adam haRishon*, whose height was one hundred cubits. Beyond this change in our physical size and stability, our Gemara teaches that in the end of days, Am Yisrael will transcend the level of existence that we had at the point of the creation of mankind.

*Sefas Emes* unfolds this insight. Each of us is made up of two ‘*komos*’: קומה רוחנית and קומה גשמית, a physical level and a spiritual level. Our physical body, whose height we can measure on the outside, is the ‘vessel’. Our spiritual soul, the light within the vessel, has its own kind of ‘stature’. Although there is a tension between the priorities and needs of the physical and spiritual, by observing *mitzvos* and committing to living *Yidishkeit* with passion, we can achieve balance of these two *komos* and achieve the fullness of our potential by ‘standing tall’. We can assume our ultimate form and express our inherent spiritual level of greatness. This is the essence of standing in our *komemiyus*; upright, with pride in our identity, observance and in the posture of our inner greatness.

Throughout more than half-century of leadership, The Lubavitcher Rebbe launched campaigns toward cultivating ‘*gaon Yaakov*’, restoring ‘authentic Jewish pride’, based on a return to Jewish identity, practice, values, ritual and tradition. The Rebbe assumed the mantle of leadership in the shadow of the Holocaust, and breathed



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new life, hope and confidence into a broken nation emerging from darkness and the brink of decimation. The Rebbe's spiritually radical model of "Mitzvah Campaigns" still challenges members of our community to step out of our comfort zone and share our wealth of knowledge, opportunities and blessings with others. From asking men

on the street to lay tefillin and women to light Shabbos candles, to holding massive Lag b'Omer parades and public Menorah lightings, the Rebbe made it his mission, and every Jew's mission, to reach out and reveal the greatness, the treasure, of every *Yidishe neshamah*.

Participating in Jewish life, fulfilling mitzvos, and being empowered by Jewish education and engagement, *gaon Yaakov* can even manifest geopolitically, as a national sense of self-respect, empowerment and pride. This is *komemiyus* — full-stature living.

This week *Am Yisrael* celebrates Yom Yerushalayim, marking the miraculous restoration of numerous קומות, essential physical and spiritual 'levels' in our development as a sovereign nation in our Homeland. The victories of the Six Day War revealed Divine providence and *gaon Yaakov* - authentic Jewish pride, another step toward the fulfillment of daily prayer:

וְהִבִּיאֵנוּ לְשָׁלוֹם מְאֻרָבֵּעַ כְּנִפּוֹת הָאֶרֶץ וְתוֹלִיכֵנוּ קוֹמָתוֹת  
לְאֶרְצֵנוּ:

“Hasten and bring upon us blessing and peace quickly from the four corners of the earth and speedily lead us *upright* to our homeland!” May we return from our exile with our heads held high, not in apologetic meekness.

P.S. The young man who escorted Reb Eizek each day and learned the lesson in *gadlus ha-adam*, Rav Baruch Mordechai Eizrachi, shlit'a, is now a preeminent rosh yeshivah in Yerushalayim, one of our generation's great progenitors of the honor of Torah. ■

Aliyah LaKever on the fifth Yahrzeit of

## **Rabbi Yaakov Yechiel Mechel (Mel) Hefthler** זצ"ל

The Aliya LaKever for my husband,  
our father, grandfather and great  
grandfather

### **Rabbi Yaakov Yechiel Mechel (Mel) Hefthler זצ"ל**

will take place b'ezrat Hashem  
on Wednesday, Rosh Chodesh Sivan  
(May 12th, 2021) at 9:30 am  
in “Eretz Hachayim” cemetery,  
Beit Shemesh Gush 1, Chelka 7

*where we will remember and honor  
Rabbi Hefthler's life which was one of  
Torah, Chesed and Emes.*

Transportation will be leaving promptly  
from Beit Tovei Ha'ir  
(Malchei Yisroel 36) at 8:25 am.

B'ezrat Hashem on Wednesday,  
May 12th, Rosh Chodesh Sivan after  
the Aliyah Lakever a Siyum and a light  
Dairy meal will be served at the home of

Simcha and Suri Fulda,  
Shvil Hagichon 3/1 Ramat Beit Shemesh

Kindly register by Sunday, (May 9th)  
at 02-6414684, 0502192535

*The Family*



# יום ירושלים

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## SHACHARIT ON THE TAYELET

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With the blessing of the Mayor of Yerushalayim

**Hon. Moshe Lion**

In the presence of the Deputy Mayor of Yerushalayim,  
Israel Heritage Portfolio

**Hon. Arie King**

Musical Tefila, including full Hallel led by

**Rabbi Shlomo Katz**

Yom Yerushalayim | כ"ח אייר תשפ"א

Monday May 10, 2021 | 7:30 AM



The event is in coordination with the Israeli Police Department.  
The police are limiting the event to 300 participants.  
Participants must present their Tav Yarak documents



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# SHAVUOT NIGHT AT OU ISRAEL

10:30 PM Doors Open

10:45 PM Humble Nobility: Life Lessons from the Stories of Ruth,  
Moshe Rabbeinu, and Rebbe Akiva with **Rabbi Sam Shor**

11:45 PM Celebrating Sinai, Opening Sefer Bamidbar: A  
Coincidental Connection? with **Rabbi Shmuel Goldin**

12:45 AM TBA

1:45 AM Doors Close

At OU Israel Center, 22 Keren HaYesod St.

In accordance with all Ministry of Health Guidelines. Entry only for those who present a copy of their official tav yarak documents

The entire evening is sponsored in honor of Rebbetzin Feiga Kahane



# OU Israel Bat Mitzvah & Beyond Program



For girls in Grades 6-8 and their mothers

**SESSION #4 - SUNDAY MAY 23, 7:30PM**

**\*Each session is a stand-alone session  
TOPIC: MY PERSONAL CONNECTION TO TEFILLA**

- ▶ Guided Chavruta learning for mothers and daughters
- ▶ Brachot Party led by **Chaya Sara Rabinowitz**
- ▶ Tehillim competition with **Orli Wahba** and the Abraham's Legacy App
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**SUNDAY EVENING, MAY 16, 8:45 PM**

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At OU Israel Center, 22 Keren HaYesod St.

Limited Seating available, 50 NIS per person, pre-registration

required - [www.ouisrael.org/events/shavuotjchat2021](http://www.ouisrael.org/events/shavuotjchat2021)

In accordance with all Ministry of Health Guidelines.

**Participants must present a printed copy of tax yarak documents**



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# OU Israel Center Shiurim

Register for one-time shiurim (in-person and by Zoom) at [www.ouisrael.org/classes](http://www.ouisrael.org/classes)

Register for ClassPass package deal for classes by Zoom at [www.ouisrael.org/classpass](http://www.ouisrael.org/classpass)

SUN, MAY 9

**9:00 AM**

**Rabbi David Walk**  
Tehillim – Divine Poetry

**10:15 AM**

**Rabbi Aaron  
Goldscheider** The Giants  
Who Shaped Modern  
Orthodoxy (Rabbi Adler  
Resumes Sun May 23)

**11:30 AM**

**Rabbi Yitzchak  
Breitowitz** Mishlei: Wisdom  
for Life (L'Ayla) (Zoom only)

**2:00 PM**

**Rabbi Jeffrey Bienenfeld**  
Men's Gemara Chabura S,T,TH  
<https://zoom.us/j/887981820>  
(Zoom only)

**4:30 PM**

**Rabbi Hillel Ruvell**  
Men's Gemara B'lyun  
S,M,W,Th <https://zoom.us/j/86466998217>  
(Zoom only)

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
Password for  
classes is:  
**ouisrael**

MON, MAY 10

**YOM YERUSHALAYIM**

**7:30AM Special Event**  
Special Yom Yerushalyim  
Tefilla Chagigit  
at the Teyelet  
(עיריית ירושלים)

**9:15 AM Mrs. Pearl Borow**  
Sefer Nechemia (L'Ayla)

**10:30 AM**

**Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider**  
Rav Soloveitchik on  
the Parsha

**11:45 AM**

**Rabbi Shmuel Herschler**  
Ethics, family and society in the  
writings of Rav Hirsch, Rav Kook  
and Rav Soloveitchik

**4:30PM**

**Rabbi Hillel Ruvell**

**7:00 PM**

**Rabbi Baruch Taub**  
Parshat HaShavua  
<https://zoom.us/j/888974573>  
(Zoom only)

**9:00 PM Rabbi Sam Shor**  
Penimiyut HaTorah- Inspiration  
from the Masters of Jewish  
Thought [facebook.com/OUIsrael](https://facebook.com/OUIsrael)

TUE, MAY 11

**9:00 AM**

**Rabbi Yitzchak  
Breitowitz**  
Minchat Chinuch  
(Zoom only)

**9:15 AM**

**Mrs. Shira Smiles**  
Torah Tapestries  
(L'Ayla)

**10:30 AM**

**Rabbi Shmuel Goldin**  
Parshat HaShavua

**2:00 PM**

**Rabbi Jeffrey  
Bienenfeld**

**5:00 PM**

**Mrs. Sylvie Schatz**  
Chazal: Insights Into  
Our Times (L'Ayla)  
<https://zoom.us/j/85177782268>  
(Zoom only)

**Special Event**

**9:00AM – 1:00PM**

Rosh Chodesh Sivan  
Seminar for Women  
[www.ouisrael.org/  
events/sivan2021](http://www.ouisrael.org/events/sivan2021)

Archived recordings of shiurim: <https://www.ouisrael.org/video-library/>



WED, MAY 12

**9:00 AM**  
**Rabbi Shimshon Nadel**

Halacha and Medina

**10:15 AM**  
**Rabbi Anthony Manning**

Contemporary Issues in Halacha and Hashkafa

**11:30 AM**  
**Rabbi Alan Kimche**  
Great Jewish Thinkers

**4:30PM**  
**Rabbi Hillel Ruvell**

**7:00 PM**  
**Rabbi Baruch Taub**  
Halacha (Zoom only)

**8:30 PM**  
**Rav Meir Goldwicht**  
(Hebrew)  
<https://zoom.us/j/2244321902>  
Parshat Hashavua  
Passcode: 18

**\*L'AYLA CLASSES  
ARE FOR  
WOMEN ONLY**

THURS, MAY 13

**9:00 AM**  
**Rabbi Ian Pear**  
Meaning in Mitzvot

**11:30 AM**  
**Rabbi Shai Finkelstein**  
Unlocking the Messages of Chazal

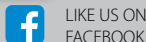
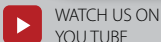
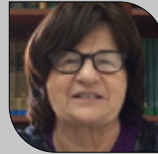
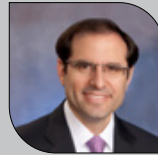
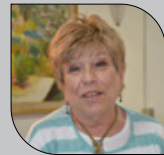
**2:00 PM**  
**Rabbi Jeffrey Bienenfeld**

**4:30PM**  
**Rabbi Hillel Ruvell**

**8:00 PM**  
**Rabbi Ari Kahn**  
Parshat HaShavua  
<https://zoom.us/j/2624570009>  
(Zoom only)

**MISSED A CLASS?**

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# ROSH CHODESH SIVAN SEMINAR FOR WOMEN

**Tuesday, May 11, Iyar 29**

In loving memory of Mrs. Linda Pruwer-Brachfeld a"h  
מרת חיה סאשא בת ר' יוסף הלל

**8:45 – 9:00** Registration  
Coffee and Refreshments


**9:00 – 9:15** Welcoming Remarks  
**Mrs. Zemira Ozarowski**

**9:15 -10:15** Shavous Inspiration  
**Mrs. Shira Smiles**

**10:15 – 11:00** Special Yahrtzeit Brunch  
Tribute to **Mrs. Linda Pruwer-Brachfeld a"h**  
by family members

**11:00 – 12:00** Zman Matan Torateinu  
**Rav Meir Goldwicht**

**12:00 – 12:50** Matan Torah: Back to Gan Eden  
**Rabbi Menachem Nissel**



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YOM YERUSHALAYIM



# Jerusalem - City of Magnets

The actual state of Israel was established 72 years ago in 1948. However, the modern state of Israel as we know it, was launched in 1967. The six-day war was so revolutionary and so transformative, that in many ways, it was more groundbreaking than 1948. Thousands of years ago, G-d created our natural world in six days. Fifty-four years ago He reshaped history in six quick days. Here is a list of the six major revolutions which occurred during those 6 days in June: Six for Six!

## 1. The Return to the Biblical “Corridor”

In 1948, Jews were graciously “permitted” to return to a carved-up parcel of Israel. This immigration soothed the world’s conscience after the horrors of the Holocaust and, additionally, solved the ugly issue of unwanted Jewish refugees. By contrast, in 1967, we returned to the Biblical corridor – a passage of land which cuts through the heart of Israel and the heart of Jewish history. This territory stretches from Shechem

in the north, snakes its way through Jerusalem, bends toward Beit Lechem and Chevron finally levels off in Be’er Sheva in the south. Jewish history, narrated in the book of Breishit, emerged in these lands and our return to this Biblical passageway signaled the resurgence of the History. Jews actually living in the provinces of original Jewish history signals the acceleration of history in a way that the important but indefinite events of 1948 did not.

## 2. An Emergent Superpower

Life in Israel between 1948 and 1967 was harsh and unforgiving- riddled by food rationing, numerous wars of attrition and by stifling diplomatic isolation. Indeed, our beloved state provided a respite from the tumultuous and tragic years of the Holocaust and certainly fulfilled a centuries-long dream of resettling our homeland. However, life continued to be difficult and conditions were austere. The miracles of 1967, the courage of our soldiers, and, of course, the palpable Divine intervention created a swell of national pride or “komemiyut” which transformed the fabric of Israeli society. Israel’s successful handling of the corona virus (so far, and with G-d’s help it will continue) has confirmed the strong feelings of pride which Israelis sense in their country. Societies with pride

and national unity will navigate this medical and financial crisis more successfully than countries which are either disunited or disillusioned. The restoration of our national pride began in 1967. Ironically, the War of Independence in 1948 is sometimes referred to as komemiyut because, for the first time in thousands of years, Jews defended themselves from military aggression. In truth, the miraculous events of 1967 established far greater komemiyut than the ambiguous victory of 1948.

If our mission in Israel is to inspire an entire world toward utopia, then international acceptance of Israel is a crucial element of that vision

### 3. Jews Flocking Home

The return to Yerushalayim and the surrounding environs beckoned international Jewish interest in their homeland. Prior to 1967, much of the emigration to Israel consisted of aliyah of distress- Jews fleeing persecution in Arab countries. Between 1948 and 1967 the financial hardships in Israel were so severe that more people emigrated from Israel than to Israel. That all changed in 1967- the magnetizing effect of Yerushalayim as well as the slow but steady economic improvement in Israel drew the interest of Jews from across the globe. Many made aliyah and still more became more embedded in Israeli life- whether through

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purchasing real estate or increasing their frequency of visits. The worldwide Jewish stake in Israel spiked after 1967.

#### 4. Gradual Diplomatic Acceptance

Prior to 1967, Israel was a diplomatic pariah. Despite the broad support afforded Israel during the UN votes of the '40s, Israel was soon plunged into diplomatic isolation. Much of the third world was aligned with Arab interests and the large Communist bloc which dominated Europe, China and parts of Latin America routinely exhibited diplomatic hostility toward our country. The US arming of Israel began in earnest only after the military victory in 1967. In 1967, we literally stood "alone" on one side of the river, facing off against an entire world; we had assumed the role of our ancient grandfather, Avraham, who had also opposed an entire world of idolatry. If our mission in Israel is to inspire an entire world toward utopia, then international acceptance of Israel is a crucial element of that vision. Though full embrace of the Jews in their homeland will only be achieved when history ends, the slow but steady diplomatic progress witnessed over the past twenty years is part of our redemptive advance. Over the past few weeks, as the enduring tensions between the USA and China flared, it was interesting to witness each country reinforcing its relationship with our state of Israel. Israel's standing among nations transformed after 1967.

#### 5. Religious Revival

The legendary scenes of Israeli soldiers sounding the shofar while standing at the newly liberated Kotel galvanized an entire

people. Witnessing G-d's explicit intervention in the historical process prompted a revival of religious sentiment. Over the past 50 years Israel has rightly established itself as the epicenter of worldwide Torah study. The euphoric aftermath of 1967 launched the national religious world of yeshivot and Torah institutions, which, alongside the Charedi Torah world, has dramatically augmented the spread of Torah study. Beyond the advances in Torah and halachic observance, our country has also witnessed a revival of 'traditionalism' amongst a majority of Israeli Jews who identify as "Masorati". They may not may not adhere to strict halachic regulations but they believe deeply in G-d and in His historical mission for His people. 1967 altered the religious landscape of Israel!

#### 6. The Confidence Index of Worldwide Jewry

Over the past fifty years, Jews across the world have become more engaged in local governance, culture and society. Previously, Jews envisioned themselves as living along the margins of society- barred from prestigious schools, law firms and country clubs. Modern Jewish communities generally display far more confidence and participate more extensively in their local societies far more than Jewish communities of the past. Much of this confidence stems from the komemiyut achieved in Israel during the 1967 war. Knowing that we have constructed a strong and successful Jewish state feeds Jewish confidence across the globe.

Six days and six seismic shifts in Jewish history! ■

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## SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

Program Director, OU Israel Center

### YOM YERUSHALAYIM



This week we will commemorate the 54th anniversary of *Ichud Yerushalayim*- the reunification of Jerusalem, the miraculous military victory of the 1967 Six Day War. For nineteen years, the joy that had permeated the Jewish People with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was tempered by the somber, humbling reality that the city of Jerusalem remained divided, the ancient city, the Western Wall, and the Temple Mount under Jordanian sovereignty. That all changed with the dramatic events of June 7, 1967.

Shortly after Lt. General Motta Gur's thrilling announcement, '*Har Habayit B'yadeinu, Har Habayit B'yadeinu!*' 'The Temple Mount is in our hands, the Temple Mount is in our hands', the many heroic and exhausted soldiers began to wind their way through the Old City streets, amidst the confusion and burning debris of a battle zone, to the *Kotel HaMaaravi*- the Western Wall.

As one group of soldiers embarked toward the *Kotel*, they suddenly noticed an elderly pious looking man, in traditional rabbinic garb, running, almost skipping through the war-torn streets. Later the world would realize that this ecstatic, older gentleman was the great Rabbi Aryeh Levine *zt'l*,

known affectionately as the *tzadik* of *Yerushalayim*. At that moment though, as the soldiers gazed at the flaming debris, and the war-torn streets, and realized the magnitude of their accomplishments, and saw this older, holy man literally running to the *Kotel HaMaaravi* , the soldiers thought he had to be *Mashiach!* After so many years the Jewish People had not only returned to the Land of Israel, but now, ancient Jerusalem, our eternal capital, was once again in our hands, it had to be that *Mashiach* had come. How else could you explain the miraculous events unfolding before their very eyes? In the midst of the miraculous victory, these soldiers were overwhelmed, in awe, appreciation and faith in *Hashem's* divine kindness.

Today, fifty-four years later we are still waiting for *Mashiach*, yet the events of June 7, 1967 still leave us mesmerized. How are we to view these events within the context of the ever evolving drama of Jewish history? What lessons are we to learn, what inspiration are we supposed to be left with, once a miracle has seemingly ceased, has come and gone? How are we to commemorate and continue to show our gratitude for such incredible gifts, even when time and circumstance seems to change and suddenly challenge that heightened faith that each miraculous act

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in our history had previously inspired?

There is a beautiful teaching in the *Netivot Shalom*, the collection of Chasidic discourses on the *Torah* and *Chagim* written by **Rabbi Shalom Noach Brazovsky, the Slonimer Rebbe zy'a**. In this insightful teaching for the seventh day of *Pesach*, when we commemorate the miracle of *Kriyat Yam Suf*, the Rebbe comments on the verse: “*Uvnei Yisrael halchu bayabasha b’toch haYam*”- “*And the Jewish People walked on dry land within the Sea...*”

The simple interpretation of this verse is that as the Jewish People traversed the Sea of Reeds, a miracle occurred allowing the sea to part and literally the Jewish people walked on dry land. There are several rabbinic teachings in both the Midrash and the Talmud that depict the scene

as the sea actually parting into twelve sections, and each tribe walking on its own path amid the waters. But the *Slonimer Rebbe* cites an earlier Chasidic Master, **Reb Elimelech of Lijensk zy'a**, who offered this interpretation of this verse in his epic work, *Noam Elimelech*:

*“The verse speaks of the idea that ‘...the children of Israel walked on dry land amidst the sea..’ that is that Hashem gifted them with such revelation that even after they had passed through the sea, and were now once again on dry land, their faith and ability to experience Hashem’s presence, was exactly as they felt while in the midst of the sea, in the midst of the miracle...*

*... The Ramban taught that we know that from experiencing the many wondrous*

revealed miracles a person comes to recognize also the many less obvious, subtle miraculous everyday events that form the foundation of the entire Torah... The highest form of faith is the awareness that Israel achieved after our departure from slavery and the parting of the Sea of Reeds, that is the faith that every aspect of our lives is miraculous, and that nothing is random and occurring simply of this world..."

## The many revealed supernatural occurrences are meant to bring us to heightened consciousness

The parting of the Sea of Reeds left such an indelible mark on the Jewish conscience, that even after the Jewish People had traversed the Sea and had seen the cessation of this supernatural event, they were acutely aware of the presence of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, even in the subtle, less obvious miracles that occur each and every day.

Perhaps this is precisely why we recite this song each and every day to reinforce this profound lesson - the lesson that the miraculous events of Jewish history, the many revealed supernatural occurrences are meant to bring us to heightened consciousness allowing us to appreciate the many less obvious gifts, the hidden miracles that occur each and every day.

Perhaps it is in this context that we can begin to address the significance of this incredible commemoration of *Yom Yerushalayim*. It was evident to see the *Yad Hashem*, the proverbial "hand of G-d" in the height of the events, and even in the days and months immediately following the events of June 7, 1967. But today, even as we are still longing for the day when indeed we'll witness the complete ingathering of the Exiles and enter into that era of eternal peace, we must not turn a blind eye to the many incredible gifts that *Hashem* gives us each and every day. After 2,000 years of exile, each of us is free to live, study and pray in *Yerushalayim Ir HaKodesh*.

May the great gift that is our return to *Yerushalayim*, the united eternal capital of the Jewish People, serve as an inspiration for each of us to appreciate all of *Hashem's* gifts, and help us to see the subtle hidden miracles we experience each and every day....

***Yom Yerushalayim***  
***Sameach*** ■

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# Real Life Rescues



## Saving A Life Despite The Jet-Lag

On Tuesday night, close to 9:30 p.m., United Hatzalah volunteer EMT Naftali Roeber was in his home in Lod getting ready for bed. Naftali had just returned from a business trip and decided to go to sleep early. Just as soon as he finished getting dressed in his pajamas, his communication's device began to ring. A 60-year-old man started choking a few blocks away from Naftali's location. In spite of his nightwear, the EMT raced down to his ambucycle that was parked outside and sped off to the emergency.

Arriving first at the scene in just under two minutes, Naftali entered the apartment to find a family member attempting CPR on the 60-year-old who was unconscious on the floor. Seeing that this was not a choking emergency, Naftali called United Hatzalah's Dispatch and Command center, alerted them to the nature of the emergency and requested immediate backup.

Naftali quickly took over in the CPR efforts, allowing the family member to rest. He then attached his defibrillator and administered one shock. After the first and only shock, additional medical personnel began arriving at the scene, including an ambulance with two United Hatzalah EMTs and two trainees. Two additional trainees responded on their own and joined the effort.

Soon enough, Naftali had an entire crew of people switching off in CPR rotations. After close to 20 minutes of chest compressions and assisted ventilation, the team succeeded at bringing back the man's pulse.

Just as the man's condition stabilized a mobile intensive care ambulance arrived at the scene and he was transported to the nearest hospital. After arriving home, Naftali embraced his wife and eight children before collapsing into bed.

"I was so tired on Tuesday night, and I had also said that I would stay home more after leaving my family for two weeks," Naftali said. "Truthfully, the reason I responded to the emergency anyways was because I missed helping people. Being away for two weeks and not responding to emergencies, it felt like a piece of me was missing. After saving the man's life, I felt fulfilled, like that part of me was restored once again. I went out to help him, and it turns out in doing so, it helped me."





# REBBETZIN LORI PALATNIK

Founding Director of Momentum

## YOM YERUSHALAYIM



**I** write this with my tears. The Meron funerals have begun....

It is 1:15 am in Yerushalayim. The *levaya* (funeral) of 19 year old Donny Morris z”l, Nachman Daniel ben Aryeh Tzvi, has just concluded. I watched it live streamed on my computer and am now left both deeply heartbroken and incredibly inspired. It began with *hespeidim* (eulogies) at his yeshiva, Sha’alvim, located halfway between Yerushalyim and Tel Aviv, and ended with the burial on *Har Hazeisim* (Mt of Olives) overlooking the Old City of Jerusalem, the lights of Yerushalayim twinkling in the background.

After his young body was placed in the holy ground, the *talmidum* (students) of the yeshiva held one another, and while crying, broke into song:

אם-אֶשְׁכַּחךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם--  
תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי.  
תִּדְבַק-לְשׁוֹנִי, לְחִכִּי--  
אם-לא אֶזְכְּרְכִי:  
אם-לא אֶעֱלֶה, אֶת-יְרוּשָׁלַם--  
עַל, רֹאשׁ שַׁתְּחֹתֵי.

*Psalm 137:5*

*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,  
Let my right hand forget her cunning.  
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my  
mouth,*

*If I remember thee not;  
If I set not Jerusalem  
above my chief joy.*

When was the last time I heard that song? It was before Pesach, while watching a friend’s daughter’s chuppah online. At the height of our greatest joy, the wedding of a man and a woman, creating a new home as part of the Jewish people, we stop and remember that we are not whole, that the *Beit Hamikdash* (Holy Temple) does not stand, that we are a divided people yet to return both spiritually and physically. The *chatan* (groom) then breaks the glass and *simcha* (joy) fills the air.

Our Rov, Rabbi Noah Weinberg zt”l, taught us the difference between happiness and simcha. He said happiness is taking pleasure in what you have. It’s completely focused on the here and now; the present. *Simcha, joy, is knowing there will be future happiness.*

Why do we call a *brit milah* (circumcision) or a baby naming a simcha? A new child has come into the world and we celebrate the potential of that child. A bar/bat mitzvah—this 12- or 13-year-old is now responsible for the *mitzvot* (commandments) and steps up to a life of commitment to the Torah and the Jewish people. The Talmud even asks, what is simcha for a woman on *yontif*? The answer: new clothing. The joy a woman

feels when shopping is not present, it's future—how she will look when wearing this outfit, what others will say, what event she will wear it to....

I think you are getting the idea.

Reb Noah זת"ל taught us not to wait for it, that every day we must “plug into” simcha from the first words that come out of our mouths:

מודה אני לפניך מלך חי וקיים שהחזרת בי נשמת  
בחמלה רבה אמונה

*I thank you, living and enduring king, for  
You have graciously returned my soul  
within me. Great is your faithfulness.*

“Great is your faithfulness.” G-d has faith in us, gave us another day, another day is potential—we need to use it to its fullest.

He also said that no matter what is going on in our lives, even when we are sitting shiva and in our greatest pain, we must have one track on simcha—there will be future happiness. If the Jewish people hadn't always had one track on simcha through history, we would have given up a long time ago.

Donny was described time and time again as a “Ba'al Simcha”, a “Master of Joy”. Indeed, the picture that was posted at 2 am Friday morning by friends and family frantically trying to find him showed a young man beaming with joy at Mt. Meron, elated to be there on Lag B'Omer, looking forward to the experience of a lifetime.

We cry, we mourn....our hearts are broken from the death of Donny and the other 44 who perished that night. Yet the lights of Yerushalayim still burn bright, and the



boys continued to sing:

אני מאמין באמונה שלמה בביאת המשיח, ואף על פי  
שייתממה, עם כל זה אֶחָכָה לוּ בְּכָל יוֹם שְׂבִיבֹא.

I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah, and, though he may tarry, I will wait daily for his coming. May this be the last pain before our ultimate joy. May Hashem comfort the Morris family and the many families who have been plunged into darkness. And may their tears of sorrow, and our tears of shared pain, soon be turned to tears of joy. ■

*Lori Palatnik is the Founding Director of Momentum (formerly JWRP). She is a world-renowned Jewish educator, speaker, writer, and media personality, who has lectured all over the world. Lori has authored four books. In 2014, Lori was named one of the ten “Women to Watch” by Jewish Women International in recognition of her contribution to Jewish women throughout the world. Hadassah named Lori one of the “Most Outstanding Jewish American Women of Our Time.” In 2020, Lori was selected to light the “Diaspora” torch at the national ceremony for Israel’s 72nd Independence Day.*



# RABBI CHAIM BROVENDER

Rosh Yeshiva, Web Yeshiva

## YOM YERUSHALAYIM



In 1965 after receiving smicha and spending several years in the YU Kollel, Miriam (my wife) and I were on a plane going to Eretz Yisrael. We had arranged to go directly to Kibbutz Lavi and were prepared to start a new life on kibbutz.

As a responsible young couple we had dutifully arranged to be met at Lod (Ben Gurion) and were guaranteed transportation to our new home.

However on the way to the promised land (on the plane) Miriam said that since I had never been in Israel before (Miriam had studied in Machon Greenberg on a YU program) we should make Jerusalem our first stop. I said, ‘How can we do that? Where will we go and where will we stay? She responded “It is all arranged!” And it was.

I mention this story to explain that a good plan does not always indicate how things will actually turn out. That in short was how I arrived in Yerushalayim.

The Yerushalayim I came to was very different from what I had imagined. In fact it wasn’t Yerushalayim at all. There was the Yerushalayim of *Shemone Esrei* and the Yerushalayim of my parents and grandparents dream. That Yerushalayim was on the other side of a fence or the other side of a gate. In a matter of fact the fence and the

gate were manned by Jordanian soldiers who were not at all part of the dream. It was not clear to me how they got there or what they were doing but they carried real guns. I had just arrived and understood that the Yerushalayim of the Jewish dream could not be reached. Yes it is true that a few persons with US passports were able to cross the gate but this was not a real solution. The other possibility was to go to the Abu Tor neighborhood and stand in a certain place and look up and you will see the Dome of the Rock on the Temple mount. You then would imagine the Kotel below. Of course you didn’t see it at all but it was a great place to imagine.

The first two years in Yerushalayim were depressing. The economic situation was getting worse day by day and there was little hope that the Israeli experiment would be successful. A popular joke told in the airport; “would the last one out please turn out the lights”.

I say this because the Yerushalayim of the dream was unavailable. As part of a cruel joke we were denied access to the place that made Yerushalayim the holiest of cities. Beyond that the country seemed to be in economic distress and our Arab neighbors were rattling swords at every opportunity The situation was terrible.

Then the Six Day War. Many have

remarked about the unique aspects of the war and thankful we must be for the reordering of Yerushalayim. From a city divided to a city which contained *kedushah*. Accessible to all.

There is no doubt that all of Yerushalayim's problems have not been solved. We hear about these problems every day in the news: but there is a subliminal peace that was not available when I came on aliya. The Kotel has become a place where prayer of every kind can be made. It is the place that represents the ongoing Jewish attempt to clarify our relationship with *Hakodosh Baruch Hu*.

The original name of the city is *shalem*, its king at the time of *Avraham* was *Malki Zedek*. After a difficult battle, *Avraham* was able to secure the release of *Lot*. He is approached by *Malki Zedek* with a gift of bread and wine. The lesson is hard to miss. Sometimes a war which in every case leads to tragedy can produce the elements necessary for peace.

Happy Yom Yerushalayim ■

*Rabbi Chaim Brovender is the president of ATID ([www.atid.org](http://www.atid.org)) - The Academy for Torah Initiatives and Directions in Jewish Education, and Rosh Yeshiva of [www.WebYeshiva.org](http://www.WebYeshiva.org) - a fully interactive online yeshiva. He was the founding Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat HaMivtar and Michlelet Bruria, and has been a pioneer in Torah education for over 40 years in Israel. A graduate of Yeshiva College and RIETS, he has a PhD from the Hebrew University.*

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**YOM YERUSHALAYIM**

# I'm Coming Home...

One of the famous battles in Jerusalem during the Six Day War is the one at Ammunition Hill, where the reserves paratroopers brigade fought their way towards Eastern Jerusalem. More than a day later, soldiers from the same brigade entered the Lions Gate and arrived at the Temple Mount and later the Western Wall. I want to take you to the southern half of the city and to a much-less known brigade that fought its way into East Jerusalem- the Jerusalem reserves brigade.

During the 19 years between the War of Independence and the Six Day War, the city of Jerusalem was divided in two- the eastern- Jordanian side and the western- Israeli side. The IDF central command was afraid the Jordanian forces might try to cut off Jerusalem from the rest of the country by crossing the narrow corridor leading to Jerusalem from the west- from Nabi Samuel, through Mevasseret and the Kastel and joining the Jordanian held area to the south. Trying to avoid this frightening possibility a huge reserves unit was founded in Jerusalem- the "Jerusalem Brigade". It was built out of thousands of residents of the city and

students that studied at the Hebrew University at the time. These soldiers were able to reach their bases in a very short while, as everyone was in the city, and didn't need to come from afar.

## **Independence Day- 1967.**

During the celebrations, Independence Day 1967, the Egyptian forces started moving into Sinai and most of the reserves units were called to their bases. The IDF command was mainly concerned with the Sinai front and couldn't offer many soldiers to the other fronts (Golan Heights and the border with Jordan). The Jerusalem Brigade got ready for war and they were stationed along the border, to start a counter- attack if it will be needed.

## **The War begins- Monday June 5<sup>th</sup> 1967**

The Jordanian forces attacked the Israeli side- gunshots, mortars and cannons. At noon, infantry soldiers attacked the Commissioners Palace compound and captured it. The Jerusalem Brigade was mobilized- to capture the palace from the Jordanian hands and further into eastern Jerusalem. In the next day- the Abu Tor neighborhood was captured in a long afternoon battle with many soldiers hit. They broke through the border line in four locations, one of them was led by company commander Eli

Keidar. He was a carpenter, mid 30's in age, born and grew up in Jerusalem. At the end of the battle, he was ordered to continue in the next day (the third of the war) to Mount Zion, right next to the Old City, on the border.

He was told that he will receive aid to cross the Ben Hinnom Valley that is under Jordanian fire but he knew every secret in the area, including an underground tunnel from the Montefiore neighborhood (Mishkenot Shaananim) to the mountain across. He quickly took his men up through the tunnel and didn't need any help at all. He was afraid that the area of Zion Gate had landmines all over so he led his men down towards Dung Gate (Shaar Haashpot) at the time it was not more than a doorway. "Something is wrong", he felt, "where are the Jordanians?" there was no one shooting or trying to stop them. They entered the gate, the Western Wall was not far at all- just in sight, but they took the left and climbed up to the Jewish Quarter. There, Eli, tells his men to continue, appoints his deputy to take over the command, turned around and went out through the gate to the western city. He arrived at his fathers' house, dressed him in an army shirt, gave him a helmet and said- "Dad, we are going home!"

Eli grew up in the Old city, he was a teenager in the War of Independence and fought in the Jewish Quarter, he was taken by the Jordanian army as a prisoner of war when the Quarter surrendered May 28<sup>th</sup> 1967. Months later he was released, with the other prisoners and lived his life like anyone other, just waiting for the moment

he will be able to walk again in the streets of the Old City, back home. ■

*Oren is a tri- lingual licensed tour guide (HEB-ENG-SPA) holding a Masters degree in Jewish history. leads tours, hikes and lectures on topics connected to Israel its history, archaeology and modern times.*

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**Rabbi Anthony Manning**  
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### Yerushalayim – A Tale Of Two Cities

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness.....”. Charles Dickens was describing London and Paris in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century, but these words could also describe much of Jewish history. And although we only have one city - Yerushalayim – embedded in our hearts and minds, the grammatical form ‘*ayim*’ implies a duality that we will explore below.

Yerushalayim is mentioned 664 times in Tanach and over 1500 times in the writ-

ings of Chazal. Described by the Midrash Tanchuma (Kedoshim 10) as the center of Eretz Yisrael, which in turn is the center of the world, Jerusalem is firmly positioned at the core of our spiritual imagination. The Maharal (Tiferet Yisrael 70) explains that these references to the center (*emtza*) are not geographical but transcendent. The edges of any object or line are clearly definable, but the center can never be located at a physical point. We can always zoom-in further to discover an even more accurate center, which itself proves to be only an approximation. The true center (like the elusive present, always merging into the past or future) ultimately exists only in an abstract and infinite sense. So too, Yerushalayim – at the very center of our world – exists for us not merely as a location but as a spiritual aspiration. This

is the first duality – Yerushalayim shel Mata and shel Ma’ala. Chazal explain (Ta’anit 5a) that God will not establish the spiritual perfection of the Heavenly Jerusalem until we have rebuilt the Earthly Jerusalem and allowed His Presence to enter it. Only then can the two parallel cities be unified to fulfil the verse (Tehillim 122:3) – “*Jerusalem built up, a city unified together*”.

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It must be a city of *sheleimut* – connecting Jews of every kind, and binding them together as companions in a shared fate and destiny

---

A second duality is that of Tehillim 147:12 – “*O Jerusalem - praise the Lord (Hashem); extol Your God (Elokayich), O Zion*”. Jerusalem and Zion are both expressions of our connection to the city. Similarly: “*For Zion’s sake I will not be silent, and for the sake of Jerusalem I will not be still*” (Yeshayahu 62:1). The ultimate redemption of the Jewish people, as predicted in Devarim 30, is expressed both as a return to God and a return to Eretz Yisrael. Throughout our long exile, the Jewish nation has clung to the Divine promises expressed in two separate Covenants with Avraham – the Brit Bein Habetarim (Bereishit 15) and the Brit Mila (Bereishit 17). The first covenant was expressed with *Shem Hashem* – and maps our battles for survival through slavery and exile and ultimate redemption in our Land. The second covenant was made with *Shem Elokim* - and symbolizes our religious



struggles and eventual reconnection with God. These two covenants are reflected in the two facets of Jerusalem: Yerushalayim – the rebuilt capital of our nation (*U’vene Yerushalayim*), and Zion – the rediscovery of our religious inspiration (*Ki mi’Tzion tet-zei Torah*).

The name Yerushalayim also reflects two essential aspects of our religious worldview. Midrash Tehillim (76) explains that Avraham called the place *Hashem Yireh* following the Akeida (Bereishit 22:14), and Malchizedek called it ‘*Shalem*’ (Bereishit 14:18). The ultimate name of the city - ‘Yeru-Shalem’, as it is almost always written in Tanach, echoes this duality. Jerusalem must be a city which resonates with the fear of God – moving the Jewish people to an ever

closer connection with the Divine through Torah and mitzvot. At the same time, it must be a city of *sheleimut* – connecting Jews of every kind, and binding them together as companions in a shared fate and destiny.

Finally, Jerusalem represents a collaboration of the two tribes of Yehuda and Binyamin. Yehoshua 15:63 and Shoftim 1:21 respectively recount the attempts by each of these tribes to capture and settle the city. Chazal (Sifrei Devarim 62) explain that their dual ownership of Jerusalem resolves the ambiguity of the Torah itself as to whether many tribes would possess the capital (Devarim 12:5 – *mikol shivteichem*) or only one (Devarim 12:14 – *be'echad shvat-echa*). In fact, the border between Yehuda and Binyamin not only cuts through the city, but also across Har HaBayit and the

Temple complex itself. Chazal explain (Yoma 12a) how the different parts of the Temple were carefully mapped to connect these tribes, whose deep interdependence is rooted in the Torah itself. When Yehuda finally accepted personal responsibility for Binyanim (Bereishit 42:9), he laid down the foundations for the ultimate reunification of the children of Leah and Rachel as a united Jewish family.

Looking back at thousands of years of Jewish history and the rollercoaster of exile and redemption, Yerushalayim has indeed seen the best of times and the worst of times, ages of wisdom and ages of foolishness. Be'H we pray now for the very best of times in our Holy Land and Holy City – "*Hashiveinu Hashem ailecha venashuva; chadash yameinu kekedem!*" ■



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# The Prohibition of Dam (Blood) #2

## Salting Meat

Before cooking meat, blood must be removed. Our Sages provided two methods to remove the blood, either through salting the meat, or through broiling. All types of kosher meat (chicken, beef, lamb etc.) are kashered by either of these two methods. This article examines the process of salting the meat.

The main procedure of removing blood from meat is the process of salting. However, other preparations are essential in order for the outcome to be considered kosher. The Gemara in *Chulin* (113:a) rules that all meat must be washed before being salted. Early authorities debate over the purpose of rinsing the meat. The *Ra"n* (*Chulin* 42:b)

explains that washing the meat before salting is to soften it, in order to improve the effectiveness of the salt in removing the blood. The *Sma"k* (205) disagrees, saying that the reason for washing the meat is to remove blood spots that remain on the surface of the meat after *shechita*. One of the many practical ramifications of this dispute is whether it is sufficient to rinse the meat under running water (in order to remove blood spots) or whether the meat needs to be soaked (in order for the meat to be completely softened). The *Rema* (YD 69:1), as well as later authorities (see *Shach* 89:3), rule stringently and require the meat to be rinsed and then soaked for at least thirty minutes.

After rinsing and soaking process, the meat must be dried on the surface in order for the salting process to be effective. Afterwards, salt is scattered on all surfaces of the meat. For chickens and turkeys, the salt is also inserted into the inner cavity once the organs have been properly removed (see *Shulchan Aruch* 69:4).

Early authorities discuss what type of salt should be used. The *Rambam* (*Ma'achalot Asurot* 6:11) requires coarse salt. Other authorities, including *Rabbeinu Yerucham* (15:25), rule that finer, less potent salt can be used. However, the salt should still have substantial flavor. Although the *Shulchan Aruch* (69:3) rules like *Rabbenu Yerucham*,

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The OU Israel Gustave & Carol Jacobs Center for Kashrut Education was created to raise awareness and educate the public in all areas of Kashrut in Israel. Rabbi Ezra Friedman, a Rabbinic Field Representative for the OU is the Center's director.



modern authorities rule that table salt is not sufficient for salting meat, and that large-grained salt is required.

Regarding the amount of time the salt needs to remain on the meat, opinions vary. While as little as eighteen minutes has been suggested, it is almost universally accepted to leave the salt on the meat for an hour (see *Pitchei Teshuva* 69).

After the salting process, the salt is shaken off the meat. This shaking process is called *nipootz*. Afterwards, the meat must be washed again. The purpose of this additional wash is to remove any blood that has accumulated on the surface from the salting and in order to remove the salt left on the meat. Salt that remains on the meat too long may be halachically problematic. Therefore, the washing process that follows the salting is essential. Regarding the second wash, authorities also debate over the proper procedure. The *Rema* (69:7), based on early authorities, rules that the proper custom is to rinse the meat three times. Following these stages, the meat is considered kashered and may be prepared for consumption in any manner.

Creating an efficient system for all of these procedures is very complex, especially in Israel, where the quantity and speed of meat production is overwhelming. The OU, in Israel and around the world, spends

much time and effort in perfecting salting systems to the highest halachic standard. One may contact our hotline for further information about our system for salting and kashering meat. ■

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RABBI AARON

Editor, Torah Tidbits

GOLDSCHIEDER

## He's My Brother

“In my opinion, as a *Chesed* personality Reb Chaim towered above his intellectual personality” (The Rav, Vol. 1, p.194).

Two terms which have similar meaning are employed throughout the Torah when referring to one's fellow person, colleague or friend: *Re'ah*, רֵא, and *Ach*, אח. One example of this is found in our parsha: “If your brother (*ach*) becomes destitute and his hand falters beside you, you shall support him...” (*Vayikra* 25: 35, also see 25:25)

The Torah's delineation of terms is precise. Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik zt”l suggested that each word denotes a particular type of relationship we have toward our fellow man.

When the Torah speaks about civil law - not to inflict harm on someone - it employs the term *re'ah*, neighbor. Two examples of this: “You shall not covet your neighbor's (*re'ah*) house” (*Shemot* 20:14), “You shall not pull back your neighbor's landmark” (*Devarim* 19:14). In these cases the obligation is to respect the property and rights of one's neighbor. One must not inflict and harm or damage to one's fellow man.

In contrast the term *ach*, brother, connotes closeness; not only an acquaintance but companionship and interrelatedness. The term *brother* is a word that means that the two individuals are united by existential bonds. One feels the joys and frustration, the agonies and hopes of that person. In speaking about *zedaka*, the Torah consistently employs the term *ach*, not *re'ah*. The precepts of *tzedaka* and *gemilut chasadim* are nurtured by the doctrine of sympathetic, brotherly love (“Vision and Leadership”, p.155).

Let us cite a memorable episode when the Rav took the opportunity to elaborate on the definition of the word *re'ah*. The Rav and the renowned philanthropist Joseph Gruss a”h were close confidants. Mr. Gruss became one the great supporters of Yeshiva University. Mr. Gruss gave a pledge to build a campus in Jerusalem, known today as the Gruss Institute where the smicha program is housed. At the time, the pledge carried with it a condition that the Rav had to commit to teach for one year to launch the program. The intricate details are not clear but the Rav decided that he could not follow through with this plan.

Following this episode, the two met one another at a major dinner event where they both sat on the dais together. When the Rav stood up to speak, even before beginning his formal talk he opened by

commenting on the subject of friendship. He said that in biblical Hebrew there are two different words that mean friendship. One is *Re'ah* and the second is *Yedid*. The two are not identical. The first type is of a temporary nature. Yesterday, he was your friend, but today he could stab you in the back, as the Torah states in *Shemot* 21:14, "If a man shall act intentionally against his fellow (*re'ehu*) to murder him with guile...". On the other hand, the friendship of a *Yedid* nature lasts forever, and is capable of surviving the bumps in the relationship. "Joseph Gruss and I are true *Yedidim*," declared the Rav ('Seventy Conversations', Adler, pp. 118-121).

The Rav cited another intriguing case when the term *ach* or *achicha* is employed. The well known passage in the Talmud (*Bava Metzia* 62a) of two individuals working in the desert. One of them has a flask of water and the other does not. If one drinks the other will die. Does the owner need to share the water with this friend?

Rabbi Akiva cites a proof from the phrase, "...so that your brother (*ach*) may live with you." Although the Torah employs the word *ach*, which highlights the empathy and love that one must offer a friend in need, the word *imach*, with you, implies that the duty to uphold your brother's life applies only when your own life is first guaranteed. In this case as well one must feel that it is a brother that stands alongside you, however, according to Rabbi Akiva, the Torah gives the right to an individual to save his own life (*Family Redeemed* p.146).

The *re'ah* relationship is only suitable when

speaking of formal laws such as civil laws and property rights. However, when it comes to a friend in need one must share in troubles and feel a closeness and empathy. The bond of *re'ah* is weak. At such times the bond of *ach*, brother, is what the Torah requires.

In this same vein the Rav offered a beautiful explanation of the Torah's command to relieve an animal's burden (*Shemot* 23:5). If you see the donkey crouching under its burden, you have to help relieve the animal's suffering. We do not very often in contemporary times come across animals carrying packages. However, said the Rav, don't think for a moment that this verse is not applicable - we often come across people who are bent low under their burden.

This obligation is relevant for each of us. The Rav explained that the mitzvah of *p'rika* (lifting the burden) is based on the principle of *tzaar baalei chayim*, preventing cruelty to animals. This law is clearly a Torah obligation. "You certainly would agree with me," the Rav said to his students, "that halachically, *kal va'chomer ben beno shel kal vachomer*, that if I see a person bent low under his burden, then certainly I am enjoined to share his burden. It is obvious that the commandment applies to human beings as well."

Finally the Rav powerfully added that carrying a physical burden is painful but is often manageable. Caring an emotional burden, worry, anxiety is exhausting and often crushing. We are incumbent to help those carrying such burdens ('The Rav Thinking Aloud', *Bereishis*, Holzer, pp. 69-71). ■



## DIVREI MENACHEM

BY MENACHEM PERSOFF

Special Projects Consultant, OU Israel Center  
mpersoff@ou.org

### The “Return” To The Land

For those of us living in Eretz Yisrael, the upcoming Shemitta Year has special meaning. Our thoughts begin to turn to the *Kedushah* that attaches to the Land. Perhaps, we will read this week’s Parsha, Behar, with a special eye.

Rav Soloveitchik draws our attention to a peculiar sentence order in one of the key sentences in the Parsha, referring to returning land to its original owner at the commencement of the Yovel. The Torah declares:

“It shall be a Jubilee year for you [...] you shall return each man to his ancestral heritage” – (Vayikra, 25:10)

The rabbi asks: If the property reverts to its original owner, shouldn’t the verse better state that the ancestral heritage ‘be returned to each man?’

The Rav reminds us that in the previous Parsha, Emor, we were admonished that if we copy the wiles of our gentile neighbors, the Land will purge us. We will be sent into exile, and for our lax observance of the Shemitta Year, Eretz Yisrael will lie desolate commensurate to the number of Shemitta cycles abandoned.

Thus, “returning to the Land” can be a physical return, the owner reclaiming his property or, metaphorically, the people returning to Israel from exile. However, the Rav is implying something more profound. He tells us that when each man returns to his ancestral heritage in Eretz Yisrael, he expunges the Galut mentality. The “return” is to the recharged recognition that we, Hashem, and the Land of Israel are intertwined.

We then wonder at Eretz Yisrael’s unique, almost human qualities: The Land under Hashem’s providence can rest, be defiled, or spit us out. The Land even provides additional harvests to cover the dormant sabbatical year!

Paradoxically, even as we return to our homesteads, we recall that the Land is not ours in perpetuity. The Land is not ours to sell, ever. We celebrate that Hashem has given us this Land as a gift, and more so that its restoration during the fallow years is “more than a financial-legal process.”

The “original owner” must return to his Land, his ancestral heritage, both physically and metaphysically. He now returns to a pristine and peaceful setting where slaves and masters have become one, to give homage to the Master Who is One. ■

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## Giving *Ma'aser* Years Later

**Question:** Over the years, I have received cash gifts for birthdays, bar mitzva, etc. and never gave *ma'aser kesafim* (=mk) from them. I would like to do so now but do not remember the exact amounts I received. What should I do?

**Answer:** Indeed, the standard ruling is that in most cases, cash gifts are subject to giving *mk* (see Tzedaka U'mishpat 5:5).

The basic question, whether one maintains a responsibility to take *mk* on “income” from which he did not take at the appropriate time, arises in different ways. For one who never gave *ma'aser*, the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 249:1, based on Yerushalmi Peah 1:1) prescribes: “The first year, from the principle, subsequently ... from what he earned every year.” (The Shulchan Aruch discusses a fifth, the maximum rate of giving *tzedaka*, but the same is true for those who give the “average rate” of *mk* (Shach ad loc. 2).) Thus, whatever remains in liquid accounts, no matter how he received the funds, would be tithed with the principle, and what was spent is “water under the bridge.”

This is not a full proof that we do not look back to the past, especially if we consider the likely origin of *mk*. While some view it as a Torah-level law (see Tosafot, Ta'anit 9a), most hold that it is only a Rabbinic requirement and, more likely, non-binding advice on how to properly fulfill the *mitzva* of giving *tzedaka* (see Pitchei Teshuva, YD 331:12). When one accepts the practice, it becomes an obligation (ibid.), and it makes sense that it starts with the aforementioned clean-the-slate system.

### The Tashbetz says it is praiseworthy to give and you seem interested to do so

What happens if one who was already practicing *mk* failed to tithe some income? The Tashbetz (II:131), focusing on money that had been spent, compares this to one who ate food slated to be given to a *kohen* or the poor. The *gemara* (Chulin 130b) says that in such a case, he is not required to pay because there is no specific recipient with rights, and it is only an act of the righteous to do so. Here too, once the money is spent, one need not donate money in its place.

The K'tzot Hachoshen (212:6) views *mk* differently. He argues that unlike produce to be donated, which applies to specific objects, *mk* is a matter of accounting how

much to give, from any asset. The obligation cannot be “eaten,” and there seems no reason for it to disappear over time.

Tzedaka U'mishpat (5:14) cites both opinions without a clear preference. It is difficult to understand the Tashbetz's logic, as indeed: why should the obligation disappear? Also, when would this occur? Perhaps, one question answers the other.

*Poskim* discuss making *mk* calculations at given intervals, which is important according to our ruling that expenses and losses are deducted from profits (Chavot Yair 224). So one needs a cutoff point to know which losses can be deducted from which profits (*ibid.*). The Noda B'yehuda (II, YD 198) demonstrates that the relevant *pasuk* and the *halacha* we cited from the Shulchan Aruch (YD 249:1) hint at a year as a likely *mk*-calculation period, and the Chavot Yair (*ibid.*) posits that *erev Rosh Hashana* is a logical time to do so. Once there is an idea of a periodic accounting, the Tashbetz can view whatever was passed over at that time as relegated to history.

Still, there are several reasons for you to give *mk* on the past: The K'tzot Hachoshen is likely correct. The Tashbetz says it is praiseworthy to give and you seem interested to do so. If you have not yet spent the money, the Tashbetz might not apply.

As far as estimating amounts, halachic logic would have it that it suffices to give only that which you know you “owe” (Shevet Halevi V:133 disagrees). After all, *mk* is likely Rabbinic or less and when you accepted upon yourself, you may/should have considered (which is impactful - see Shut Chatam Sofer, YD 231) that you would sometimes forget income and do not want to be liable for what you do not remember. (Many are also more stringent in the system of calculating than may be necessary.) On the other hand, those who can afford to give *tzedaka* generously are promised reward (see Ta'anit 9a). ■

*Eretz Hemdah has begun a participatory Zoom class - "Behind the Scenes with the Vebbe Rebbe" - an analytical look at the sources, methodology, and considerations behind our rulings, with Rav Daniel Mann. Contact [info@eretzhemdah.org](mailto:info@eretzhemdah.org) to join.*

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## The Surplus of Eggs

Last week we discussed the process of fertility treatment, during which a number of fertilized eggs are produced and one or two are transferred. The best eggs are chosen for transfer back into the patient's body as they are more likely to lead to a healthy pregnancy.

As we mentioned last week, in most cases a woman will have received hormonal treatment and ovulated a number of eggs. How many eggs are produced in a cycle of fertility treatment? That depends on many factors: the patient's age (an older woman will typically produce fewer eggs), how much stimulation was given (a higher dose of hormonal treatment will often lead to more eggs), medical history and other factors.

Generally, anywhere between 1 and 20 eggs, and even more, will be produced during a cycle of hormonal treatment. Not all of the eggs will fertilize and develop

properly, but some will. The end result is the transfer of one or two of the best developed eggs.

The question is then what to do with the remaining eggs? In most cases the couple will keep them for future treatment. There is no guarantee that the process will be successful the first time, and so storing the remaining eggs is a good idea, since they can be used for the next round of treatment. Even if the process is successful and a baby is born, the couple can use the remaining eggs when they are ready to have another child without having to start the whole process from the beginning.

Sometimes the fertilized eggs are of a reduced quality; they may not survive the process of freezing and subsequent thawing, in which case they will be discarded. In cases where the fertility treatment was performed for a genetic reason, the remaining embryos may be affected with an unwanted genetic characteristic and the couple may also choose to discard them.

It should be clear, from this short explanation, that there are many frozen embryos

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that remain in clinics and labs from fertility treatment. The estimate is that worldwide this number is over one million such fertilized eggs. Many couples who started the process do not want to use these eggs; they have already been successful in building their family, they have since separated or are deceased, or any other reason.

What can be done with these frozen fertilized eggs?

More on this next week. ■

*The Puah Institute is based in Jerusalem and helps couples from all over the world who are experiencing fertility problems. Offices in Jerusalem, New York, Los Angeles & Paris. Contact (Isr) 02-651-5050 (US) 718-336-0603 [www.puahonline.org](http://www.puahonline.org)*

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# Preparing The Garden For Shemittah, #3: Pruning

Last time, we wrote that the melachot *derabbanan* are permitted only for *ukmei illana* - “preserving the status quo” (to avoid worsening of the situation, but not to improve it). This is with regard to the tree, and also, possibly, the fruit itself. However, nothing may be done to strengthen the tree itself.

## Pruning trees and bushes

Pruning (*gizum*) is a melacha *derabbanan*. Sometimes, the goal of pruning is to cause the plant to grow more; this is not permitted.

It is only permitted to prune when the goal is to preserve the existing form of the plant.

In general, it is recommended to avoid

pruning trees and bushes during Shemittah. We recommend to prune all your bushes and trees in Fall of the sixth year, until Elul 29.

For many plants, this pruning will be enough and there will be no agricultural or esthetic reason to prune again in the Shemittah year.

Pruning meant only to preserve the existing shape of the tree or bush is permitted, providing that the plant is mature and the pruning does not initiate new growth. For this reason, it is permissible to prune a full living fence or gate. However, it is forbidden to prune a young living fence, since pruning initiates growth of new branches that fill in the gaps.

It is permissible to prune in the following cases: protruding branches next to (or above) sidewalks that bother pedestrians or growing near electrical wires, and such; dead or sick branches. All the above are permissible providing that it is apparent that the purpose is not to facilitate the tree’s growth.

Pruning branches and mechanical supports for trees and branches to ensure that the trees do not collapse due to excess weight is permissible. ■

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### TEFILLA

BY REBBETZIN ZEMIRA OZAROWSKI

Director of OU Israel L'Ayla Women's Initiative



It's Motzei Shabbat and my Torah Tidbits article for this coming week is long overdue. I am supposed to be writing about the first Brachot of Shemoneh Esrei but I can't bring myself to do anything. My mind is only in one place...Meron. My heart is with all the families whose lives ended so tragically; I am mourning even as I go about my regular tasks. I can't focus on studying a sefer or piecing together an article. But I can share with you some of the powerful Tefilla lessons I have learned over the past couple of days.

I first received news of the tragedy at 2am and rushed to call my teenage son, who was in Meron at the time, to make sure he was ok. To my dismay, there was no answer. Again and again I tried, but no success. Because of the high volume of cell phone calls, the system was overloaded. For the next hour, I alternated between davening, messaging the mothers of my son's friends, and dialing his number. How I longed to hear from my son, *anything*, even just a one-word message. Baruch Hashem, eventually I reached him and he was ok. I went back to sleep completely shaken up. In the morning, I tried to call him to find out if he had gotten out of Meron and how he planned to make his way back home before Shabbos. But alas, his phone was now dead. I waited a few hours, assuming at some point he would make contact, but

there was no word. At some point, I began to get nervous. I knew he was fine Baruch Hashem, but I felt the need to hear from him. I wanted to make sure I knew where in the country he was and that he wasn't stranded somewhere. Listening on the news to stories of mothers who had still not gotten word at all from their sons since the calamity, I could feel their pain, their worry, their gnawing terror. And it made me only more eager to finally hear from my son. When he finally arrived at home, though, he could not understand the big deal. Why should he have contacted me? From his perspective everything was fine. He had made it onto a bus and all was fine and good.

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**We pour our hearts and our tears into our Tefillot, begging Hashem to help. But what we forget is that every single day, we are actually just as reliant on Hashem as we are when disaster strikes**

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Suddenly it hit me...this is our relationship with Hashem. Hashem is waiting and waiting to hear from us. He's longing for contact with us. He'll take whatever it is...

even if our Tefilla is short or rushed or by rote; He wants to hear *something* from us. And we, His children, just don't get it. As far as we're concerned, life is going well, everything is good. Why do we need to reach out to Hashem? But Hashem is waiting, His ears are open, He's ready to listen, and He wants to connect.

Moreover, we just don't realize how much we **do** need Him. When a tragedy occurs, we are suddenly able to open our hearts in real Tefilla in a way that we never usually can. Every word we say is full of meaning. We don't need to use tricks to help ourselves to concentrate, because we are already totally and completely present. We pour our hearts and our tears into our Tefillot, begging Hashem to help. But what

we forget is that every single day, we are actually just as reliant on Hashem as we are when disaster strikes. Every single time our children arrive home safely at the end of the day, that's miraculous. There are so many things that could go wrong every single day. We need to daven to Hashem with that same intensity, to beg Him to watch over us and our children and everyone we know and to thank Him for every day of health and safety.

May we use some of these lessons to push ourselves to daven better, to connect with Hashem, and to recognize our complete and utter reliance on Him. And may the families of those who perished find comfort and מנוחת הנפש. Our hearts are with you. ■

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# TORAH 4 TEENS

## BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



**Rabbi Yosef Ginsberg**  
Co-Regional  
Director, NCSY Israel

### The Freedom To Serve

The second of this week’s double Parsha, Bechukotai, is called and begins with speaking about the reward and punishment of going in the ways of Hashem. Rashi comments on the first Pasuk with regards to going in Hashem’s ways and keeping His mitzvot by explaining that they lead into each other by us being ‘Ameilim Batorah – diligent in Torah study’. In other words, if we are diligent in Torah study we will know how to keep Hashem’s mitzvot, which in turn will help us connect to them and be diligent in them. Without the Torah, we would have nowhere to begin on the journey of fulfilling Hashem’s will. But what if we already know the laws? What if we feel that Torah learning doesn’t help us connect to Hashem and his Mitzvot?

The Holy Reb Moshe Leib of Sassov ZY”A brings an important parable. He tells us that when a person wants to go and ask for something from a king, he enters with fear and trembling. Any offense to the king’s honor could be severe. He dresses his best, prepares and follows all the rules, all while shaking in his boots. But, let’s say one of the king’s simple painters wants to come

in and paint some rooms in the palace as per his job. He enters in overalls covered with paint and messy materials, swipes his employee card, and doesn’t think twice. The reason for this is because he is going in as a worker. It’s particularly the work that gives him freedom to act natural in the kingdom.

If we bring Torah study and connect it to everything we do, all of the Mitzvot and will of Hashem becomes our job and we become his workers. This gives us the freedom to act naturally in how we do them and enables us to better connect to Hashem and his Mitzvot through an organic relationship, as opposed to distance and fear. As chosen employees of Hashem’s kingdom, may we merit to rebuild his Beit Hamikdash speedily in our days.



**Liat Sanders**  
12th Grade,  
Jerusalem

### Taking A Break And Trusting In God

Parashat Behar starts with the commanding of Shnat Shmita, the seventh year and Yovel the fiftieth year, seven periods of seven years. In Shnat Shmita and Yovel you are not allowed to plant or cut any crops, you need to take a break. God is forcing us to stop working, forcing

us to take a break and relax. Just like on Shabbos. Sometimes in life we forget to give ourselves a break, but God reminds us to take care of ourselves. It's interesting that every seven days we reset and also every seven years. The number seven seems to have some significance. We know why we rest on the seventh day but why do we rest on the seventh year?

It seems like God wanted to follow the same pattern of seven. On the seventh year we rest, but so does the earth. It gives the earth time to replenish itself and rest, just like us. God is looking out for the earth just as he is looking out for us.

To learn to trust in God and have faith in him. To remember that he wants what is best for us even if we can't see it in the moment

Parashat Bechukotai starts off with God telling Bnei Israel that if they listen to him and follow his ways and do his mitzvahs he will bless them with rain and the crops with blossom and there will be peace in the land. I'd take this part to say that we need to trust in God. Yes, it's scary to not plant for a year, or lose business because we can't work on Shabbos, but we need to trust in God. If we are good and listen to him and follow in his ways then he will be good to us and bless us.

I think everyone can take this to a more personal level, in our own lives. To learn

to trust in God and have faith in him. To remember that he wants what is best for us even if we can't see it in the moment. I truly do live by the saying הכל לטובה. Always try your best in life and leave the rest up to God.

These two Parshiot combine beautifully. They both show us how much God cares about us and how we should listen to God and trust in his ways. ■

*NCSY Israel is the premier organization in Israel, dedicated to connect, inspire, empower, and help teen olim with "Klita" to the Land of Israel by encouraging passionate Judaism through Torah and Tradition. Find out more at [israel.ncsy.org](http://israel.ncsy.org)*



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