

שבת בשבת



Parshat Beshalach

No 1660: 15 Shevat 5777 (February 11, 2017)

WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER

Membership: \$50.00

CLICK [HERE](#) TO JOIN OR DONATE TO THE RZA

Pillar

Membership:\$180.00

We are in the process of collecting membership dues for 2017.

Please show your support and join as a member or renew your membership at this time.

Religious Zionists of America

305 Seventh Avenue, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10001

office@rza.org, www.rza.org

Yom Yerushalayim Honor Roll

Dear Friend of Religious Zionism,

One of the initiatives we are planning, in anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem, is an "Honor Roll" to be signed by the leadership of congregations and schools across the country.

- 1) Please have your leadership inform us if they want to be included on our Honor Roll. (We will include the names of all participating institutions in the media).
- 2) Please share this Honor Roll with institutions in your community and encourage participation.
- 3) Please arrange to hang this Honor Roll in the lobbies of your Shuls and Schools. Click [here](#) to print out a copy of the poster OR kindly email us to let us know if you'd like us to mail you a hard copy flyer or poster.

We have more than 40 Shuls signed up. If your community is not yet on our list please let us know.

Rabbi Gideon Shloush
Presidium
National Director
Oliner

Mr. Martin

Please encourage your community leadership to include the paragraph below in your Shul and School Announcements:

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem. On May 22-25 be front and center for a mega-celebration in Israel in partnership with the Religious Zionist of America (RZA) and World Mizrahi. Individuals and communities from around the world will participate in this once in a lifetime opportunity. Celebrating 50 years of a reunited Jerusalem on Yom Yerushalayim. See www.mizrachi.org/YY50.

Below is a list of shuls, schools, and organizations that are participating in our Honor Roll:

Congregation B'nai David-Judea

Los Angeles, CA

Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky

Shaarey Zedek Congregation

Valley Village, CA

Rabbi Jonathan Rosenberg

Young Israel of Orange County

Irvine, CA

Rabbi Dov Fischer

Young Israel of Century City

Los Angeles, CA

Rabbi Elazar Muskin

Beth Jacob Congregation

Beverly Hills, CA

Rabbi Kalman Topp

Beth David Synagogue

West Hartford, CT

Rabbi Yitzchok Adler

Westville Synagogue

New Haven, CT

Rabbi Fred Hyman

Boca Raton Synagogue

Boca Raton, FL

Rabbi Efreim Goldberg

Congregation Torah Ohr

Boca Raton, FL

Rabbi Benjamin Yasgur

Anshei Emuna Congregation

Delray Beach, FL

Rabbi Jack Engel

Ida Crown Academy

Chicago, IL

Rabbi Leonard Matanky

Congregation KINS

Chicago, IL

Rabbi Leonard Matanky

Congregation Yehuda Moshe

Lincolnwood, IL

Rabbi Joel Gutstein

Suburban Torah

Livingston, NJ

Rabbi Elie Mischel

Congregation Etz Chaim

Livingston, NJ

Rabbi E. Sameul Klibanoff

Congregation Ahavath Torah

Havurat Yisrael

Forest Hills, NY

Rabbi David Algaze

Young Israel of Hewlett

Hewlett, NY

Rabbi Heshy Blumstein

Rambam Mesivta

Lawrence, NY

Rabbi Zev Friedman

Young Israel of Jamaica Estates

Jamaica Estates, NY

Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg

Community Synagogue of Monsey

Monsey, NY

Rabbi Moshe Tendler

Congregation Beth Sholom

Lawrence, NY

Rabbi Kenneth Hain

Young Israel of Long Beach

Long Beach, NY

Rabbi Chaim Wakslak

The Jewish Center

New York, NY

Rabbi Yosie Levine

Bialystoker Synagogue

New York, NY

Rabbi Zvi Romm

Congregation Adereth El

New York, NY

Rabbi Gideon Shloush

Congregation Ohab Zedek

New York, NY

Rabbi Allen Schwartz

Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun

New York, NY

Rabbi Elie Weinstock

Congregation Beth Shalom

Rochester, NY

Rabbi Avi Kilimnick

Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe

Brighton, MA

Rabbi Jason Strauss

Congregation Shaarei Tefillah

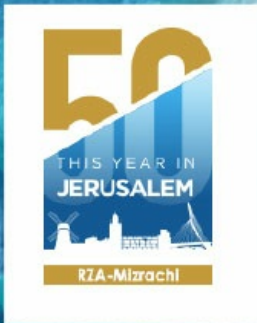
Newton, MA

Rabbi Benjamin J. Samuels

Beth Tfiloh Congregation

Englewood, NJ
Rabbi Shmuel Goldin
Congregation Israel
Springfield, NJ
Rabbi Chaim Marcus
Congregation Bnai Yeshurun
Teaneck, NJ
Rabbi Steven Pruzansky
Congregation Rinat Israel
Teaneck, NJ
Rabbi Yosef Adler
Congregation Keter Torah
Teaneck, NJ
Rabbi Shalom Baum
Congregation Ahavas Achim
Highland Park, NJ
Rabbi Steven Miodownik
Rabbi Pesach Raymon Yeshiva
Edison, NJ
Rabbi Daniel Loew
Congregation Brothers of Israel
Long Branch, NJ
Rabbi Nasanayl Braun
Young Israel of Scarsdale
Scarsdale, NY
Rabbi Jonathan Morgenstern
Magen David Sephardic Congregation
Scarsdale, NY
Rabbi Mitchell Serels
Congregation Ahavath Achim
Brooklyn, NY
Rabbi Ari Kagan
Congregation Pri Eitz Chaim
Brooklyn, NY
Rabbi Melvin I Burg
Magen David Yeshiva High School
Brooklyn, NY
Rabbi Saul Zucker
Congregation Talmud Torah of Flatbush
Brooklyn, NY
Congregation Beth Torah
Brooklyn, NY
Rabbi Rabbi Ari Azancot

Baltimore, MD
Rabbi Mitchell Wohlberg
Beth Tfiloh Dahan Community School
Baltimore, MD
Rabbi Mitchell Wohlberg
Rockville Jewish Outreach Center
Rockville, MD
Rabbi Yaacov Benamou
Young Israel of Southfield
Southfield, MI
Rabbi Yechiel Morris
Young Israel of Oak Park
Oak Park, MI
Rabbi Michael Cohen
Nusach Hari B'nai Zion Congregation
St. Louis, MO
Rabbi Ze'ev Smason
Congregation Torat Emet
Columbus, OH
Rabbi Howard Zack
Green Road Synagogue
Cleveland, OH
Rabbi Binyamin Blau
Congregation Mikveh Israel
Philadelphia, PA
Rabbi Albert Gabbai
Touro Synagogue
Newport, RI
Rabbi Marc Mandel
Congregation Shaare Tefilla
Dallas, TX
Rabbi Ariel Rackovsky
United Orthodox Synagogues
Houston, TX
Rabbi Barry Gelman
Beth Israel Beth Aaron
Congregation Cote St. Luc, Quebec
Rabbi Reuben J. Poupko
Kollel Agudath Achim
Jerusalem, Israel
Rabbi Aharon Ziegler
Beth Israel Synagogue
Edmonton, Canada
Rabbi Daniel Friedman



YOM YERUSHALAYIM

Honor Roll

MY COMMUNITY IS PROUD TO CELEBRATE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF YOM YERUSHALAYIM.

The fiftieth anniversary of the re-unification of Jerusalem is upon us. Yom Yerushalayim 2017 will take place on Wednesday, May 24th.

In celebration of this historic milestone the RZA-Mizrachi is preparing an Honor Roll of synagogues and schools who will be organizing t'fillot and festivities to mark this occasion.

JERUSALEM HONOR ROLL

Fifty years ago, through the miracle of the Six Day War, the holy city of Jerusalem was reunited. As the soul-stirring cry of "Har Habayit b'yadeinu" rang out, Israel's courageous young soldiers fulfilled the hopes and dreams of countless generations. At long last, the destroyed synagogues of the Old City would be rebuilt; the desecrated graves on the Mount of Olives would be restored; and the Kotel would resume its rightful place at the center of the Jewish universe. Yom Yerushalayim both commemorates that incredible moment in time and symbolizes the joining of G-d, Torah, and the Land of Israel, now and forever. On this 50th anniversary of the reunification of the eternal capital of the Jewish people, we renew our commitment to protecting the safety and sanctity of united Jerusalem.

(signature)

(name of institution)



The Religious Zionists of America is the US affiliate of the 115 year old World Mizrahi movement. The goal of the RZA-Mizrachi is to instill in the American Jewish community a commitment to religious Zionism, the preservation of Jewish political freedom, the enhancement of Jewish religious life in the land of Israel, and the promotion of aliyah. For more information, visit: www.rza.org

In The Spotlight

We are pleased to announce a new initiative: Each week, we will (translate and) feature a d'var Torah shared by a Rav who teaches at a Dati Leumi Hesder Yeshiva in Israel. Our goal is – until we get there ourselves – to bring Torat Yisrael closer to America.

Parshat Beshalach

Speak to the Children of Israel and tell them to journey forth!

Rabbi Gur Golan

Rosh Yeshiva in Yeshivat HaHesder Har Brachah, Israel

Translated by RZA-Aryeh Fellow Nimrod Soll

This week the Jewish People begin their journey throughout the desert, a journey that will take them all the way to the Promised Land. The generation of the "midbar", as its name suggests, was a generation which lived outside of nature. The desert is a place where people cannot naturally live, and where everyday life is miraculous. So too the generation of the midbar was filled with miracles, and was a generation which was not bound by the natural order we live in.

On the day to day level, the generation of the midbar had the pillar of fire and the clouds of glory to guide them. Manna fell from the heavens, the sea split before them and their battles were dependent on the hands of Moses. More than all of that, the generation of the midbar was able to live outside the normal spiritual order. In the normal spiritual order there is reward and punishment, where how much good God bestows upon you depends on your merit. Not so was the generation of the midbar. The prophet Yechezkel (16;6) tells us, "Then I passed you and I saw that you were stumbling in your blood, and I said to you, "In your blood you shall live", I said to you, "In your blood you shall live." According to the Sages our people were standing at the 49th level of impurity in Egypt, and were not deserving of redemption. Nevertheless, God redeemed us despite our inequities.

And yet despite, or perhaps in spite, all the miracles which occurred in that generation, we see that there is a clear need for Israel to act before God can bestow any miracle on them. The order of redemption requires "kol dodi dofeq" "the voice of my beloved is knocking". Thus, the Sages teach us in Shir HaShirim Rabbah (Shir HaShirim 5;2): "Open for me", Rabbi Yasa says, "The Holy One Blessed Be He tells Israel. My children open for me one opening of repentance as small as the point of a needle, and I will open for you openings in which carriages can enter through."

In the depths of Egypt too God demands that we first open for him the doorway, even if it is only a crack, so that He can redeem us. Thus, Israel is told to take a sheep, one of the Egyptian gods, slaughter it and spread its blood on the doorpost. It is a sign of our faith in Hashem, but it is also part of the divine command that we must act if we wish to see the redemption.

This is even clearer at the Splitting of the Sea. God bestows upon us a miracle which is greater than anything he did during the plagues, and again we find God demanding that we take the first step. "And Hashem said to Moshe, "Why do you cry out to me?! Speak to the Children of Israel and tell them to journey forth!"

The Gemara in Sotah 37a stresses this even further, when it relates how the Jewish People refused to go into the sea. Each person said, "I am not going down first into the sea!". The Gemara relates that Nachshon ben Aminadav acted, and went first into the sea. It was only after that, that God told Moses raise his staff and stretch his arm in order to split the sea. The Gemara then states that it was because of Nachshon's bravery that the tribe of Judah merited being the rulers of Israel.

Furthermore, this Gemara teaches us that Nachshon was the only one to jump into the sea. The masses did not wish to go into the sea as they were skeptic, afraid and lacked courage and faith in God. Only one person, out of an entire nation, decided to jump and act. An action by one man might seem minuscule compared to an entire nation which is passive, but it was enough to bestow upon Israel the miracle of the Splitting of the Sea. "Open for me", God tells the Jewish People, even the smallest action can be enough to bestow upon us the greatest of miracles.

Additionally, the Gemara in Sotah tells us that Nachshon jumped into the sea before the

explicit command given by God, "Hashem said to Moshe, "Why do cry out to me?! Speak to the Children of Israel and tell them to journey forth!" In that moment Nachshon was in grave danger, because if the nation wouldn't follow then he would have drowned. Indeed the Gemara relates that God told Moses, "My beloved ones are drowning in the sea, and you are praying?! Speak to the Children of Israel and journey forth!"

In our generation as well we must try to become like Nachshon, in Torah learning, in settling the Land of Israel and in everything. Just as it was for the generation of the midbar, so too it will be for our own our actions will, God Willing, merit us to see the full redemption speedily in our days.



Rabbi Gur Galon is a Rosh Yeshiva in Yeshivat HaHesder Har Brachah which is located on the southern ridge of Har Gerizim in the Shomron.

We are pleased to feature a different Religious Zionist rabbi each week from around the country to share a Dvar Torah.

Parshat Beshalach

Rabbi Chaim Marcus

Rabbi of Congregation Israel

Springfield, NJ

Earlier this week, on the 10th of Shevat, was the yahrzeit of Rav Yissachar Shlomo Teichtal *hy"d*, the author of a sefer written during the dark days of the Shoah, *Eim HaBanim Semeichah*, a work that quickly became among the most influential books forcefully arguing for the principles of the Religious Zionist Movement. Rav Teichtal was killed on a train on his way to Mauthausen, while defending the honor of a fellow Jew. To commemorate the yahrzeit of this great tzaddik, I would like to share a teaching from his sefer that is from this week's parsha.

In Shemos 14:15, when the Jews are trapped between the sea and the approaching Egyptian army, Hashem tells Moshe Rabbeinu, "*Why do you cry out to me? Speak to the Bnei Yisrael that they should travel.*" Many *meforshim* wonder why one of the most effective tools of the Jewish People, Tefillah, at this point is rendered ineffective. Rav Teichtal explains that faith alone, and Tefillah as an expression of our emunah, at times needs to be accompanied by action. Words alone are not enough. Taking action



demonstrates that the person's faith has been internalized and is real. This is why the Bnei Yisrael needed to travel forth, thereby meriting the Divine Salvation of Krias Yam Suf.

Rav Teichtel says that the Exodus from Egypt is the prototype for all future redemptions. Especially when it comes to our belief in Mashiach, faith and prayer is not enough. We need to take action. He argues that when we take concrete steps to ascend to Eretz Yisrael, then Hashem will bring the Geulah Shelaimah.

Since the horrors of the Holocaust, the Jewish People, and specifically the Religious Zionist Community, have taken significant, concrete steps towards the Geulah Shelaimah. However we must not grow lax in our commitment to Yishuv Ha'Aretz. Especially for us Jews who live outside the land of Israel, we must heed Rav Teichtel's call, and answer the question: what concrete steps are we taking to build up the land?

RZA in the News

Rabbi Marvin Hier Goes to Washington



L-R: Mr. Michael Rosenberg, Rabbi Marvin Hier, Mr. Jack Nagel and Rabbi Shlomo Einhorn.



L-R: Mr. Jack Nagel, Rabbi Gideon Shloush and Rabbi Dr. Ernie Agatstein.

RABBI ARYE D. GORDON

On Motzoei Shabbos, January 28, the RZLA (Religious Zionists of LA) hosted a *melaveh malkah* at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jack and Gita Nagel.

The special guest was Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean and founder of the Wiesenthal Center, which was named in honor of the famed Nazi hunter, Mr. Simon Wiesenthal.

Rabbi Hier was invited to speak about his recent experience at the Washington, DC, inauguration of the president, Mr. Donald Trump.

Prior to the *melaveh malkah*, the RZLA hosted a *Shabbaton*, with various guest speakers at shuls in the Pico/Robertson community. The weekend topic was "Trump's America and Its Israel Relations."

The Shabbos guest presenters included Rabbi Shaul Robinson of the Lincoln Square Synagogue of New York, and Rabbi Gideon Shloush, executive VP RZA-Mizrachi and Rabbi of Congregation Aderet El in New York.

The Nagels, magnificent hosts, warmly welcomed all who came. Following an elegant and tasty spread of delicacies, the attendees headed to the outside tent for the evening's event.

Introductory remarks were given by Rabbi Dr. Ernie Agatstein, a member of the newly created presidium of the Religious Zionists of America.

Dr. Agatstein, enthused by the newly revised and invigorated organization, introduced Rabbi Shloush.

Rabbi Shloush extolled the Nagels for their hospitality and for their numerous philanthropic accomplishments. After listing Rabbi Hier's many achievements,

Mr. Ronald Nagel then turned the podium over to Rabbi Hier.

Rabbi Hier spoke of the great honor to recite the invocation at the inauguration. He was the first Orthodox Rabbi so honored at an American president's inauguration. The last time a Jewish clergyman was asked to recite the invocation was at President Ronald Reagan's second inauguration in 1985.

"It was quite an event to see so many presidents of the United States – political opponents – sitting on the dais. That's the greatness of America on Inauguration Day."

Rabbi Hier described how he picked the particular quotes from *Tehillim* and other Jewish sources for the invocation.

It was an amazing experience to have a Jew wearing a *parmitke*, with millions throughout the world listening, stand and declare, "Bless all of our allies around the world who share our beliefs, 'By the rivers of Babylon, we wept as we remember Zion ... If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill.'" (*Tehillim* 137)

While Rabbi Hier was castigated in social media in a most foul and deprecating manner, by Jews and non-Jews alike, he stood firm in his acceptance of this invitation and staunchly stated, "Jews have flourished, thanks to the system of government we have here. To refuse the request of a president-elect of the United States to offer a prayer – he didn't invite me to give a political discourse – would be an insult to the country where Jews are flourishing. And I wouldn't consider insulting the United States of America."

Even the Anti-Defamation League was "outraged and sad-

dened by the anti-Semitism leveled at Rabbi Marvin Hier" after the blessing he delivered at the inauguration.

This was truly a moment in time

that we had the opportunity to express our thanks to this country that took in so many of us.

To Rabbi Marvin Hier, *kol hakarov!*

LOS ANGELES EVENTS

February 2017

- 8 | **UNITY 2000 Rabbi Shalom Arush**
"Reach Your Full Potential Through Faith"
Open to All, First Come First Served
8:00 p.m., Eretz Center, 6170 Wilbur Ave., Tarzana
- 9 | **Night of Unity**
Rabbi Paysach Krohn
8:00 p.m., Beth David, 18648 Clark St., Tarzana
\$10 per person; Men and women welcome.
- 13 | **"Achieving Happiness" - Rabbi Yashov Marcus**
Jewish Learning Exchange
7:30 p.m., 512 N. La Brea Ave. 323.857.0923
- 14 | **Ponevez Sit West Coast Dinner**
Recognizing the Fasman family
Reception 6:30 p.m.; Dinner 7:00 p.m.
Sofitel Hotel, 8555 Beverly Blvd.
- 15 | **KFWE Herzog Wine Festival**
Kosher Food & Wine Experience
Peterson Automotive Museum
1 – 4 p.m. open to the trade; 6 – 9 p.m. open to the public
Tickets: Email info@kfwea.com for details
- 25 | **Kesher Torah Annual Melaveh Malkah**
Honoring the Ackerman and Zheutlin families
8:00 p.m., Moshe Ganz Hall, 350 N. La Brea.
- 26 | **Mesivta of Greater Los Angeles Calabasas**
20th Anniversary Dinner
Memorial Tribute to Mr. Lawrence Dinovits
6:30 – 9:00 p.m., Lure Sunset Hotel, 11491 Sunset Blvd.
- 26 | **Valley Night Kollel!**
An Evening of Chizuk and Entertainment
Featuring Rabbi Zecharia Wallenstein and Mr. Eitan Katz
8:00 p.m. Details to follow.

Two New Florida Events!

Religious Zionists of America-Mizrachi presents

The Future of Religious Zionism in America



with

Rabbi Gideon Shloush

Executive Vice President of RZA-Mizrachi

Boca Raton Synagogue

7900 N Montoya Cir, Boca Raton, FL 33433

Sunday, February 26th, 2017

7:30 PM • Light Refreshments



RSVP to 212.465.9234
or office@rza.org



Sponsors:
Boca Raton Synagogue
Congregation Torah Ohr



Religious Zionists of America-Mizrachi presents

The relevance of
RELIGIOUS ZIONISM
in the
21ST CENTURY

MARCH 1, 2017 • 7:30 PM • YOUNG ISRAEL OF HOLLYWOOD, FL



Presenter:

Isaac Blachor

Past chair of the American delegation to the World Zionist Congress and veteran Religious Zionist leader

Young Israel of Hollywood

3291 Stirling Road, Hollywood, FL
Light Refreshments to be Served



RSVP to 212-465-9234
or office@rza.org



Save the Date - Yeshivat HaKotel Dinner

Yeshivat HaKotel will be hosting their 50th Anniversary dinner on Tuesday, Yom Yerushalayim, May 23, at the Lincoln Square Synagogue in New York City. Mr. and Mrs. Louis Drazin of Montreal will be honored for their many years of support and devotion to Yeshivat HaKotel. The program will include a Tefila Chagigat, Dvar Torah by our Dean of Students Rabbi Reuven Taragin, and music by Eitan Katz.

For those unable to join the mission to Israel, this is an incredible opportunity to celebrate Yom Yerushalayim here in the United States.

More details to follow.

Introducing the New RZA-Aryeh Fellowship!

The RZA-Aryeh Fellowship is a new initiative of the RZA-Mizrachi to strengthen the mission of Religious Zionism. Fifty college and graduate school students from around the country have been invited to spend their winter-break in Israel where they will be studying Torah and attending intensive seminars devoted to Religious Zionism education. Upon their return the Aryeh Fellows will focus on their year-long Manhigut (leadership) projects designed to bring the message of Religious Zionism back to communities across America. We are excited to profile a different “Aryeh Fellow” each week.

Meet Ezra Cohen



Ezra Cohen was born and raised in New York, attended SAR High School in the Bronx, and learned in Yeshivat Orayta in Jerusalem's Old City before starting his collegiate studies in Brandeis University where he is studying psychology and something else (he's open to suggestions!).

Ezra has been active in his Jewish community, spearheading pro-Israel lobbying and being the president of the Brandeis University Beit Midrash Committee – organizing countless aspects of religious life by coordinating minyanim, shiurim, and chaburot for undergraduates on campus.

In his free time, Ezra enjoys mountain biking, learning new things, and writing his own music (he has a hankering for country music and anything pop, and can't resist a good niggun here and there!). Ezra is excited to join the RZA Aryeh Fellows so he can use his leadership abilities to

educate about Israel for the RZA, and, of course, to learn in yeshiva during winter break!

Tu B'Shvat Celebrations

THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE SUBURBAN TORAH CENTER
invites the entire community for a

SHABBAT TU B'SHVAT SEUDAT SHLISHIT

*Israel's Cherry Tomatoes and the
Land's Miraculous Revival*

with



RABBI DORON PEREZ

Head of the World Mizrachi Movement

FEBRUARY 11
PARSHAT BESHALACH

SEUDAH
SHLISHIT
5:05PM

MINCHA
4:45PM

*Enjoy the fruits of
the land of Israel
and inspiring
words of
Torah!*



SUBURBAN
TORAH

South Florida's Annual

TU B'SHVAT Family Celebration!

Presented by:
The David Posnack Jewish Community Center
The Michael-Ann Russell Jewish Community Center
and supporting organizations

Sunday, February 12
Noon - 4pm at TY Park in Hollywood



Join Us At This Free Community Event:

- Carnival Attractions!
- Petting Zoo!
- Mini-Tu B' Shvat Seder
- Israeli Dancing
- Take away your own flower pot!
- Holiday Thematic Show!
- Scouting Activities!
- Organizations Interactive Thematic Activities
- Kosher Food for purchase!
- And more!

**MEET AT
PAVILIONS
2 & 3**

Event free of charge/Park admission applies
For info, call 305-932-4200, x128 / 954-434-0499, x106
TY Park • 3300 North Park Road, Hollywood, FL 33021



Entebbe 1976: A Shabbat Miracle

"Entebbe 1976: A Shabbat Miracle". Congregation KINS, YU Torah MiTzion Kollal, and Mizrahi - Religious Zionists of Chicago invite the community to an exceptional presentation by special guests **Benny Davidson**, who was hijacked with his family to Entebbe on his way to celebrate his BarMitzvah in the USA, and **Avner Avraham**, who served 28 years in the Mossad, and curated the first exhibition on Operation Yonatan. **Thursday, February 23, 8:00 PM, at Cong. KINS, 2800 W. North Shore. No charge.**

Forty years later, and a lion share of the fascinating stories are just seeing light. An exceptional lecture by two people. One celebrated his Bar Mitzvah in captivity in Uganda. The other, an ex Mossad officer, collected the behind the scenes breathtaking stories. A combination of a story bigger than life, with the exceptional personality of the narrators, and their rare talent of storytelling, promises great excitement and exposure to historic facts that are just now being revealed, 40 years later. A rare opportunity to enjoy the experience first-hand and become virtual passengers in a trip to Entebbe and back.

ENTEBBE 1976

A SHABBAT MIRACLE

Benny Davidson



Benny Davidson was blessed with his family to Entebbe while he was on his way to celebrate his Bar Mitzvah in a coast-to-coast trip in the USA. His personal and emotional story of survival, sanity, and mental courage, in unbearable conditions, together with insights collected over the years, bring about an unforgettable, emotional and powerful event. Benny is a Hi-Tech veteran and entrepreneur in various fields, and is active and volunteers in a number of non-profit organizations. He is a father to four children and lives in the Sharon district. In the recent past, he has chosen to participate and lead projects and ventures in welfare, education and culture that are rendering good service for the community and individuals.

Avner Avraham



Avner Avraham served 28 years in the Mossad – Israel's Secret Intelligence Service. His connection to Entebbe began when he created the first exhibition on operation Yonatan. In the process of collecting the testimonials and materials Avner became the de-facto world expert for the subject. Avner composed the materials, interviews and meetings to a coherent narrative and visual, valuable and emotional experience. The spies and scheme stories that Avner collected unveil the behind the scenes stories and facts in an interesting, mysterious and imaginative encounter. Avner is a curator and a producer of exhibitions around the world and is an internationally renowned expert in secret operations research.

THURSDAY FEB 23

8:00 PM

CONGREGATION KINS

2800 W NORTH SHORE AVE

CHICAGO

NO CHARGE

SPONSORS:



Patriots Owner Invites Ezra Schwartz's Family as His VIP Guests To Super Bowl

By Eddie Dvir

The more we hear about compassion, charity and kindness that billionaire New England Patriots owner, Robert Kraft does, the more we are impressed. Kraft is a true Mentch and his latest act of kindness is just another example of big heart.

Ezra Schwarz's aunt, Rachel Deri, reached out to OS News with this amazing message of Hakarat Hatov (The Jewish duty to acknowledge kindness received from another.)



This is not the first time that Robert Kraft has shown his compassion for the Schwartz family. On 19 November 2015, a Palestinian gunman opened fire at Gush Etzion Junction where he killed 3 people, including Ezra. At the time, Jews from all the world were questioning why President Obama did not mention anything about this, no flags were lowered to half-mast as they are with other American terror victims.

In stepped Patriots owner Robert Kraft who paid special tribute to Ezra when he issued a moment of silence and at a Patriots Monday Night Football game which was watched by 15 million viewers.

As if that was not enough, the billionaire personally paid a shiva call to the Schwartz family the following night.

Kraft told Ezra's parents that he knew how big a fan Ezra was of the Patriots and he knew how meaningful it was to his family and would have been to him that his memory was honored at the game. They relayed the wonderful memories of watching Patriots games together and playing football in their living room.

Kraft also penned a heartfelt letter of condolence to the family of Max Steinberg, a Golani unit American soldier who was killed in Gaza.

Kraft is also a huge supporter of Israel and routinely takes football players to goodwill trips to Israel, even during the height of the Second Intifada.

Kraft took Patriots players on the tours, including star quarterback Tom Brady in 2006 – who, though not Jewish, keeps a menorah that Kraft gave him in his Brookline home. These players in turn share stories and photos of Israel to their millions of fans with counterbalance all the negative press and opinions about Israel.

One of Kraft's most distinctive philanthropic projects is supporting American Football Israel, including Kraft Family Stadium in Jerusalem and the Kraft Family Israel Football League.

In 2016, Kraft was awarded an honorary doctorate from Yeshiva University. In his commencement speech he said about his father. "Watching his son deliver the commencement address at Yeshiva would be far more rewarding to him than all of my Super Bowl successes combined."

He takes time out of his busy schedule to write letters to the families of fallen IDF soldiers and personally doing the huge mitzvah of nichum aveilim (visiting the bereaved) Kraft is nosei b'ol chavairo (carrying the burden of your people) by helping these bereaved parents find some comfort with his condolence visit and remembering them over a year later and flying them down to the Super Bowl to be his personal VIP guests at the Super Bowl.

As Ezra Schwartz's aunt Rachel said, he has a "good neshoma" and is a true "mentch" in every sense of the word, it is not for us to say that her theory of the last minute miraculous turn-around in the Super Bowl is not somehow ordained from above, although quarterback Tom Brady did famously say "God, [there's] got to be more than this" on "60 Minutes" in reference to winning his third Super Bowl. Kraft indeed deserves credit where credit is due. (Hakaras Hatov.) we just shared it with you, now share this story and the inspiration. G-d Bless you, Mr. Kraft!

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More details about the program can be found at the following link - www.mizrachi.org/YY50 - including the draft schedule, highlights, pricing options and booking procedure.

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1. There are 10 hotel options, with a price range depending on hotel choice. Each hotel package includes breakfast, lunch and dinner (excluding Wed evening). The hotel packages also include the entire 4 day program at discounted rates.
2. There is also an option for people who are not staying in hotels - if they have their own accommodation - to join for the 4 day program, at a cost of \$630 per person. It does not include hotel, breakfast and dinner, but does include transport from central meeting points to and from all the venues, lunch each day, and participation in the full program.
3. For those shuls/communities/groups who wish to bring missions and want to extend their trip either before or after our 4 day mission, that can also be arranged by contacting us at YY50@mizrachi.org, and we - together with our partners - will put together a tailor-made package for your group.

Looking forward to celebrating together – in Jerusalem – on this historic occasion.

With excitement and anticipation,

Rabbi Gideon Shloush
Mizrachi – Religious Zionists of America

Rav Doron Perez
Mizrachi World Movement

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POINT OF VIEW

The Evacuation of Amona: Who is “the Enemy”?

By Rabbi Yisrael Rozen, Dean of the Zomet Institute

“Keep guard for me, **my good G-d...**

Do not uproot the plants / Do not abandon hope.

Bring me back and I will return / To the goodland.

Guard, my G-d, over this house / Over the garden, and the wall

From grief, from sudden fear, and from war.”

(Naomi Shemer, “Al Hadevash V'al Ha'oketz” –(On Honey and on the Sting)

The Judgement of the “Evil God”

The above song by Naomi Shemer has become something of a “settler hymn” and their prayer to “the good G-d,” asking Him to guard over our plants and our walls. This prayer with its plea echoed through the air last week in the area of Binyamin, in the mists of Amona, which was torn apart in the noise of the bulldozers that were sent to storm the mountain, by order of the Supreme Court. **Who is the “evil god,” better known as “Satan,” who has decreed that the plants should be uprooted** and that grief should abound (to quote from the above song)? Who is the main “enemy” who leads the charge against Amona and its subsidiaries?

Would you say it is the Palestinians, our bitter enemies? For certain! Would you say it is the Israeli left, the “traitorous” ones? Absolutely, for sure! Would you say it is the newspaper, Ha'aretz? No doubt this is also true. Do you blame the Prime Minister? Not necessarily. While I do agree with all the criticism against him from the right and I am upset by his hesitation in political and legal terms, he does have some reasons for his actions – he is restrained by the courts, in general and in detail. What about the State Attorney? He too is led by a fear of the Supreme Court and by a “religious” dedication to the rule of law. **Would you say that the “enemy” is the Supreme Court? If so, you are moving in the right direction.** But just who is the Supreme Court? Do all the members of the court completely agree with each

other? Do they all share the same exact viewpoint, together with the fervor to rule that “a legal ruling takes precedence over themountain”? Evidently they are not all fashioned from the exact same mold! And so we conclude that there is no alternative than to look for **“the evil god” at the highest level of the Supreme Court – in the office of the President of the court!**

Only recently did it become clear to me that the President of the court appoints the members of the panels of judges –arbitrarily, without a set system of rotation or randomization, without regard for special expertise. Every manager (even in Zomet Institute) knows that he will get a different result for an assignment depending on who is given the job, and that this outcome can be predicted in advance. Our sages have taught us, “Just like the faces (of people) are different, so their opinions differ” [Yerushalmi Berachot 9:1]. I would humbly add **that their opinions can be predicted from “their faces”** – from their expressions, their social relationships, their place of residence, their life style, whether they are “liberal” or “conservative,” and so on. In the midst of the tumult of the evacuation of Amona on a rainy day, we were given the news that **the Supreme Court had rejected the “Amona plan”** that had been proposed for settling the matter (in spite of the fact that it was already a moot point). The panel was led by **an Arab judge together with a second judge who has a completely leftist record**, both appointees of the “evil gods.” The third judge, of course, “was more positive,” in an attempt to block any complaints about a distorted panel.

Justice in Sedom

It is said that the general public is losing confidence in the Supreme Court of Israel. How could it be otherwise? How can we teach that we must support the values of the court when they are literally **the laws of Sedom, which accept the proposal of the prostitute who came before King Shlomo, saying, “He will not be either yours or mine...”** [Melachim 3:26]. The wise King ruled against her claim. “And the entire nation came to hear the wisdom of Shlomo” [5:14].

You might say, the privilege of private ownership must prevail! There is no way to overrule the rights of land ownership! This is pure nonsense! In Israel, within the boundaries of the Green Line, according to the laws of land ownership, a court can force an owner to accept generous compensation for confiscation of his property. Beyond the Green Line, **the Supreme Court extends the sweet taste of destruction to our enemies, thus indirectly encouraging the laws of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas which declare a death sentence for anybody who will accept such compensation!** Moreover, in the cases of Amona and Ofra, **there is no way that the owners will enforce their ownership by planting a flower or a tree.** The land is surrounded by vibrant Jewish settlements. According to our traditional Jewish law, this is a clear case when a person “can be forced not to abide by the laws of Sedom” [Bava Batra 12b]. On the other hand, according to the “enlightened” ethics, the prophecy of destruction will be fulfilled: “the cities will be destroyed without inhabitants, and the houses without man, and the land will be completely desolate” [Yeshayahu 6:11]. **Nero, the Caesar, enjoys seeing Rome burn, and he is joined by the Israeli leftists dancing on the rooftops.**

As Shabbat Approaches

Unique Traits and Choice

By Rabbi Mordechai Greenberg, Rosh Yeshiva, Kerem B'Yavne

In the year 5665 (1905), the Ridbaz made Aliya from the United States to take on the job of the rabbi of Tzefat. He was a friend of Rav Kook, and before he made the trip he wrote a letter to Rav Kook, ending as follows: “And I hope that I will meet with the one desired by my soul, the honorable rabbi, whose soul is linked to my soul.” However, in spite of their strong friendship, the Ridbaz fought very strongly against Rav Kook on many items, such as selling land to Gentiles before Shemitta and Rav Kook’s attitude toward sinners. He did not understand how Rav Kook could form a close relationship with sinners and still continue to pray, “Let there be no hope for apostates.” He therefore asked Rav Kook to explain his behavior. Rav Kook replied in a famous letter, no 555 in his published letters. His son,

Rav Tzvi Yehuda noted that this number is the numerical value of the word “*Takanah*” – a decree – a hint of the fact that the letter is a great decree which explains the unique traits of Bnei Yisrael.

Rav Kook explains that there are two main elements which form the basis for the link between Yisrael and G-d. One is “*segulah*” – innate characteristics of the people – which he defined as “an internal holy force which is part of the nature of the soul, as is desired by G-d.” The other element depends on the free choice of man, appearing as holiness that stems from good deeds and the study of Torah. While the power of the unique traits is infinitely greater than good deeds that are performed by choice, it has been decreed that the unique traits will be revealed in practice only through human actions. And it is G-d who organizes actions of the souls. At times the unique traits take precedence and at other times freedom of choice is most important. But the innate traits are always present. And that is the basis of the rule that “Even when a Jew sins he remains a Jew.”

Rav Kook explains the changes throughout the generations in his analysis of the epic poem sung after the crossing of the Red Sea, “*Shirat Hayam*,” in his book *Olat Re'iyah*. It is written, “Until **your nation** will pass over, until this nation **which you have acquired** will pass over” [Shemot 15:16]. The sages have taught us, “Until **your nation** will pass over – that is the first return to the land. Until this **nation which you have acquired** – that is the second return.” [Sanhedrin 98b]. In the First Temple the innate uniqueness of the people was emphasized, and therefore there were open miracles in the Temple and through the prophets. Therefore this is linked to **your nation**, since the events took place because the people were **the nation of G-d**. However, in the second Temple there were no miracles and no prophecy, rather there was much Torah study and many rabbinical decrees. This is referred to as **the nation which G-d acquired** – taking possession through positive action. This corresponds to what is written in the introduction to Pirkei Avot: “All of Yisrael have a portion in the world to come, as is written, ‘**your nation are all righteous**’ [Yeshayahu 60:21].” Everybody in Yisrael, even the sinners, have a portion in the world to come. This is clearly because of their innate traits, and that is why it is written, “**your nation are all righteous**” – it is because **they are your nation**, because of their innate traits and not their specific good deeds.

Not everybody accepted Rav Kook’s way of thinking. Hillel Tzietlin tells about when he visited Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, who was sympathetic to the Zionist activities but continued to speak out against irreligious people. “The Rav of Yaffo (Rav Kook) tries to approach them in many ways, but that is not my position. He says that we should not judge them...because internally they are clearly better than their external appearance, since they are ready to give their lives for settling the land. This approach does not appear correct in my eyes. Why should we become involved with their spiritual traits? G-d can see into the hearts of man, but we as human beings can only act according to revealed matters, and we must make all of our rulings based on the halacha.”

ZIONIST CHASSIDISM

Mending the World on “Tu B’Shevat”

By Rabbi Rafi Ostroff, Head of the Religious Council of Gush Etzion

This year Tu B’Shevat is on Shabbat for this week’s portion of Beshalach, and this gives us an opportunity to review the approach of the Rebbe of Husiatyn on this occasion.

The Rebbe was very happy to be living in Eretz Yisrael, which gave him the ability to observe the mitzva of eating fruits of the land on this date. Several times he quotes the words of Rabbi Yaacov Emden:

“On Tu B’Shevat the custom is to partake of many fruits and to sing praise to G-d. This provides a great ‘*tikun*’ – mending – in the upper worlds.”

What great mending can be accomplished in the upper worlds? The Rebbe says that we are obligated to observe the customs in a straightforward way. However, beyond this, there are

holy intentions and hints that are related to the customs and the mitzvot, and when these are performed correctly they can achieve perfection. The intentions in eating fruit on TuB'Shevat include the following:

“When eating fruit it is important to remember that a person has been compared to the trees of the fields. Just as the trees were created to make fruits, so man was created to perform good deeds, which are the fruits that are expected of him.”

Proper Intentions

On another occasion, in 5712 (1952), the Rebbe wrote:

“Observing the customs of Yisrael with full faith and out of fear and love of G-d provides ‘support from below’ for sweetening judgement and increasing of mercy. The people have a saying (in Yiddish), that a custom can “break” a law. On the surface, this seems to correspond to what Rabbi Hoshaya said, that a custom can override the halacha (Yerushalmi, Bava Metzia, Chapter 7). But as we have written we can also understand this in a different way – the customs of our fathers have the power to lessen the power of judgement if they are performed with the proper intentions.”

Observing customs with the proper good intentions has the ability to “fix” upper worlds by an influence from below and lead to more lenient judgements. The Rebbe quotes from the Rebbe “Ohev Yisrael,” that until Tu B'Shevat the regimen of Din – Law – is in effect, and from then on the trait of mercy rules.

A Sign of Redemption

In the year 5711 (1951), the Rebbe discussed another aspect of eating fruit. In the time of King Rechavam, the people refused to comply with three things - The Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of the House of David, and the Temple:

“Rabbi Shimon Ben Menasya said: no sign of redemption will be shown to Yisrael until they repent for these three sins. When we observe the custom of eating fruit on Tu B'Shevat, we should take note of the reason why we cannot observe this with fruits from Eretz Yisrael and accept on ourselves to mend our ways in these three ways: to accept the yoke of heaven, and to strengthen our yearning for the Mashiach and for the building of the Temple. This will certainly bring about a great ‘tikun’ in the upper worlds.” [Quoted by RADAK on Hoshaya 3:5].

Austerity and Prosperity

The time when the Rebbe delivered these Torah lessons was an era of austerity in Israel, and it was not even easy to obtain fruits. Here is what he said in 5710 (1950):

“This year we have less fruit than usual. We will compensate for the lack with words of Torah about fruits and trees. Torah insights are the sweetest possible type of fruit.”

In 5709 (1949) he wrote:

“There is a custom to eat fruit on TuB'Shevat, especially fruit grown in Eretz Yisrael. But the fruit for which the land is praised are not being grown now in Eretz Yisrael (figs and dates that we have were grown abroad), because in the time of the exiles the land ceased to be a land of milk and honey. The reason for this appears in Torat Kohanim: ‘And I will make the land desolate’ [Vayikra 26:32]. This is good news for Yisrael, in that the enemies will not be satisfied with the land.” G-d wanted to have nature itself bear witness to the link between Yisrael and its land. And Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Levi also made a well-known declaration: Eretz Yisrael, hide your fruits, do you want to take them out for these Arabs? **But now that G-d has performed miracles and shown us signs, when a Jewish State has arisen and most of the Arabs have fled from the land out of a fear of the Jews, the land will be able once again to become a land of milk and honey.**”

** * * * *

I can picture myself visiting the grave of the Rebbe of Husiatyn, to tell him that the land has

indeed been transformed into a land of milk and honey, that it gives us an abundance of fruit and that it is happy to receive its sons. We grow not only figs and dates, but also mango, kiwi, peppers, and tomatoes from the desert, and much more. How happy he would be to hear these tidings!

Note: A summary of the life of Rebbe Yaacov of Husiatyn and his community appeared in issue 1646 for the Torah portion of Noach.

WHEN THE CHILDREN OPEN THEIR HEARTS

When Tanks get Stuck as a Sign of Love

By Meirav Maggeni, Author of Content and Stories in Chemed, the Religious School System

I heard the following story from my uncle, David Eldad, a hero who fought in Operation Protective Edge in Gaza. Here is what he said:

* * * * *

I was a tank commander. We proceeded towards Azza. Suddenly, without any apparent reason, we got stuck. I reported to my superiors, and they promised to send a mechanical crew as soon as possible. About half an hour later we saw another tank going towards Azza. It came near us and stopped. It turned out that this tank too got stuck for no reason that the soldiers could see. We were all quite amazed. What was going on? After a few hours, we finally saw another tank coming in our direction. I was sure that this was the tank sent to rescue us in the our tanks. But as it approached I saw that it was a regular tank, not suitable for a rescue operation, just like our own. And then this tank too also got stuck! This was unbelievable. In the end, after we waited for a few more hours, a rescue crew arrived, and we were able to return to our base.

I couldn't get one thought out of my mind: What strange kind of coincidence was this? Why should three tanks all get stuck for no good reason, one after the other?

Four months after this incident, I met a good friend who works in the Intelligence Service. "Hi, Eldad," he greeted me warmly, with a hug. "It's great seeing you, I missed you..." We went into a nearby restaurant and had a great conversation. We spoke about our work and our children.

As we were finishing, my friend suddenly remembered a very interesting incident from Operation Protective Edge. He said, "Just listen to this!"

"During the operation," he said, "we received a very important intelligence message. A suicide terrorist was planning a mass attack in the middle of the country. We knew the exact time of the attack, and we made plans to thwart it. But in the end the whole thing was much easier than we expected, since we captured the terrorist in Azza, without endangering any of our soldiers.

"In his interrogation I asked the terrorist, 'Why didn't you go through with your original plan?' You will not believe what he said. As he was about to leave the area of Azza, he became scared because three Israeli tanks were stationed on the border, watching every move he made. I have no idea who sent the tanks, nobody but our intelligence services knew about the plans for a terrorist attack."

I looked at my friend, and I couldn't stop the tears from coming. I said to him, "I was the commander of a tank that got stuck, for no apparent reason. I watched in amazement as two more tanks got stuck in the same place, also without any reason that we could see. Do you understand what happened here? The Holy One, Blessed be He, organized a defense for His people... Just look at how He watches over us.

How He must love us indeed...”

And then my friend also started to cry. We hugged each other again and went our separate ways.

***** * * * ****

That is the story that my uncle David Eldadtold me.

Ever since, when I think of this incident, Iam very happy to be part of this nation, which G-d loves so much. Sometimes Ithink, “If the Holy One, Blessed he He, loves our nation so much, perhaps thetime has come for us to learn our lesson and love each other more than everbefore?”

THE ROOTS OF FAITH – Basic Tenets of Jewish Philosophy

The Soul of a Gentile

By Rabbi Oury Cherki, Machon Meir, Rabbi of Beit Yehuda Congregation, Jerusalem

It is often said that a Gentile has no soul. However, this statement is rooted in a misunderstanding of the sources which discuss the matter.

The most widely publicized source is the Tanya, Chapters 1 and 2: “Every man from Yisrael has two souls. One soul is related to the mystical shell... and this is the source of all evil traits... In addition, the good traits which are natural for Bnei Yisrael... come from there... This is not true for the souls of the other nations... which do not have any good at all... And the second soul within Yisrael is a part of G-d above in an absolutely real way (*mamash*).”

Some people understand this to mean that the other nations do not have a second soul, a “neshama,” at all. However, I heard directly from Rabbi Yehuda Ashkenazi, who heard it directly from Rabbi Yitzchak Shnierson, the cousin of the Rebbe of Lubavitch, that the above sentence should be read with a comma in the appropriate place, implying a very different meaning: “The second soul, which in Yisrael is a direct part of G-d above...” Thus, the second soul exists among the Gentiles too, and it is part of G-d, but it is not an “absolutely real” element.

If we do not understand the passage in this way, we might well ask how we can demand that Gentiles behave in a moral way, if they have no Divine foundation in their souls. However, we must understand that every human being has an element of purity in their soul, but in the Gentiles this does not appear in their “animal” soul but rather in their “second” soul. It is then clear why for a Gentile spiritual uplifting requires a very large effort, while a Jew can find a path to moral purity within his first-level human nature.

The essence of the difference between the “precision” of the soul of Yisrael and the “imprecise” character of the other nations can be seen from what Rav Kook writes – that for the other nations eternity can be acquired by those who desire it by perfecting their souls with deeper understanding and with good deeds. But anyone who does not want to do this can “opt out” and not be involved in the effort. This is not true of a person from Yisrael, who is forced to establish a relationship to eternity, and who is required to bear the yoke of purging of sin and of suffering until he manages to perfect his soul. (*Olat Re’ayah*, volume 2, page 156).

Rav Kook elaborates on this when he explains that a person from Yisrael must maintain a relationship with the community, while this is not required for other nations (*Orot*, page 144). This implies that the soul of an individual is what links him to the community. While it is true that the people of the other nations have a community soul (see *Orot*, page 156), which Daniel calls “the minister of the nation,” the individual does not receive his moral and spiritual nourishment from this, and for this reason he does not have an obligation to the entire community.

We can therefore understand the aspiration which is voiced by the people of Yisrael twice

every day in the “Shema” – that the ministers be removed from their tasks, and that all the creatures in the world will revert to being protected directly by the shadow of the G-d of Yisrael.

“G-d, who is now our G-d and not that of the other nations [who are under the control of the ministers], will in the future become ‘One G-d.’ As is written, ‘Then I will have the nations revert to a clear language, so that they will all call out in the name of G-d, and serve Him in unison.’ [Tzeplania 3:9].” [Rashi].

NATURE AND THE TORAH PORTION

They Sank like Lead

Dr. Moshe Raanan, Herzog College and the Jerusalem College for Women

High Density

In the above verse (Shemot 15:10), lead serves as an example of the way the Egyptians sank into the Red Sea. This metal is indeed the best model of quickly sinking into water, because except for gold it has the highest density of all the metals which were known in ancient times. In the following verse, we have added the density of the metals (kg/cu m): “...the gold (19,320), the silver (10,490), the copper (8,920), the iron (7,874), the tin (7,310), and the lead (11,342)...” [Bamidbar 31:22].

The link between the high density of lead and using it in a comparison is hinted at in the Midrash: “‘They descended into the depths like stone’ [Shemot 15:5] – This refers to the middle group. The relatively good people were torn apart like straw (15:8), the average ones fell like stones, and the evil ones dropped like lead in deep water (15:10).” [Mechilta D’Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai, 15]. Today lead is still used to make most weights, such as in drapes and for fishing and diving. Weights from the era of Bar Kochba have been found in underground hiding places in the Alim ruins near Bet Guvrin.

Lead is mined in limestone as the mineral galena, which is lead sulfide (PbS). This is 86.5% lead. In order to extract the galena from the ore, it is first heated to remove any remaining sulfur. The pure galena is then placed in a kiln with coal. Heating it to a high temperature breaks the chemical bond between the lead and the sulfur, to yield fairly pure lead. The lead produced by this process often contains precious metals such as gold and silver, and there is sometimes enough that it is worthwhile to distill them out of the lead.

We can also read about a reverse process where lead is added to gold: “The bellows are burned by fire, and the work of the refiner is in vain, for the evil ones are not removed. People call them ‘rejected silver,’ because G-d has rejected them.” [Yirmiyahu 6:29-30]. Metzudat David explains as follows:

“The refiner’s job is to remove the slag. He puts silver in a kiln with lead, lights the fire, and blows with a bellows until the silver and the lead are melted. The lead is burned away, leaving pure silver and no slag. And the prophet says, the bellows have been dried by the flames and there is no lead left, since everything has been burned. But the work was all in vain, because the bad slag was not removed from the silver and it remains there just as it was...”

Plumbing

Lead was widely used in ancient times for many purposes, but after it was found to be highly toxic it was no longer used for anything that comes into direct contact with the human body.

In ancient Rome, pipes and bathtubs were made from lead, and this continued for many years. A remnant of this can be seen today in European languages. People who install and maintain water pipes are called “plumbers” in English and “plombier” in French, based on the Latin word for lead, “plumbum.” Lead is a convenient material for water installations because of its properties. It is easy to shape, it does not rust, it can easily be welded or soldered (because of its relatively low melting point), it does not tend to break when the water freezes because it is flexible, and it does not crack like iron does.

The Mishna implies that lead is not suitable to seal a vessel: "What is used as a seal? Lime, gypsum, pitch, or wax, mud or excrement, crude or potter's clay, or any material used for plastering. One may not make a seal with tin or with lead because though they form a cover it is not tightly sealed." [Keilim 10:2]. Rambam explains: "It closes the vessel but not tightly. It holds the cover on the vessel, but it does not bond tightly to the vessel's clay."

Protection from Radiation

It may be that just like today we use lead to protect us from radiation (for example, in an apron covering us when taking an x-ray), it was also used for this purpose in ancient times. This is based on the assumption that the "Shamir" worm was able to split stones by generating some type of radiation:

"From the time when the Temple was destroyed, there was no longer a 'Shamir' or honey from the honeycomb. Rabbi Yudah said: What is the essence of this Shamir? It was a creature from the Six Days of Creation such that when it was put on stone or beams it would open them up like pages in a notebook. And even if it was placed on iron, it would split it and fall through to the bottom. What would they do? They would wrap it in strands of wool and put it in a basket made of lead filled with grains of barley. Shlomo used it to build the Temple..." [Tosefta, Sotta, 15:1].

Lead was also used as a coating for pottery. In the Talmud there is a dispute whether a vessel coated with lead, called "*kunia*," is considered pottery or metal. (Avoda Zara 33b). Rashi writes, "Kunia is pottery that is coated with 'avar,' which is called 'plomer.'" Dr. M. Katan translates plomer as a coating of lead.

STRAIGHT TALK

Young People in their own Words

By Rabbi Yoni Lavie, Manager, "Chaverim Makshivim" Website

I got off the bus and looked at the time. There were 37 minutes left. I started to run. I could see in my mind's eye my mother's angry face and I could hear my father's rebuke: "What will be with you, Mickey? You always arrive at the last second! Don't they teach you in your yeshiva that you shouldn't arrive home a few seconds before Shabbat??"

On the other hand, I ask you to tell me – what else can I do? I simply have no alternative. I am 21 years old, and I am in the third year of my studies at a post-high school yeshiva. Everybody who knows me says that I am a serious boy, with high aspirations. But it always happens – whenever I come home, it always happens again. Why, you ask? It's really very simple.

From a very early age I have had my own computer in my room. Thank G-d, my parents always had enough money. We are four children, and each of us has a private room, with all the equipment that we need. When I was little, my friends were jealous that I had my very own computer, and the fact that I could watch it and surf to my heart's content. When I got older, I found the dark side of the internet on my own... For years, I fought temptation with all my might. I would climb up and then fall again, I would lift myself up and then crash.

Only when I reached the yeshiva did I finally find a solution. All I had to do was spend as little time as possible at home. I would return home a few minutes before candle lighting, and half an hour after the end of Shabbat I was already standing at the door with my backpack, on the way back to the yeshiva. My parents are insulted every time. "Why are you in such a hurry? Why is it so bad here, at home?"

I am caught and embarrassed, but I can't really explain. I would love to stay longer, but it's not their fault, it's HIM...

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The first time I happened to see such things was in the fourth grade. It was to the "credit" of a

friend of mine. He called me over to see something "cool," and I was in complete shock. I had not imagined that this was how it would look. At the time, I thought it was weird and even perverted. As time went on, I learned how to reach such material by myself. I always felt bad about it, I knew that I was doing something wrong. But I never stopped.

Our home is very open, we have cable television, newspapers, and of course a computer. There was nothing to stop me. I could have gone on this way for years, but when my bar-mitzva approached I decided that the time had come to stop. I knew that this was a serious sin, that now I was responsible for my own actions, and that I was not allowed to continue.

I went to my parents and made up a story about a long discussion in school about the dangers of the internet, and that the speaker told us that it is very important to have protective programs on the computer. But Abba smiled and said, "Is that why we are paying such a high price for your education in school? Let them teach the students to cope with the problems! What are we, Chareidim?"

I tried to talk to Imma too, but she simply declared, "In our house we have no need for such things, darling. We trust you and we feel that you know how to cope."

What could I tell her? That in fact I had not been able to cope? That I tell myself over and over that this is the last time, and then it happens again, the very next day??

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I was always sure that this is only a problem for the boys. Not the girls, certainly not the religious ones, certainly not for a girl like me. And then it happened. The first time was not on purpose, it was not that I was taken over by an impulse. I was just curious. I felt that I must once and for all understand what everybody was talking about. What was this great secret that the grownups were hiding from me on the internet? I tried to surf one time, and I was in total shock. But that same week I got caught up again, and this time I didn't feel such a great shock. From then on, it became something of a habit.

By looking at me you would not believe it's true. By day I am righteous, I volunteer to do good deeds, and I am a counsellor. At night, I am a walking garbage bag. I ingest all the garbage that is available.

Two weeks ago my older sister caught me in the act. I started to stammer to her that it was an accident, it was the first time that it had happened to me. But she started to scream at me. "You are not normal! You have no idea how you are completely ruining your life! One day you will want to abandon the fantasy and the lies, to find yourself a real boy, a good man. And then you will discover that something inside you is broken. You will no longer be able to look at anything in depth, you will no longer be able to show simple love. Instead of seeing people and their souls, you will see bodies and limbs. Trust me, I know what I am talking about..."



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