

# שבת בשבת



Parshat Yitro

No 1661: 22 Shevat 5777 (February 18, 2017)

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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](mailto:office@rza.org), [www.rza.org](http://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 display 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.

Nearly 100 Shuls have signed up. If your community is not yet on our list please let us know.

Rabbi Gideon Shloush  
*Presidium*  
National Director  
Oliner

Mr. Martin

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**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](http://www.mizrachi.org/YY50).

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

**Beth Jacob Congregation**

Beverly Hills, CA  
Rabbi Kalman Topp

**Young Israel of Orange County**

Irvine, CA  
Rabbi Dov Fischer

**Congregation B'nai David-Judea**

Los Angeles, CA  
Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky

**Yeshivat Yavneh**

Los Angeles,  
Rabbi Shlomo Einhorn

**Young Israel of Century City**

Los Angeles, CA  
Rabbi Elazar Muskin

**Shaarey Zedek Congregation**

Valley Village, CA  
Rabbi Jonathan Rosenberg

**Westville Synagogue**

New Haven, CT  
Rabbi Fred Hyman

**Beth David Synagogue**

West Hartford, CT  
Rabbi Yitzchok Adler

**Young Israel of West Hartford**

West Hartford, CT  
Rabbi Tuvia Brander

**Boca Jewish Center**

Boca Raton, FL  
Rabbi Yaakov Gibber

**Boca Raton Synagogue**

Boca Raton, FL  
Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

**Congregation Torah Ohr**

Boca Raton, FL  
Rabbi Benjamin Yasgur

**Anshei Chesed Congregation**

Boynton Beach, FL  
Rabbi Avi Billet

**Anshei Emuna Congregation**

Delray Beach, FL  
Rabbi Jack Engel

**Young Israel of Hollywood**

Hollywood, FL  
Rabbi Yosef Weinstock

**Congregation KINS**

**Young Israel of Kew Gardens Hills**

Kew Gardens Hills  
Rabbi Yoel Schonfeld

**Rambam Mesivta**

Lawrence, NY  
Rabbi Zev Friedman

**Congregation Beth Sholom**

Lawrence, NY  
Rabbi Kenneth Hain

**HAFTR**

Lawrence, NY  
Rabbi Gedaliah Oppen

**Young Israel of Long Beach**

Long Beach, NY  
Rabbi Chaim Wakslak

**Community Synagogue of Monsey**

Monsey, NY  
Rabbi Moshe Tendler

**Young Israel of New Hyde Park**

New Hyde Park, NY  
Rabbi Lawrence Teitelman

**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 Chaim Steinmetz

**Manhattan Jewish Experience**

New York, NY  
Rabbi Mark Wildes

**The Jewish Center**

New York, NY  
Rabbi Yosie Levine

**Young Israel of New Rochelle**

New Rochelle, NY  
Rabbi Reuven Fink

**Young Israel of Hillcrest**

Queens, NY  
Rabbi Richard Weiss

**Congregation Beth Shalom**

Chicago, IL  
Rabbi Leonard Matanky  
**Congregation Or Torah**  
Chicago, IL  
Rabbi Zvi Engel  
**Ida Crown Academy**  
Chicago, IL  
Rabbi Leonard Matanky  
**Congregation Yehuda Moshe**  
Lincolnwood, IL  
Rabbi Joel Gutstein  
**Ohr Torah Congregation**  
Edison, NJ  
Rabbi Yaakov Luban  
**Rabbi Pesach Raymon Yeshiva**  
Edison, NJ  
Rabbi Daniel Loew  
**Congregation Ahavath Torah**  
Englewood, NJ  
Rabbi Shmuel Goldin  
**Congregation Ahavas Achim**  
Highland Park, NJ  
Rabbi Steven Miodownik  
**Congregation Etz Chaim**  
Livingston, NJ  
Rabbi E. Sameul Klibanoff  
**Suburban Torah**  
Livingston, NJ  
Rabbi Elie Mischel  
**Congregation Brothers of Israel**  
Long Branch, NJ  
Rabbi Nasanayl Braun  
**National Council of Young Israel**  
Paramus, NJ  
Rabbi Binyamin Hammer  
**Congregation Israel**  
Springfield, NJ  
Rabbi Chaim Marcus  
**Congregation Bnai Yeshurun**  
Teaneck, NJ  
Rabbi Steven Pruzansky  
**Congregation Keter Torah**  
Teaneck, NJ  
Rabbi Shalom Baum  
**Congregation Rinat Israel**  
Teaneck, NJ  
Rabbi Yosef Adler  
**Congregation Shaarei Orah**  
Teaneck, NJ  
Rabbi Haim Jachter  
**Congregation AABJ&D**  
West Orange, NJ  
Rabbi Eliezer Zwickler  
**The Jewish Center of Atlantic Beach**  
Atlantic Beach, NY  
Rabbi Ari Perl  
**Avenue N Jewish Center**  
Brooklyn, NY  
Rabbi Doniel Eisenbach  
**Congregation Ahavath Achim**  
Brooklyn, NY  
Rabbi Ari Kagan  
**Congregation Beth Torah**  
Brooklyn, NY

Rochester, NY  
Rabbi Avi Kilimnick  
**Magen David Sephardic Congregation**  
Scarsdale, NY  
Rabbi Mitchell Serels  
**Young Israel of Scarsdale**  
Scarsdale, NY  
Rabbi Jonathan Morgenstern  
**Shaarai Torah Orthodox Congregation**  
Syracuse, NY  
Rabbi Evan Shore  
**Young Israel of West Hempstead**  
West Hempstead, NY  
Rabbi Yehuda Kelemer  
**Young Israel of Woodmere**  
Woodmere, NY  
Rabbi Hershel Billet  
**Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe**  
Brighton, MA  
Rabbi Jason Strauss  
**Congregation Beth El-Atereth Israel**  
Newton, MA  
Rabbi Gershon Segal  
**Congregation Shaarei Tefillah**  
Newton, MA  
Rabbi Benjamin J. Samuels  
**Young Israel of Sharon**  
Sharon, MA  
Rabbi Noah Cheses  
**Beth Tfiloh Congregation**  
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 Oak Park**  
Oak Park, MI  
Rabbi Michael Cohen  
**Young Israel of Southfield**  
Southfield, MI  
Rabbi Yechiel Morris  
**Nusach Hari B'nai Zion Congregation**  
St. Louis, MO  
Rabbi Ze'ev Smason  
**Young Israel of St. Louis**  
St. Louis, MO  
Rabbi Moshe Shulman  
**Young Israel of Las Vegas**  
Las Vegas, NV  
Rabbi Yitzchak Wyne  
**Congregation Torat Emet**  
Columbus, OH  
Rabbi Howard Zack  
**Green Road Synagogue**  
Cleveland, OH  
Rabbi Binyamin Blau  
**Keshet Isarel Congregation**  
Harrisburg, PA  
Rabbi Elisha Friedman  
**Congregation Mikveh Israel**  
Philadelphia, PA

Rabbi Ari Azancot

**Congregation Pri Eitz Chaim**

Brooklyn, NY

Rabbi Melvin I Burg

**Congregation Talmud Torah of Flatbush**

Brooklyn, NY

**Magen David Yeshiva High School**

Brooklyn, NY

Rabbi Saul Zucker

**Yeshiva of Flatbush**

Brooklyn, NY

Dr. Norman Rosenblum

**Young Israel of Lawrence-Cedarhurst**

Cedarhurst, NY

Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum

**Havurat Yisrael**

Forest Hills, NY

Rabbi David Algaze

**Young Israel of Forest Hills**

Forest Hills, NY

Rabbi Michael Weingarten

**Great Neck Synagogue**

Great Neck, NY

Rabbi Ian Lichter

**Young Israel of Hewlett**

Hewlett, NY

Rabbi Heshy Blumstein

**Young Israel of Jamaica Estates**

Jamaica Estates, NY

Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg

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

**Beth Israel Synagogue**

Edmonton, Canada

Rabbi Daniel Friedman

**Shaarei Shomayim Congregation**

Ontario, Canada

Rabbi Chaim Strauchler

**Congregation Machzikei Hadas**

Ottawa, Canada

Rabbi Idan Scher

**Zichron Yisroel**

Thornhill, Canada

Rabbi Charles Grysman

**Kollel Agudath Achim**

Jerusalem, Israel

Rabbi Aharon Ziegler





# 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 Mizrachi 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](http://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 from a different Rosh Yeshiva of a Dati L'umi Yeshivat Hesder in Israel. Our goals – until we get there ourselves – to bring Torat Yisrael closer to America.**

# Parshat Yitro

Rav Yehoshua Mordechai Schmidt

*Rav of the Yishuv Shavei Shomron and Rosh Yeshiva at the Yeshivat HaHesder  
Shavei Shomron, Israel*

*Translated by RZA-Aryeh Fellow Yehudith Dashevsky*

This Shabbat we are going to read and accept the Torah. Hakadosh Baruch Hu leads the Jews out of Egypt, but before He gives them the Torah, He gives them chizuk, telling them, "You will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." What does this mean? Why does the giving of the Torah require such a preface?

We must remember – the nation of Israel has just come out of exile. For a nation leaving exile to transform into a holy nation, it must undergo a certain process. In last week's Torah portion, G-d commands Moshe to tell the Jews that they will be leaving with great wealth. This is "so that the tzaddik, Avraham, would not say, He fulfilled 'and they will subjugate them and afflict them' but not 'and afterwards they will leave with great wealth'" (Brachot 9). That wealth was given to them as part of the process of turning the nation of slaves into the nation of priests. A person who has the mindset of a slave does not carry himself as a normal, upstanding person, and therefore cannot serve G-d. In Kiddushin 12 and in Rambam Hilchot Mechira Chapter 16, it is said that a person who bought a slave and then realized that the slave has negative character traits – for example, he is a liar or a thief – still retains ownership of the slave. This is because it is to be expected – the experience of slavery affects a man's character, may make him lowly. A slave does not have personhood in the full sense, he is without strength, independence, backbone...

And so, G-d begins to build up the nation of slaves' backbone. He does so first through the Ten Plagues. And then, by giving them wealth. And then – by telling them that they are a nation of priests, a *holy* nation. He believes in them.

One of the things we need to ingrain in our children is our belief in their abilities. That they *are* holy, part of a holy people. We need to tell them that they are good and sweet and righteous, even if they are unruly or disobedient. When we make known to our children the depth of our belief that they are great, they slowly reveal their hidden greatness.

We are all familiar with the Gemara in Niddah 30b, that when an infant is in its mother's womb, he learns the entire Torah. Before he leaves the womb, an angel comes and gives him a slap across the cheek. Why does the angel do that? Or, if the infant is supposed to forget the Torah, why is he taught it in the first place? It is to make the following important point: You have potential.

The entire story of leaving Egypt and what came before it – the story of Creation, the stories of the forefathers, the story of the subjugation in Egypt, the entire ordeal of changing nature in the Plagues – all come to teach us where we come from. To have us realize who our fathers were, who our grandfathers were. To have us see who Adam HaRishon was, who was able to see from one side of the world to the other. See what a giant of a person he was! To have us realize that we come from Avraham. To know who he was, what enormous faculties of being he had. To know who our matriarch Sarah was. To know of Jacob, Rachel, Leah, Yehudah. The knowledge of these people gives us the knowledge of our potential, the awareness of our strength and of our being "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." It gives us the awareness that we are G-d's nation.

See, sometimes you have a Rebbe who has only a few Chassidim, but he still wears the garb of a Rebbe – that is because he knows what kingship is. Similarly, we need to internalize that we are a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Consequentially, we will refrain from all evil. We will understand that it has no relation to us. We have nothing to do with it, because we *are* a holy nation.

"You have chosen us from all the other nations, You have loved us, and You have desired us."

And that is why, after all this preparation, we receive the TenCommandments. We receive them on a basis of our strength, our faith, and our ability to receive and keep these things as a “kingdom of priests and a holynation.”

May it be G-d's will that we merit to go in this way, to internalizethese things, to know that we are G-d's nation.



**Rabbi Yehoshua Mordechai Schmidt**, shlita graduate of Mercaz HaRav and Hesder Yeshiva Nir Kiryat Arba. Now Serves as head of Yeshiva Kollel (Hesder Gavoa) and Rabbi of Shavey Shomron. Students feel a warm, fatherly relationship with the Rosh Yeshiva. He takes time and interest in each individual helping them their full potential as Jews. Rabbi Schmidt, is the author of SHitathASimanim (system of signs) which is a mnemonic method of key words designed to help students learn and remember Gemara pages.

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

## Parshat Yitro

Rabbi Adam Starr

*Rabbi of Young Israel of Toco Hills*

*Atlanta, GA*

Moshe, the fearless leader of the Jewish people, left the comforts of royalty to lead his enslaved brethren, and led the people out of Egypt culminating with the splitting of the sea.

But Moshe is most famous for what we read in this week's Torah Portion. He is *moshe rabbeinu*, Moshe our master, and he taught us, *Torat Moshe*, the Torah of Moshe. He ascended Sinai to receive the Torah on our behalf. *Moshe kibel torah misinai*, Moshe received the Torah on Sinai.”

Moshe is the intermediary between God and the Jewish people...yet the portion we read this Shabbat, the portion in which the Ten Commandments are given to the children of Israel, is not ascribed to him. His father-in-law, acting as only a true in-law can, comes in and takes all the credit. It's Yitro, the pagan priest, *kohen Midyan*, who receives the honor of having his name describe this Torah portion containing the highest religious experience of our people: *Matan Torah*, the revelation at Sinai. It is Yitro's name that has been associated with the Ten Commandments as they have been read in synagogues throughout the world, every year for hundreds and hundreds of years. Why does Yitro receive this honor? Was Moshe the ultimate teacher of Torah in





Israel not worthy?

I would like to strengthen this question further. There is a long standing dispute going back to the Talmud about the placement of Exodus Chapter 18, wherein Yitro comes to Moshe and advises him to create a judicial system.

According to one opinion, *Yitro Achar matan Torah haya*, Chapter 18 in reality occurred following the giving of the Ten Commandments even though it is written before following the principle of *ein mukdam umeuchar batorah*, that the Torah is not always ordered chronologically.

As a methodological note, it's important to realize that the principle of *ein mukdam umeuachr batorah* is never used randomly; rather, there must be a reason to place it where it is that supersedes chronology.

Our original question is now even stronger. The Torah went out of its way to connect the Yitro account with the giving of the Torah even changing the order of events as they occurred to connect the Yitro account with the giving of the Torah. Why was Yitro, the Midianite priest, given the honor of being chosen to be forever connected to *Matan Torah*?

The commentary of the *Or Hayyim Hakadosh* explains, "It seems that the reason (that the story of Yitro is placed as a prelude to *matan Torah*) is so that God could show the generation of the children of Israel, and every generation, that great and enlightened minds exist in other nations; go and learn from the enlightenment of Yitro himself..."

I would like to suggest based on the *Or Hayyim*, that the Torah is teaching us an important lesson. As we read about the receiving of the Torah, the symbol that we are God's chosen people, and as we read that we are an "*am segulah mikol ha'amim*", a nation set aside from others, we must recognize the value and worth of other people and peoples and what we can learn from them. In Chapter 18, where Moshe hears and accepts advice from Yitro, we find an example of understanding and mutual respect, a harmonious relationship where two people with very different backgrounds can learn from one another.

By placing the story of Yitro right before the giving of the Torah, thereby causing this portion to be called Yitro and not Moshe we learn that we don't have a monopoly on wisdom. Yitro and his advice are a part of what makes up our Torah.

This is the blessing of the modern State of Israel. It's a Jewish state that celebrates our unique particular identity as Jews. The calendar and flow of life in Israel is guided by Jewish tradition, Torah and culture. At the same time, it is a modern state incorporating the best of the wisdom of the world thereby emerging as one of the most prosperous and innovative countries. May the Yitro and Moshe elements of Israel continue to grow and thrive side by side for many years to come.

## 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](mailto:office@rza.org)



**Sponsors:**  
Boca Raton Synagogue  
Congregation Torah Ohr



Religious Zionists of America-Mizrachi presents

The relevance of  
**RELIGIOUS ZIONISM**  
in the  
**21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**



**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

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**MARCH 1, 2017 • 7:30 PM • LIGHT REFRESHMENTS TO BE SERVED**

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RSVP to 212-465-9234  
or [office@rza.org](mailto:office@rza.org)



**RZA Aryeh Fellows presents:  
Inter-Collegiate Game Night + Chidon HaTanakh**



RZA Aryeh Fellows presents:

**INTER-COLLEGIATE**

**GAME NIGHT**

**+ CHIDON HATANAKH**



## RZA Game Night + Chidon HaTanakh

Come and hang out with friends, play fun Israel-themed games, eat good food, and watch or participate in the FIRST EVER INTERCOLLEGIATE CHIDON HATANAKH! The Chidon will feature approximately 40 Perakim that focus on Israel, Zionism, and Shivat..

[Read more](#)

[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

## Photos from out Los Angeles Shabbaton



Click [here](#) to see more

## 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 Yael Turitz



Yael Turitz hails from Silver Spring, Maryland, and is a proud graduate of the Melvin J. Berman Hebrew Academy. She continued her studies in Migdal Oz, an Israeli midrasha in Gush Etzion, affiliated with Yeshivat Har Etzion (Gush). In just one year, Yael deepened her passion for studying gemara, honed her Hebrew skills, and witnessed (and fell in love with) Israeli culture.

This past summer, Yael was a counselor for Drisha's Dr. Beth Samuels Summer High School program, where she enabled high school students from across America, Israel, and England to learn in an immersive Beit Midrash experience in Manhattan. As a counselor, she was also responsible for creating fun activities in the dorms and creating meaningful shabbat experiences for the students.

Now a sophomore at Barnard College, Yael is studying English and Education. Yael dreams of becoming a writer and Jewish educator one day. She can't wait to join the RZA Aryeh Fellowship!



**"Entebbe 1976: A Shabbat Miracle"**. Congregation KINS, YU Torah MiTzion Kollel, 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 hijacked 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 Shalom 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 curated 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:**



**Join us for Yom Yerushalyaim!**

Please ask your Shul Rabbi and local school to include this in their weekly emails. Make sure to join us for this once in a lifetime opportunity!



**JOIN THOUSANDS  
FOR THE MEGA-  
MISSION OF A  
LIFETIME**



**May 22-25  
Iyar 26-29**  
Celebrating 50 YEARS of  
a reunited Jerusalem



**For more details  
and to book:**

[www.mizrachi.org/YY50](http://www.mizrachi.org/YY50)



**In light of the UN Security Council vote, our support for Yerushalayim is needed now more than ever. Register now for this once in a lifetime opportunity. Join Jewish people from around the world as we gather in our holiest city to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem. The time is now. Show your support!**



Dear RZA-Mizrachi Friends,

We very much look forward to having you take part in our Mizrachi World Movement's "This Year in Jerusalem" Mega-Mission over Yom Yerushalayim. Our aim is to bring thousands of people (including rabbinic and community leaders) from hundreds of communities from across the global Jewish community to learn, experience and celebrate together at this momentous time in Jewish history.

Please see below a personal invitation from Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, one of the global leaders of the mission, inviting you to join him on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

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

Please note the following:

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](mailto: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

My Volunteer Advice to the Prime Minister

*By Rabbi Yisrael Rozen, Dean of the Zomet Institute*

“What was Esther thinking when she invited Haman? She didn’t want the people of Yisrael to say, **We have a sister in the King’s palace** – and therefore turn their minds away from asking for Divine mercy.” [Megillah 15b].

You who are reading this article after it has been published already know what I don’t know when I write it. What happened and what was discussed in the meeting between our Prime Minister and the new President of the United States? As I write this, an assorted group of politicians, spokesmen, publicists, and media experts **are giving out free advice to the Prime Minister** – what to say or not to say: is this a time for silence or for speaking / how to plant new things or to uproot existing ones / when to hug and when to avoid a hug / how to love and how to hate / a time for war and a time for peace (see Kohellet 3 – but I have in

some cases replaced “time” with “how,” and I rearranged the sequence). And I will also add my voice, **free of charge, to the chorus of advisors**. I must admit that I am also moved by a sporting spirit, to see how well I fare in my predictions!

Here are a few minor notes about the current relationship between Israel and the United States.

### **Essence and not Symbolism**

(1) I do not believe that symbolic declarations or actions are efficient necessities today. For example, take the matter of **moving the United States embassy to the capital of Israel**. This is quite important in terms of the declarative content, it would be an encouraging and embracing move, but the price of worldwide “incoming fire” against us is much greater than any real benefit. Certainly such a “dramatic achievement” is not worth the cost of giving up on much more significant successes. And if we feel that this is an absolute must, all the activity can be brought to Jerusalem at a slow crawl, without the fanfare that would entail a bombastic and very high price.

(2) It may surprise you to read **that I am not at all enthusiastic about the possible appointment of the President’s Jewish son-in-law as a negotiator between Israel and the Palestinians**. This is doomed to failure! Such a move would provide our enemies with a threshold weapon to torpedo any serious contact between the two sides. It would be a shame to plant a noisy obstacle directly under the negotiation table which the Prime Minister is hoping to get to, and rightly so. We might add that such a move might eventually act as a boomerang, if the President’s son-in-law is not exactly a member of Gush Emunim (the organization which set up many of the “settlements”).

(3) Similarly, **I am not sure that it is a good idea to appoint a Shabbat-observant Jew who is one of the trustees of Yeshivat Bet El in the area of Binyamin as the United States ambassador to Israel**. In the international arena, his position and his ability will be very constrained from the start. This is also true of public opinion in America, in that his apparent lack of objectivity may act as a detriment. There is no doubt that this appointment can act as a double-edged sword among sectors of the Israeli public which are not clearly on the political right.

(4) In the matter of the Palestinians, expansion of the settlements, and blocking the “vision” of two nations – **I do not think that expansion of Israeli sovereignty should be the focus of this summit meeting, “openly on the table.”** With respect to this central question, I would be willing to accept mild moves from the United States, such as rejection of a demand to rebuke Israel, turning a blind eye, or a shrug of the shoulders. And from our side, we can swallow up new territories at a slow crawl, “one day after another.” For example, the initial move might be extending Israeli law to cover the residents of Yehuda and the Shomron without a need to declare sovereignty over the land. And “along the way,” we might block the Supreme Court from making anti-nationalistic legal decisions through new laws, the details of which we will not discuss further here. Full sovereignty will come later, *de jure* if not *de facto*.

(5) As far as I am concerned, there is no real need for a public declaration **cancelling “the Bar Ilan declaration”** which recognized a desire to establish “two nations for two peoples.” And there should not be any calls to formally disband the **“Oslo agreements.”** These two visions have dissipated long ago, and it is best if they will simply be allowed to wither and disappear. Reality is much stronger than any declaration.

(6) **With respect to Iran, ISIS, and the region of the Mediterranean, I do not have any specific advice.** For these matters, I defer to the greater experience and judgement of the Prime Minister.

I close by returning to the quote at the beginning of this article, with some notes added: “What was Esther thinking when she invited Haman [to her summit meeting with King Achashverosh in an effort to save the Jews]? She didn’t want the people of Yisrael to say, **We have a sister in the King’s palace [named Ivanka] – and therefore turn their minds away from asking for Divine mercy.**”



# As Shabbat Approaches

## In Praise of Human Audacity

*By Esti Rosenberg, Head of the Midrasha for Women, Migdal Oz*

“I have a vision of You in the Sanctuary, seeing Your power and Your honor” [Tehillim 63:3].

“And you shall tell your children and your children’s children about the day when you stood before your G-d at Chorev...” [Devarim 4:9]. “Which other men have heard the voice of the living G-d speaking from within the flames as we did and remained alive?” [5:23].

The momentous events of Mount Sinai were a singular occurrence – a one-time occurrence, beyond the normal bounds of logic. It was an encounter between the Shechina (the Holy Presence) which never came down lower than ten tefachim above the ground and those who were created in G-d’s image from the dust of the earth, to which they will return. Can an aphysical body and a soul really hear the voice of the living G-d and remain alive?

This impossible paradox is a recurring theme throughout all the preparations for Mount Sinai and is part of the events themselves. “Speak to G-d and we will listen, but let G-d not speak to us, or we might die” [Shemot 20:16]. The commentators give various descriptions of the character of the “*Yemai Hagballa*” – the three days when access to Mount Sinai was limited – which sharpen and give indications of different possible interpretations and spiritual approaches to the understanding of the events on the mountain.

Based on a careful reading of the verses, Rashi notes that the original Divine plan was for the Holy One, Blessed be He, to be revealed only to Moshe, while the nation looked on from a distance. G-d says to Moshe, “Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud so that the nation will hear when I speak to you” [Shemot 19:9]. The Creator knew that the people would not be able to withstand the power of the direct Divine revelation, and He therefore proposed that He would be revealed fully only to Moshe, and that the people would look on from a distance.

In a remarkable commentary, Rashi goes into great detail, and he writes that the people stubbornly refused to accept this plan. Here is what Moshe said to G-d: “They want to hear directly from You. To hear from a messenger is not the same as hearing from the King – we want to see our King.” Insisting on this took great spiritual courage. The Holy One, Blessed be He, had planned to reveal Himself only to Moshe, but the people wanted to experience a direct revelation of the Shechina. The Holy One, Blessed be He, accedes to the request. Therefore, in a following verse Moshe declares in the name of G-d that he “will descend in view of the entire nation.” [19:11]. The constant human desire to see the Shechina eye to eye began before the Torah was given and it continues to this very day. The Holy One, Blessed be He, had an original plan, but He changed it in response to the request of the people. Human yearning was able to modify the Divine plan.

“And the entire nation saw the thunder... and the nation moved and stood far away” [Shemot 20:15]. “For you were afraid of the fire, and you did not ascend the mountain...” [Devarim 5:5]. The human attempt to see the King was beyond human ability. But the attempt, the aspiration, and the yearning have not waned from that time until this day. The fear and the power of the momentous events at Mount Sinai have brought to the world the constant human attempt to see the King, and the corresponding desire of the King to be revealed and to talk to His creatures – for the Creator to exist and to be seen in their world. It is a constant attempt to engage in an encounter.

This is both a great privilege and a great challenge. Fear and love are intermingled with each other.

“My soul is thirsty for You, my flesh longs for you” [Tehillim 63:2].

The concept of “political correctness” refers to a manner of speech where a person modifies the language he or she uses and the way of speaking in order to sound better in the ears of his listeners. A person who is talking in a politically correct way will try to minimize saying things with content or in a way that is considered improper for speech in public and in society. He will always strive to say things the audience would like to hear and in a way that they want to hear it.

### **Hypocrisy and Distortion**

Many people are upset with “politically correct” speaking, feeling that it represents an attempt to ignore reality and lead to hypocrisy. As far as they are concerned, a person or a society which constantly maintains language that is “right and proper” will be transformed into a group that ignores reality and tries all the time to find favor in the eyes of the people in their surroundings.

Some people have even come to the conclusion that the exaggerated insistence of using politically correct language was the main cause that led to the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States, since as we all know any connection between him and political correctness is nothing more than a mere coincidence.

### **A Story with a Lesson**

A story is told about a wealthy man who had a huge amount of property. In his old age, when he no longer had the strength to move around from one country to another, he called his beloved son and proposed that they enter into a partnership. The father said that he would stay home and manage the business, while the son would travel from place to place, in order to make sure that the enterprise remained a success.

The son knew that if he accepted this proposal he would no longer be able to sit around in peace, rather he would constantly be moving from one place to another. However, it was **important for him to show respect for his father and to show that his father’s command was important to him.** He therefore accepted his father’s proposal.

In a short time, it was clear that the son was a huge success. He traveled from place to place, and the business grew steadily. One day, the son met a family friend who told him that he was going to the city where his father lived. So the son decided to write a letter to his father. He wrote that his horse and carriage were weak from age, and that the seats in the carriage had lost all their padding, and he therefore asked his father for the money to buy a new horse and carriage.

The father’s friend went on his way, and while he was traveling he opened the son’s letter and read it. He saw right away that the son would not get anything at all from the father. When the father saw that his son didn’t care about him at all – that he did not ask how he was feeling – he would be very angry. And he would certainly reject the son’s request.

The friend therefore wrote a new version of the letter. He began with a question about how his father was getting along. He changed the son’s request by noting that all his life had been spent in the interests of enhancing the respect shown for his father. It was therefore not proper that he should travel around in a dilapidated wagon, with horses that were worn out from age.

**When the father read the revised letter, his heart was filled with love and a yearning for his son. And he immediately fulfilled the son’s request.**

### **“And Moshe Repeated the Words of the Nation”**

Yitro’s wonderful advice, aside from organizing the system of justice, was for Moshe to act as a messenger and a link between the nation and the Holy One, Blessed be He. “You

should represent the nation to G-d, and you should bring their words to G-d” [Shemot18:19].

Yitro understood that Moshe was the right person to stand before G-d and to interpret the words of the people to Him. Moshe would say the things in the proper way, he would know how to word the messages in a way that would be proper and fitting for contact with the Creator of the World. Call it “Divinely Correct.” He would certainly not modify or distort their words, but he would repeat the message in a fashion that was the proper one for them to be heard.

It is right to criticize those who speak dishonestly, who mean one thing and say another. But we must also not forget that it is very important to behave properly and to organize every declaration and every request – at any time and place in the world, and certainly before the Holy One, Blessed be He – in the best way possible.

## WHEN THE CHILDREN OPEN THEIR HEARTS

It's in Our Hands!

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

“I don't believe it!” I suddenly shouted it out, I couldn't control myself. “Imma, just look at what it says!” And she ran to my side, shocked. I gave her the newspaper, and I tried to stop my flowing tears. Imma read the paper, and she looked very sad. The story in the paper was about a bride who wanted on the day of her wedding to pray in the holiest place in the world, at the site of the Temple. But police officers at the spot forbid her to do it. I asked Imma, “Why? How can this be?”

Imma gave me a big hug, and she said, “Don't worry, my darling, everything will be okay in the end.” And then she seemed to remember something. She got up, excited, and went to the calendar. She said, “Look, today is the twenty-first of Shevat. On this date, exactly 99 years ago, a man was born who kept the site of the Temple very close to his heart. He had the privilege of being part of the liberation of the Temple Mount from the Jordanians, and he even blew a shofar on the mountain. Rabbi Shlomo Goren was the first Chief Rabbi of the IDF, which was established in 5708 (1948), when the state of Israel was founded.

Imma was very enthusiastic. Here is what she told me:

\*\* \* \* \* \*

***In the days before the Temple Mount was liberated, Rabbi Goren was visiting the United States. The Jewish community in the United States was shocked and afraid. They said, “We can see a terrible holocaust coming... All the Arab countries have gathered together to wage war against us... What will happen?” They trembled with fear. Rabbi Goren opened the holy ark in the synagogue, and he declared with a firm voice: “I promise you. It doesn't matter which enemy attacks us. We will win, and with G-d's help will blow a shofar on the Temple Mount.”***

***Rabbi Goren hurried back to Israel in order to join the other soldiers. On the third day of the war, he already knew that we had captured the Old City of Jerusalem. At four o'clock in the morning he went to his father-in-law, Rabbi David Cohen, who was known as the “Nazir.” He told him, very excited, “I need a shofar, we are about to liberate the site of the Temple.” Rabbi Cohen too was very enthusiastic, and with trembling hands he gave Rabbi Goren a shofar.***

***At seven o'clock in the morning, Rabbi Goren joined a group of soldiers. He led the way, blowing his shofar over and over. He gave the men strength and encouraged them in their task. When they reached the Temple Mount, Rabbi Goren bowed down towards the place where the Temple stood, blew his shofar, and prayed.***

\*\* \* \* \* \*

Imma stopped talking and looked at me. I said to her, "But Imma, what good is all of this if today even a bride on her wedding day can't pray on the Temple Mount?" I pointed at the story that I had read in the newspaper.

Imma replied, "You are right, but you are also not right." This confused me even more, and I asked her to explain.

"You are right that the situation is not simple. But how can you say that nothing is good about our situation? In the Six Day War, the Holy One, Blessed be He, gave us a wonderful gift – the holiest place in the whole world. And ever since, He has been waiting for us to accept it. He wants us to yearn for the place..."

And Imma hurried to set the table for the Shabbat meal.

I wanted to shout out from the rooftops, so that everybody would hear me: "Okay, my wonderful nation, the nation of Yisrael – let's get on with it! Show that you appreciate the wonderful gift that G-d has given us!"

The Temple Mount is in our hands – It is up to us to take it in our hands and act!

## HOLY AND SECULAR

*We will Find the Answer at the End of the Winter*

*By Rabbi Amichai Gordin, Yeshivat Har Etzion*

They also didn't really understand why it was so important. But they knew it was, and they, as opposed to the rest of us, took the matter very seriously. When they were replaced by other religion teachers, who wore knitted kippot, doubt began to creep in. The great difficulty in studying Gemorra and in getting the youths interested in the studies brought up the obvious question.

Why was it necessary?

The doubt expanded. What does the study of Gemorra give us? To what does it link us? What important moral outlook is provided for us by discussions of financial disputes? Why is it relevant for us? The world of yeshiva high schools (and in their wake, the world of Hesder yeshivot) was on the brink of a serious crisis.

A young journalist, a graduate of an important Hesder yeshiva, wrote a decisive article in 5762 (2002) that summarized the trend of thought that was common at the time:

"The time has come to stop studying Gemorra. Actually, there is no need to take any action. It's happening on its own in the world of the religious Zionist yeshivot. The ancient legal discussions are no longer interesting for the typical students..."

"One of the main reasons for the great success of the army prep schools is the desire of the students to study in a place where time is spent on things other than the Gemorra. The prep schools gave up in advance on any effort to infect the students with a love of Gemorra, and they put much greater emphasis on the study of faith and Jewish philosophy..."

"The world of the Zionist yeshivot is breaking new ground, and it will be followed by the Chareidi world... The world of the yeshivot will soon begin to involve itself in Torah that is "softer" and more relevant... I am describing a revolution that has begun and is taking place spontaneously, which will replace the era of brightness of the Gemorra with the Law of Limitations."

(Panim, the bulletin of the Teachers Union, October 2001).

\*\* \* \* \* \*

Well, the journalist was wrong. The world of Hesder yeshivot still has great faith in the power



of the Gemorra. But it is still necessary to put the issues openly on the table. There is a raging dispute between the world of the yeshivot (and the classic academic world) and the outside world. The external world treats knowledge as something which has a goal of serving a person. This general world scorns knowledge for its own sake. If it does not serve some useful purpose, why should knowledge interest me at all?

On the other hand, the world of the yeshivot (just like the classic academic world) starts out with an assumption that **knowledge enhances strength**. The study of Torah helps to build up the personality. The study of Torah is good not only because it is exciting and or because it imparts moral values. The main reason that the study of Torah is important is that a person who knows Torah is a better person. We do not try to give our students an emotional experience, we are trying to make them more powerful.

In this approach we follow the lead of Yeshayahu, with his parable that illustrates the role of the Torah.

\*\* \* \* \* \*

***Let everyone who is thirsty go to the water...  
Bend your ears and come to me,  
Listen and your souls will live...***

***For just as the rain and the snow fall from the earth,  
Never to return there,  
Unless they have satiated the land,  
Given birth and made plants grow,  
And has provided seeds for the planters  
And bread for the one who eats,  
The same will be true for My word, which comes from My mouth.  
It will not return empty-handed  
Until it has done what I desire  
And has succeeded in its mission...***

***[Yeshayahu 55].***

\*\* \* \* \* \*

The sages learned from this passage that the Torah can be compared to water. Yeshayahu compares the Torah to rain and snow. We are sure that by the end of the winter the rain will cause the wheat to sprout. We are also confident that the Torah which we have piled up around us will cause our personalities to take root and grow. The Torah penetrates into us, it gives birth within us to a full world which will develop later.

When rain falls, while it is still cold and wet outside, we do not feel the good that it is doing for us. A young sceptic will say, "Who needs the rain? It keeps coming down, but it does not lead to any improvement..." And a budding journalist will declare, "Let us have the sun! Let us have spring and budding flowers! Scatter all the clouds and bring out the sun!"

However, the rain is indeed necessary. The irksome rain, which can turn a field into a wet swamp, will lead to carpets of grass and other greenery that will grow in the spring.

"The same will be true for My word, which comes from My mouth." Every new element of knowledge enriches us. This is all the more true of the Torah. Any Torah which we studied with great difficulty and hard labor will not return empty-handed before it has accomplished what we desire and has helped us succeed in our mission.

In the world of the yeshivot, the sun is not brought into shine, which would thereby lead to instantaneous popularity among the students. In the world of the yeshivot, we bring down rain on the students. Only rain which will penetrate deep into their bones will give them great strength. Like the rain, Torah does not do its work immediately. One who studies and weeps as he goes, carrying the burden of the seed, will return in happiness, carrying his sheaves. (See Tehillim 126:6). He will believe and plant, believe and plant.



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