

שבת בשבת



Parshat Vayakhel-Pekudei

No 1666: 27 Adar 5777 (March 25, 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

Passover Appeal

March 2017

Dear Friends,

Passover season is upon us and traditionally this is a time when we raise funds for Kimcha D'Pischa for our brethren in Israel.

While the Religious Zionists of America continues to be committed to the principles of Religious Zionism and the protection and the security of the State of Israel, this Passover season we recognize that "Im Ein Kemach, Ein Torah." Without physical sustenance, Torah cannot be perpetuated.

Thus, as we sit down to our Passover table, the Religious Zionists of America recognizes that the physical well-being of our sisters and brothers who reside in such outposts as Sderot, our sons and daughters who serve in the Israeli army, and our precious young men who fill the Hesder Yeshivot and army units with bravery and Torah principles, must be physically sustained.

Their physical needs: food, shelter, clothing, must be provided. The Religious Zionists of America needs your help in feeding and clothing these heroic souls so they can think and act and continue to guarantee the land of Israel, for the people of Israel, according to the Torah of Israel.

Only with the support and assistance of dedicated partners such as yourselves, can the Religious Zionists of America, in this Passover season, provide for the physical needs of

our Israeli brethren while continuing to nurture their souls as they protect our heritage.

With sincere gratitude,

Rabbi Gideon Shloush
Oliner *Executive Vice President*
Matanky
Ernest Agatstein
Presidium

Mr. Martin
Rabbi Leonard
Dr.

Save the Date!!

RZA-Mizrachi Manhattan Shabbaton June 16-17

**Location:
The Jewish Center
131 West 86th Street
New York, NY 10024**

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

RZA ARYEH FELLOWS PRESENTS:



INTER-COLLEGIATE

GAME NIGHT

+CHIDON HATANAKH

JOIN YOUR FELLOW COLLEGE STUDENTS FOR A FUN NIGHT OF ISRAEL-THEMED PANOPLY, DINNER AND REFRESHMENTS, AND WATCH OR COMPETE IN THE FIRST EVER COLLEGIATE CHIDON HATANAKH!

**SUNDAY, APRIL 2ND
6 PM (CHIDON NO LATER THAN 7:30)
CONGREGATION ADERETH EL
133 EAST 29TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10016**

First Prize - \$300 + Set of Tanakh Sefarim. Second and Third Prizes - Set of Tanakh Sefarim. (Prizes subject to change)

Open to students and young professionals ages 18-24

The Chidon will feature approximately 40 Perakim that focus on Israel, Zionism, and Shivat Zion: שמונת: י-טז, במדבר: יא-יד, טז, כ, כא, לב, יהושע: כב-כד, מלכים א: יז-כב, מלכים ב: א-ה, ישעיה: לה, ירמיה: ל, יחזקאל: לז, הושע: יד, זכריה: א, ב, ח, נחמיה: א, ב, ד, ה, ו

FOR MORE INFO CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK EVENT
"RZA GAME NIGHT + CHIDON HATANAKH"
AND SIGN UP @ TINYURL.COM/RZACHIDON



Order your Yom Yerushalayim buttons today!

**SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR
YOM YERUSHALAYIM**

As the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem approaches, our support of Israel is more important than ever.

Please reply to this email to order your Yom Yerushalayim "United with Jerusalem" buttons.

These buttons are perfect to hand out at your Yom Yerushalayim celebrations.

\$36 per 100 buttons.

**Please contact our office at
212-465-9234 or
office@rza.org to order!**



Here's what One Shul did to Promote Yom Yerushalayim Buttons to their Community:

Yom Yerushalayim Buttons



In anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem we are pleased to offer free Yom Yerushalayim buttons. Please stop by the Shul office to pick one up. Show your support for Yom Yerushalayim!

"למען ציון לא אטשה ולמען ירושלים לא אשקוט"

"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain still." - Isaiah 62:1

Getting Ready for Yom Yerushalayim!

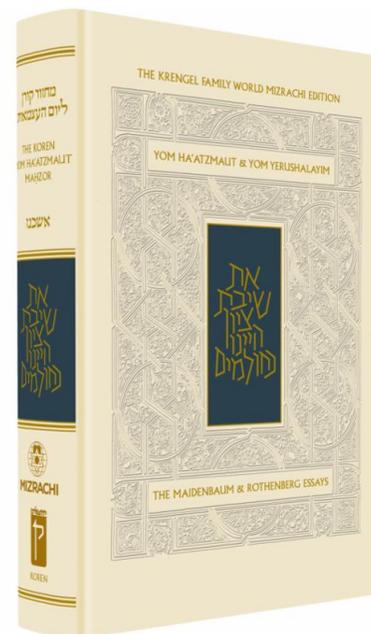
We are pleased to introduce a new initiative. Each week we will feature new items and materials to help you prepare for Yom Yerushalayim.

The Koren Mahzor for Yom Ha'atzmaut & Yom Yerushalayim

This Koren Machzor includes special tefilot to commemorate these momentous days, as well as a host of educational essays from leading scholars.

It can be purchased [here](#).

[Take a look inside!](#)



NEW!!!

Introducing a new section to our website.

MEDIA RESOURCES

We are pleased to introduce a media resource section for our RZA-Mizrachi website! This section is meant to provide helpful resources for Israel related news, media, and advocacy, as well as Torah resources.

Please take a moment to see what's there. Kindly let us know if there are additional sites that we should add to this list.

Many thanks to RZA Aryeh Fellow Alex Sachs for preparing this section.

You can find our new section [here](#).



YOM YERUSHALAYIM *Honor Roll*

NEXT STEPS

Now that you have signed the Yom Yerushalayim Honor Roll please tell us:
How will your institution be celebrating YY50?
Please let us know so that we can publicize your Yom Yerushalayim program.

Our website will feature Yom Yerushalayim Religious Zionist events taking place all across North America. Please send us your flyers, promotional videos, Facebook pages, general announcements and any other material you may have.

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

If you haven't started planning, here are some suggestions:



Concert



Picnic



Educational
Program



Flag
Ceremony



Lecture



Game Night



Mission to
Israel



Siyum



BBQ



Movie



T'fillah
Chagigit



Yom Iyun



Israeli Kiddush



Carnival



Yom Yerushalayim Honor Roll

More than 190 have signed up!!!

Dear Friend of Religious Zionism,

One of the initiatives we are planning, in anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the re-unification 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.

More than 190 Shuls and Schools have signed up. If your community is not yet on our list please let us know.

Rabbi Gideon Shloush
Presidium
National Director
Oliner
Religious Zionists of America - Mizrachi
gshloush@rza.org
Agatsstein

Mr. Martin

Rabbi Leonard Matanky
Dr. Ernest

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

CALIFORNIA

Beverly Hills

Beth Jacob Congregation
Rabbi Kalman Topp

Irvine

Young Israel of Orange County
Rabbi Dov Fischer

Los Angeles

Congregation B'nai David-Judea
Rabbi Yosef Kanefsky

Gindi Maimonides Academy
Rabbi Aharon Wilk

Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy
Rabbi Yahel Tsaidi

Shalhevet High School
Rabbi Ari Segal

Yeshivat Yavneh
Rabbi Shlomo Einhorn

Young Israel of Century City
Rabbi Elazar Muskin

YULA Boys High School
Rabbi Dov Emerson

Valley Village

Shaarey Yerushalayim
Rabbi David Adatto

Shaarey Zedek Congregation

Congregation Beth Torah
Rabbi Ari Azancot

Congregation Bnei Yitzhak
Rabbi Joseph Beyda

Congregation Pri Eitz Chaim
Rabbi Melvin I Burg

Congregation Talmud Torah of Flatbush

Magen David Yeshiva High School
Rabbi Saul Zucker

Merkaz Yisrael of Marine Park
Rabbi Elisha Weiss

Shulamith School of Brooklyn
Rabbi Shmuel Klammer

Yeshiva of Flatbush
Rabbi Raymond Harari

Young Israel of Flatbush
Rabbi Kenneth Auman

Cedarhurst

Shulamith High School for Girls
Ms. Rena Zerykier

Young Israel of Lawrence-Cedarhurst
Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum

Far Rockaway

The White Shul
Rabbi Eytan Feiner

Flushing

Rabbi Jonathan Rosenberg

COLORADO

Denver

Denver Academy of Torah
Ms. Naomi Lev

Denver Academy of Torah Minyan
Rabbi Joseph Friedman

CONNECTICUT

New Haven

Westville Synagogue
Rabbi Fred Hyman

West Hartford

Beth David Synagogue
Rabbi Yitzchok Adler

Young Israel of West Hartford
Rabbi Tuvia Brander

FLORIDA

Boca Raton

Boca Jewish Center
Rabbi Yaakov Gibber

Boca Raton Synagogue
Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

Congregation Torah Ohr
Rabbi Benjamin Yasgur

Katz Yeshiva High School
Rabbi Jonathan Kroll

Boynton Beach

Anshei Chesed Congregation
Rabbi Avi Billet

Delray Beach

Anshei Emuna
Cong Rabbi Jack Engel

Hollywood

Young Israel of Hollywood
Rabbi Yosef Weinstock

Miami Beach

Hebrew Academy (RASG)
Rabbi Zvi Kahn

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Young Israel of Queens Valley
Rabbi Shmuel Marcus

Forest Hills

Havurat Yisrael
Rabbi David Algaze

Young Israel of Forest Hills
Rabbi Michael Weingarten

Fresh Meadows

Utopia Jewish Center
Rabbi Yonoson Hirtz

Great Neck

Great Neck Synagogue
Rabbi Dale Polakoff

Hewlett

Young Israel of Hewlett
Rabbi Heshy Blumstein

Hewlett Bay Park

Stella K. Abraham High School for Girls
Rabbi Yisroel Kaminetsky

Hillcrest

Young Israel of Hillcrest
Rabbi Dr. Richard Weiss

Hollis

YU High School for Girls - Central
Mrs. Chaya Batya Neugroschl

Jamaica Estates

Young Israel of Jamaica Estates
Rabbi Shlomo Hochberg

Kew Gardens Hills

Congregation Etz Chaim
Rabbi Moshe Rosenberg

Young Israel of Kew Gardens Hills
Rabbi Yoel Schonfeld

Lawrence

Rambam Mesivta
Rabbi Zev Friedman

Congregation Beth Sholom
Rabbi Kenneth Hain

Congregation Shaaray Tefilah
Rabbi Uri Orlian

HAFTR
Rabbi Gedaliah Oppen

Atlanta Jewish Academy
Rabbi AriLeubitz

Young Israel of Toco Hills
Rabbi Adam Starr

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Congregation Anshe Motele
Rabbi Alan Abramson

Congregation Kehillah Jacob Beth Samuel
Rabbi Aaron Leibtag

Congregation KINS
Rabbi Leonard Matanky

Congregation Or Menorah
Rabbi Doug Zelden

Congregation Or Torah
Rabbi Zvi Engel

Ida Crown Academy
Rabbi Leonard Matanky

Park Plaza Synagogue
Rabbi Mordechai Cohen

Young Israel of West Rogers Park
Rabbi Elisha Prero

Lincolnwood

Congregation Yehuda Moshe
Rabbi Joel Gutstein

Skokie

Hebrew Theological College
Rabbi A. Friedman, Rabbi S. Schuman

Hillel Torah North Suburban Day School
Rabbi Menachem Linzer

Kehilat Chovevei Tzion
Rabbi Shaanan Gelman

Young Israel of Skokie
Rabbi Gershon Schaffel

KANSAS

Overland Park

Congregation BIAV
Rabbi Daniel Rockoff

MASSACHUSETTS

Brighton

Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe
Rabbi Jason Strauss

Long Beach

Young Israel of Long Beach
Rabbi Chaim Wakslak

Mamaroneck

Westchester Day School
Rabbi Joshua Lookstein

Merrick

Congregation Ohav Sholom
Rabbi Ira Ebbin

Young Israel of Merrick
Rabbi Marc Volk

Monsey

Community Synagogue of Monsey
Rabbi Moshe Tendler

Young Israel of Monsey and Wesley Hills
Rabbi Ari Jacobson

New Hyde Park

Young Israel of New Hyde Park
Rabbi Lawrence Teitelman

New York City

Bialystoker Synagogue
Rabbi Zvi Romm

Congregation Adereth El
Rabbi Gideon Shloush

Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun
Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz

Congregation Ohab Zedek
Rabbi Allen Schwartz

Congregation Ramath Orah
Rabbi Moshe Grussgott

Lincoln Square Synagogue
Rabbi Shaul Robinson

Manhattan Day School
Rabbi Mordechai Besser

Manhattan Jewish Experience
Rabbi Mark Wildes

The Jewish Center
Rabbi Yosie Levine

The Ramaz School
Rabbi Eric Grossman

Yeshiva University
President Richard M. Joel

Yeshiva University High School for Boys

Newton

Congregation Beth El-Atereth Israel
Rabbi Gershon Segal

Congregation Shaarei Tefillah
Rabbi Benjamin J. Samuels

Sharon

Young Israel of Sharon
Rabbi Noah Cheses

MARYLAND**Baltimore**

Beth Tfiloh Congregation
Rabbi Mitchell Wohlberg

Beth Tfiloh Dahan Community School
Rabbi Mitchell Wohlberg

Rockville

Rockville Jewish Outreach Center
Rabbi Yaacov Benamou

Silver Spring

Kemp Mill Synagogue
Rabbi Brahm Weinberg

Melvin J. Berman Hebrew Academy
Dr. Joshua Levisohn

MICHIGAN**Oak Park**

Young Israel of Oak Park
Rabbi Michael Cohen

Southfield

Farber Hebrew Day School
Rabbi Scot Berman

Young Israel of Southfield
Rabbi Yechiel Morris

MISSOURI**St. Louis**

Epstein Hebrew Academy
Rabbi Yaakov Green

Nusach Hari B'nai Zion Congregation
Rabbi Ze'ev Smason

Yeshivat Kadimah High School
Rabbi Naftali Rothstein

Young Israel of St. Louis
Rabbi Moshe Shulman

Rabbi Joshua Kahn

New Rochelle

Young Israel of New Rochelle
Rabbi Reuven Fink

North Woodmere

Midreshet Shalhevet High School
Ms. Esther Eisenman

Oceanside

Young Israel of Oceanside
Rabbi Jonathan Muskat

Plainview

Young Israel of Plainview
Rabbi Elie Weissman

Rochester

Congregation Beth Shalom
Rabbi Avi Kilimnick

Scarsdale

Magen David Sephardic Congregation
Rabbi Mitchell Serels

Young Israel of Scarsdale
Rabbi Jonathan Morgenstern

Syracuse

Shaarai Torah Orthodox Congregation
Rabbi Evan Shore

Wesley Hills

Congregation Ahavat Yisrael
Rabbi Asher Bush

West Hempstead

Congregation Eitz Chayim
Rabbi Dov Greer

Young Israel of West Hempstead
Rabbi Yehuda Kelemer

Westhampton Beach

The Hampton Synagogue
Rabbi Avraham Bronstein

White Plains

Hebrew Institute of White Plains
Rabbi Chaim Marder

Woodmere

DRS Yeshiva High School for Boys
Rabbi Yisroel Kaminetsky

NEW JERSEY**Bergenfield**

Bais Medrash of Bergenfield
Rabbi Moshe Stavsky

Cherry Hill

Congregation Sons of Israel
Rabbi Ephraim Epstein

Deal

Yeshiva at the Jersey Shore
Rabbi Elie Tuchman

Edison

Ohr Torah Congregation
Rabbi Yaakov Luban

Rabbi Pesach Raymon
Yeshiva Rabbi Daniel Loew

Englewood

Congregation Ahavath Torah
Rabbi Shmuel Goldin

East Hill Synagogue
Rabbi Zev Reichman

The Moriah School
Rabbi Daniel Alter

Fair Lawn

Congregation Darchei Noam
Rabbi Jeremy Donath

Shomrei Torah
Rabbi Benjamin Yudin

Fort Lee

Young Israel of Fort Lee
Rabbi Zev Goldberg

Highland Park

Congregation Ahavas Achim
Rabbi Steven Miodownik

Linden

Congregation Anshe Chesed
Rabbi Joshua Hess

Livingston

Congregation Etz Chaim
Rabbi E. Samuel Klibanoff

Suburban Torah
Rabbi Elie Mischel

Hebrew Academy of Long Beach
Rabbi Yisroel Kaminetsky

Young Israel of Woodmere
Rabbi Hershel Billet

NEVADA**Las Vegas**

Young Israel of Las Vegas
Rabbi Yitzchak Wyne

OHIO**Columbus**

Congregation Torat Emet
Rabbi Howard Zack

Cleveland

Green Road Synagogue
Rabbi Binyamin Blau

OREGON**Portland**

Congregation Ahavath Achim
Rabbi Michael Kaplan

PENNSYLVANIA**Harrisburg**

Keshet Isarel Congregation
Rabbi Elisha Friedman

Philadelphia

Congregation Mikveh Israel
Rabbi Albert Gabbai

Pittsburgh

Congregation Poale Zedeck
Rabbi Daniel Yolkut

Wynnewood

Congregation Beth Hamedrosh
Rabbi Yonah Gross

RHODE ISLAND**Newport**

Touro Synagogue
Rabbi Marc Mandel

TENNESSEE**Memphis**

Anshei Sphard Congregation
Rabbi Joel Finkelstein

Long Branch

Congregation Brothers of Israel
Rabbi Nasanayl Braun

Ocean

Hillel Yeshiva
Dr. Ruth Katz

Paramus

Ben Porat Yosef
Dr. Steven Lorch

National Council of Young Israel
Rabbi Marc Volk

Yavneh Academy
Rabbi Jonathan Knapp

Yeshivat Noam
Rabbi Chaim Hagler

Passaic

Congregation Adas Israel
Rabbi Dr. Solomon F. Rybak

Young Israel of Passaic Clifton
Rabbi Yaakov Glasser

River Edge

Rosenbaum Yeshiva of North Jersey
Rabbi Daniel Price

Springfield

Congregation Israel
Rabbi Chaim Marcus

Teaneck

Congregation Bnai Yeshurun
Rabbi Steven Pruzansky

Congregation Keter Torah
Rabbi Shalom Baum

Congregation Rinat Israel
Rabbi Yosef Adler

Congregation Shaarei Orah
Rabbi Haim Jachter

Ma'aynot Yeshiva High School for Girls
Mrs. Rivka Kahan

Torah Academy of Bergen County
Rabbi Asher Yablok

Yeshivat He'atid
Rabbi Tomer Ronen

Yeshivat Heichal Hatorah
Rabbi Aryeh Stechler

Baron Hirsch Congregation
Rabbi Binyamin Lehrfield

Margolin Hebrew Academy
Rabbi Benjy Owen

Nashville

Congregation Sherith Israel
Rabbi Saul Strosberg

TEXAS**Dallas**

Congregation Shaare Tefilla
Rabbi Ariel Rackovsky

Houston

United Orthodox Synagogues
Rabbi Barry Gelman

WISCONSIN**Milwaukee**

Anshe Sfard Kehillat Torah
Rabbi Wes Kalmar

CANADA**ALBERTA****Edmonton**

Beth Israel Synagogue
Rabbi Daniel Friedman

QUEBEC**Cote St. Luc**

Beth Israel Beth Aaron Congregation
Rabbi Reuben J. Poupko

Montreal

Congregation Beth Tikvah Ahavat Shalom
Rabbi Mark Fishman

Cong. Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem
Rabbi Yechezkel Freundlich

Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue
Rabbi Schacher Orenstein

Hamilton

Adas Israel Congregation
Rabbi Daniel Green

Ottawa

Congregation Machzikei Hadas
Rabbi Idan Scher

Young Israel of Teaneck
Rabbi Binyamin Krohn

West Orange

Congregation AABJ&D
Rabbi Eliezer Zwickler

NEW YORK

Atlantic Beach

The Jewish Center of Atlantic Beach
Rabbi Ari Perl

Bronx

SAR Academy
Rabbi Binyamin Krauss

Young Israel Ohab Zedek
Rabbi Shmuel Hain

Brooklyn

Avenue N Jewish Center
Rabbi Doniel Eisenbach

Congregation Ahavath Achim
Rabbi Ari Kagan

Thornhill

Zichron Yisroel
Rabbi Charles Grysman

Toronto

Beth Avraham Yoseph Congregation
Rabbi Daniel Korobkin

Bnei Akiva Schools
Rabbi Dr. Seth Grauer

Netivot HaTorah Day School
Rabbi J. Rothman

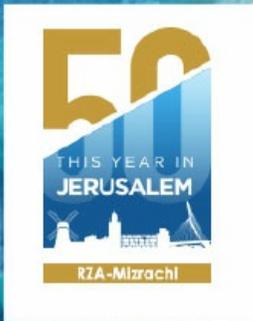
Shaarei Shomayim Congregation
Rabbi Chaim Strauchler

Tanenbaum Hebrew Academy
Rabbi Lee Buckman

ISRAEL

Jerusalem

Kollel Agudath Achim
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

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 goal is – until we get there ourselves – to bring Torat Yisrael closer to America.

For the great and the lowly are equal before the Holy One

Blessed Be He

By Rabbi Yehoshua Weitzman

Rosh HaYehiva of Yeshivat Hesder Maalot

Translated by RZA-Aryeh Fellow Nimrod Soll

Parshat Vayakhel seemingly repeats things which were said in the previous Parshah. Yet, our Sages of blessed memory learnt many things in this Parshah about the soul of man, and of societies which we can take with us into our daily lives.

The Talmud Yerushalmi says in the Tractate of Shekalim (Ch.1 H.1) “Rabbi Yehudah ben Pazi said in the name of Rebbe: How can we read this and not be frightened? When for good-“everyone whose heart motivates him” (כל נדיב ליבו), when for bad-“The entire people removed the gold rings that were in their ears” (ויתפרקו כל העם את נזמיהם). When for good-“And Moses brought the people forth” (ויוצא משה את העם), when for bad- “all of you approached me and said, “Let us send men ahead of us and let them spy out the land” (ותקרבו אלי כולם). When for good-“And then Moses and the Children of Israel sang” (אז ישיר) (משה ובני ישראל), when for bad- “The entire assembly raised up and issued its voice” (ותשא כל העדה) (ויתנו את קולם ויבכו העם בלילה ההוא)”

Reading these verses causes us fear. When the Jewish People are asked to do things for good causes, such as the Mishkan, those “whose hearts motivates him” brought, but apparently not everybody did. Yet, when it comes to do things for bad causes, such as the golden calf, “The entire people removed the gold rings”.

We find this phenomenon in our lives as well. In lowly matters such as watching TV, everybody seems to watch, from professors in universities to those in the lowest positions. Moreover, the professors aren't ashamed that they watch the same things which even not sophisticated people watch. Yet, when it comes to good things, such as Torah learning, only few learn. Once I heard an important rabbi complain that for an average singer you can get 100,000 people come to the Yarkon Park to listen to the concert, and all of Tel-Aviv will be filled with traffic jams. Yet, to my shiurim on Moreh Nevuchim only 4 people show up. That's how it is, from the days of the Mishkan till our own. Additionally, everybody has a smartphone, and some people spend hundreds of dollars on them. Yet, for a filter which costs thirty dollars that's only for “those whose heart motivates him”. This is what the Yerushalmi means, how will we not become frightened. How can the world maintain itself when bad things attract everybody, and the good only manages to attract a few?

Yet, after we become frightened we are able to think to the depth of the matter. What is common to all human beings is what the Kabbalists refer to as their animalistic soul (נפש הבהמית). The evil inclination is connected to our physical nature, and we are all made up of physicality. We are born with a body which needs to be fed, and we feed it. As we age, our physical body demands more things and we give it what it needs. Our good inclination, Yetzer HaTov, only comes in later, and the things it requires our physical body does not demand. We falsely believe that we can live without praying and without learning Torah. Hence, only those whose hearts motivate them give space for the yetzer hatov in their lives.

However, this is not healthy. At least those who merited at some points to be among those who sit in a Beit Midrash and listen to shiurei Torah need to be connected to the Holy and not just the mundane. We need to give space in our lives to the things which are above the physical desires. To things which require concentration and focus and which make up the very foundation of our nation's existence.

Let us focus on two drashot about the Mishkan. The Tanchuma in Ki Tisa (13) states: “Rabbi Chanina ben Pazi says: There is no one greater among the tribes than the tribe of Yehudah, and no one lower than the tribe of Dan, who is descended from the concubines... The Holy One Blessed Be He said: Let Yehudah be matched with Dan so that his spirit shall not be haughty, for the great and the lowly are equal before the Holy One Blessed Be He. Says Rabbi Chanina: Never should a person be haughty as the Mishkan was made by these

two tribes.”

For the building of the Mishkan the Torah matched two people, the first, from the highest of places, the tribe of Yehudah, the tribe of the monarchy. The second person came from the lowest of the tribes, the tribe of Dan, yet the Torah states regarding both of them: (Shemot 35; 30-35)

“And Moshe said to the Children of Israel, “See, Hashem has proclaimed by name, Betzalel son of Uri son of Hur of the tribe of Judah. He filled him with Godly spirit, with wisdom, insight and knowledge and with every craft...and Ohivav son of Achismach of the tribe of Dan. He filled them with a wise heart to do every craft ect...”

Thus, both of them build the Mishkan, and to both God gives “a wise heart” (חכמת לב). This teaches us a great lesson in life; a person should never be haughty. Furthermore, this midrash teaches us how to interact with the general public. In the world of yeshivot it teaches us what the requirements are to accepting new students. The Torah does not allow the tribe of Yehudah to be on its own, it demands it to be matched with the tribe of Dan, the lowest of the tribes, so that the tribe of Yehudah shouldn't become arrogant. Thus creating yeshivot for only the best students is a recipe for disaster. True, the students might end up knowing a lot of Gemara, but they will become arrogant and immoral. The Torah wished to teach us ethical behavior, and one who is arrogant doesn't know anything at all.

Moreover, the Divine Presence does not rest on Israel unless there is a connection between the brightest and the lowest, a connection which is meant to enrich Israel with humility and fraternity. Hence, the Zohar states (Pinchas 3, 237) that in the beginning God wanted everyone to be included in the building of the Mishkan, including the Erev Rav as it states “From every person whose heart motivates him”- even the Erev Rav”. Yet the mixing of Israel with the Erev Rav is what brings to the sin of the Golden Calf, and in our Parshah God commands to gather only “the congregation of the Children of Israel” (עדת בני), without the Erev Rav. Therefore, we see that with regards to the Children of Israel we need everyone; from Yehudah to Dan, but whoever is not part of the Jewish People cannot partake in the Mishkan. This shows us that there are also limits to inclusion.

In our times anyone who wishes to be filled with the “spirit of wisdom” (רוח חכמה) is able to, if he wills it. Ahivav came from the tribe of Dan, a lowly place, yet he wished to be filled with holiness and God gave him the “spirit of wisdom” to help build the Mishkan. Yet without will or desire, one cannot become close to God. The Erev Rav did not wish to become close to God, they only desired power and strength and were therefore ultimately excluded from the Mishkan.

It should be clear that I am not trying to find out who among us is an Erev Rav, God Forbid. Rather, my message is that we need to learn the words of the Sages and use them as a guide in our own lives. What we need to understand is the power of will. When there is will, then one is able to learn Torah and become a partner with God in fixing this world. This must be done without haughtiness, which ultimately leads to heresy, but with humility, which leads to the resting of the Divine Presence. Therefore, we must give everyone a place in our communities and schools, without leaving any Jew behind. Parallel to this we must beware not to permit any evil inside our communities, and our homes. Through this, God Willing, will merit building a true Mishkan for the Torah in our times.



Rabbi Yehoshua Weitzman, born 1949 in [Tel-Aviv](#), is the Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivat Hesder Maalot. He studied at [Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh](#) and is a student of [Rabbi Shlomo Goren](#) z"l and [Rabbi Sha'ar Yeshuv Cohen](#) z"l. When in 1989 [Yeshivat Ma'alot](#) was about to close down due to lack of students, Rabbi Weitzman was appointed Rosh Yeshiva. Since his appointment, Yeshivat Ma'alot has grown into one of the largest Hesder Yeshivot with over 300 students. Rabbi

Weitzman's hashkafah is deeply based in [Torat Eretz Yisrael](#), the belief that the uniqueness

of Torah is internally connected to the Land of Israel.

During the Second Intifada, Rabbi Weitzman coined the phrase “The eternal nation is not afraid from a long journey” (עם הנצח לא מפחד מדרך ארוכה) based on the teachings of Rav Kook. The phrase has since become the motto of the Settlements of Judea and Samaria, especially after the expulsion of Jews from Gush Katif in 2005.

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

The Kiyor and Our Preparation for Holiness

Rabbi Brahm Weinberg

Rabbi of Kemp Mill Synagogue

Silver Spring, MD

One of the vessels of the Mishkan left out of Parshat Teruma is the Kiyor, the copper washbasin used to pour water over the hands and feet of the Kohanim prior to the performance of their service in the Mishkan. It is only in Parshat Ki Tissa that we discover the command that Hashem gives to fashion the Kiyor.

Why is the Kiyor singled out from other vessels?

The Seforno (R. Ovadiah Seforno, 16th century Italy) notes that the Kiyor appears separately from the rest of the vessels of the Mishkan because it serves a very different function.

The other vessels serve integral roles as part of the mandated service and help invest the Mishkan with the spirit of the Divine. By contrast, the Kiyor serves no function in the *actual* service in the Mishkan, but is used only to *prepare* the Kohanim. It is a vessel of “*hachana*,” preparation, and of “*hechsher mitzvah*,” preparation for the mitzvah, rather than a vessel of mitzvah itself.

One might conclude that its status as a preparatory vessel is indicative of its inferior status. On the other hand, one could also consider the preparatory stage to be the essence of the service itself for it defines all that comes afterwards. Preparation for life, for events, for encounters, and especially for the encounter with Hashem is integral to its success.

There is halachic evidence of just how defining the Kiyor’s preparation might be. The Minchat Chinuch (R. Yosef Babad, 19th century Ukraine) (Mitzvah 106) says that the Kohen who fails to wash prior to the service is like a *Kohen Mechusar Begadim*, like a Kohen not wearing the designated priestly clothing, and would invalidate whatever service he performs.

How exactly is the Kiyor meant to affect the service or the Kohanim performing it?

In this week’s parsha of Vayakhel-Pekudei we are told that the material used for the fashioning of the Kiyor was not collected from the normal donations of Parshat Teruma but from the mirrors that the women donated at the entryway of the Mishkan. While there is much significance to the origins of these mirrors, as Rashi notes, what interests me in this context is their physical properties.

The Kli Yakar (R. Shlomo Ephraim Luntschitz, Prague 17th Century) notes that what was unique about these mirrors was their reflective properties; the same reflective properties as



the water inside the Kiyor itself. Although the Kli Yakar explains the symbolism of the reflective properties of the Kiyor in terms of its usage for the Sotah, I would like to suggest that those reflective properties come to define the symbolism of the Kiyor and its role in preparing the Kohanim for the service each day.

The Kiyor and its waters are not just meant to wash away dirt and impurity so that the Kohanim could perform the service in the most respectful and holy fashion, but they are perhaps meant to prepare the Kohanim emotionally and spiritually as well. The Kohanim are forced to see their reflection in the mirrored copper of the Kiyor *and* in its waters every time they enter the Mishkan. They are meant to take a good look at themselves and reflect upon their spiritual state, their *kavana*, their desire to be emissaries of the Jewish people, and their preparedness to face the presence of Hashem. Self-reflection and preparedness are the necessary steps to be able to capture and absorb holiness.

We experience holiness daily through Tefilla and Talmud Torah, but also through the existence of the State of Israel. Moments of self-reflection are critical for us to ensure that we approach the holiness of that special place with the appropriate awe. As we physically visit Israel or even just engage with Israel through study and Jewish text, through interest in the news, through *chesed*, organizational work, or fundraising, we must stop to think about just how wondrous it is. We must look within ourselves to examine whether we have the requisite gratitude to Hashem, to the founders, and to the soldiers and citizens of Israel for the most unbelievable miracle that has occurred to our people in thousands of years. We must pause for a moment every day to recognize the enormity of our responsibility in ensuring the thriving success of our homeland and of our ability to truly apprehend its holiness.

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 Jonathan Pedeem



Jonathan Pedeem is a native of West Orange, NJ and graduated from Kushner. He continued his learning in Yeshivat Heder Birkat Moshe and presently studies Electrical Engineering at The Cooper Union.

Jonathan looks to his year in Birkat Moshe with great fondness, for it gave him access to Torah giants and others who effectively explored the depth and richness of our Jewish tradition, text, and liturgy. Additionally, Jonathan felt that being in the land of Israel, itself, was transformative, for its historical and religious implications are astounding.

As an RZA Aryeh fellow, Jonathan is looking forward to returning to Israel during winter break so to revisit those past experiences in Birkat Moshe; additionally, he is excited to take on the Manhigut Project so he can create a

Humans of Israel

Welcome to Humans of Israel!

Created by RZA Aryeh-Fellows Jonathan Pedoeem, Ilan Atri, and Yishai Pearl

Our team is dedicated to increasing awareness of people that made a significant impact on Israeli society, served in the IDF, and/or made *Aliyah*. While we were in Israel during winter break, we sat down with our friends who made Aliya and talked with them about their journey. We listened and asked questions to understand why these people made these decisions and the difficulties they went through while executing it.

We took these interviews and are now sharing them with you to expose the true greatness of our brothers and sisters who are making this journey.

Doivid Goldschien is finishing yeshiva and drafting to the IDF in March.



Why do you want to draft?

“There is an awareness among Israelis that serving in the IDF is necessary. Many Americans believe that the army is not for them or they don’t have to shoulder any responsibility in regards to the army. I like to explain it in with the following example: if everyone sits down to eat lunch and no one cleans up because they think it will be left to someone else, the table will never get cleaned.”

What advice would you give anyone thinking if moving here?

“I don’t think there an issue of convincing people to move here. It’s more about informing people that its possible and that it’s not the most difficult thing to accomplish. For example, if Woodmere, New York was transplanted to Israel, I think most people would be thrilled. The problem is that their

friends aren’t doing it.”

What was a powerful experience that you had when making Aliyah?

“I came a few days early to help set up the house and when the Nefesh B’nefesh flight landed, it was such an incredible sight to see all the olim and the soldiers greeting them. On a similar note, this is a country of immigrants. An Israeli in Jerusalem told me “you’re not Israeli” to which I responded, we are all Israeli once we move here. Your parents or

grandparents became Israeli when they moved here and the honor of being an Israeli citizen is open to all that come.”

Aryeh Fellows seeking New York-area high schoolsto speak in

This is a letter that one group is sending to high school principals in the tri-state area:

We hope this letter finds you well. Our names are Adina Cohen, Adi Ciner, and Brandon Lurie and we are part of the Religious Zionists of America's Aryeh Fellowship. The fellowship was introduced by the RZA as a revolutionary student leadership program to bolster religious Zionist life in America. The fellowship pulls college aged students from a diverse group of backgrounds and challenges them to bolster religious Zionism through meaningful activism within the American Orthodox community.

This year, the three of us brainstormed ways in which we can get into the field and inspire Jewish youth. After much deliberation, we believe that our unique backgrounds are our strongest asset to helping invigorate religious youth in America. Adina Cohen studied at the Nishmat Center for Advanced Women's Studies for one year and continued to spend a year doing Sherut Leumi, National Service, in an educational organization based in Yerushalayim. In so doing, Adina interacted first hand with organic Israeli culture, life, and people. She has in turn brought back that education and vigor to her community at Stern College for Women. Adi Ciner attended the Hakotel Hesder Yeshiva for two years followed by eighteen months of service in the IDF. During his tenure, Adi tended to the religious needs of soldiers from special units by providing organized davening times, Torah education programs, and an overall spirit of religiosity amongst his non-religious comrades. He now continues his studies at Yeshiva University. Finally, Brandon Lurie is a senior at New York University and heads NYU's premier and only Orthodox club on campus entitled, "Shalhevet." Brandon commands a board of fourteen students who collectively are credited with organizing weekly Friday night dinners of 200 people, a daily minyan, religious programming throughout the week, and Israeli activism on campus.

Taken together, we comprise important sections of the widely diverse religious Zionist student spectrum. We believe that our unique collaboration as a team positions us with the tools to influence and inspire others. Our diverse backgrounds provide wide-reaching insight, views, and enthusiasm about religious Zionism in the student sphere and its challenges and successes going forward. That said, we would be honored to use our unique talents to influence and inspire the next generation.

At your permission, we would appreciate the opportunity to come speak at your high school to students about the opportunities to pursue an even more meaningful religious Zionist experience post high school and explain the myriad of ways that passion can play out. We envision this panel as an opportunity to answer questions, explain our personal passions, and hopefully cultivate a stronger and deeper connection with Medinat Yisrael through educating and fueling the next generation of religious Zionists.

We are available on Fridays and we look forward to being in touch.

Sincerely,

Adina Cohen, Adi Ciner, and Brandon Lurie



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 Chagigit, 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.

Yom Yerushalayim Invitation

Watch this video invitation from the iconic paratroopers who liberated Jerusalem in 1967. They invite you to join them for a once in a lifetime opportunity to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Yom Yerushalayim, May 22nd-May 25th. More details below.



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



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!

SPACES LIMITED



WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US THIS YEAR IN JERUSALEM

FOR A MEGA-MISSION OF A LIFETIME
Be Front and Center, Celebrating 50 years of a reunited Jerusalem
over Yom Yerushalayim
MAY 22-25, 2017

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 - 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, 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

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 Mizrachi. Individuals and communities from around the world will participate in this once in a lifetime opportunity. Celebrating 50 years of a reunited Jerusalem

Click below to see our video!



POINT OF VIEW

Rabbi Levinstein's Spiritual "Price Tag"

By Zevulun Orlev

With his sharp tongue, Dr. Yosef Burg once said (even before the advent of the social networks in the world) that "everything we say is leaked, and therefore he makes sure not to talk even in a dream, because he is sure that such speech will also eventually be leaked..." In reply I told him that I was not surprised to hear this, since his son "Avrum" was living with him in his house. These precautions are even more important today, and even those who do not work in the secret service are well aware that every smartphone is readily available for making both audio and video recordings.

Is there anybody who believes the MK from the Zionist Union who adamantly claimed that he had not made any deal with the woman MK who is running for head of the Histadrut, even after hearing the recording of his conversation where he stated that a deal exists? He should have understood from previous leaks of his conversations that if Dr. Burg refused to talk in his dreams, then our careless MK should certainly be wary of what he says while he is fully awake.

The visual and audio exposure of the talk given by Rabbi Yigal Levinstein has led to deep public shock. His words to students of the IDF prepschools were quite offensive. First and foremost, this is true of the rabbi, who is liked by his students and who has a spiritual influence on them. But the most offensive part of his words lies in the harm he caused to any possible solution for the problem that he wants to solve. I have no doubt at all that this talk caused inestimable harm to any attempt to do something about the issue of combat duty for women in the army. His caustic style and his presentation in the manner of a

standup comic raise serious questions about whether such a person should be in a position to lead young men in their efforts to integrate into Israeli society as a whole and into the IDF. Is this really the way to speak in a Beit Midrash? From various reactions that have reached my ears I have learned that many of my colleagues, as I did, lowered our eyes in shame. I felt very strongly that **the rabbi failed miserably in trying to establish some sort of spiritual “price tag.”**

The IDF shows great appreciation for the prepschools, which have succeeded in developing a generation of recruits who take the lead and demonstrate high motivation to serve in elite forces. Prep school graduates include many officers who fell bravely on the battlefield, and – on the other hand – admired officers who command divisions, brigades, battalions, and companies, in the best of the combat units. Even if there are harsh complaints against the Chief of Staff, the generals of the IDF, and their assistants, and such complaints do exist, are the words of the rabbi the correct way to look for a solution to the problems? What connection is there between the legitimate questions about women serving in mixed combat units which the rabbi wanted to address in his talk and the style, the place, and the audience to whom he spoke? Would the rabbi have spoken in the same way in a meeting with the Chief of Staff and the commanders of the IDF? Is this the proper way to teach young recruits? Is this the way to convince anybody? **Is this the style of discussion that we want to teach our students to use when they speak to their commanders in the IDF?**

The reactions of the Minister of Defense, other ministers, and politicians, have only made a solution to the problem harder to achieve. They transformed the matter into **a political dispute in order to make personal political gains**, again showing that power politics is more important to them than finding a practical solution to real dilemmas. The truth is that I was not especially disappointed by them because I did not expect anything better. The heads of the prep schools, on the other hand, demonstrated much greater stately responsibility in their reactions to the problem, and they knew how to differentiate between the terrible style of the rabbi's talk and the need to talk to the leaders of the IDF with respect and persuasive power, without blurring the value system of the prep schools in anyway.

The words of the rabbi are not the problem of the innovative prep school in Eli, where he teaches. That is not a proper place to address threats. This is a problem for Rabbi Levinstein himself. **His way of dealing with the problem will show if his failure was incidental or systematic**, a planned outburst or a slip of the tongue, a recurring or a one-time-only event. His true test will be how he now acts to defuse the offensive bomb which he planted against religious Zionism, and how he plans to treat the “harm” he caused in the excellent existing relationship between the religious prep schools and the IDF, which was established through much hardwork, ever since the first prep school was founded in Eli thirty years ago.

Based on our acquaintance of many years and my great esteem for you, **I turn to you personally: Rabbi Yigal, take responsibility** and release us from the harsh commotion which you unleashed around us. This is how IDF commanders acted in the past and continue to act now. Give your students an example of how to cope and what they should do if in the future, as commanders and community leaders, they are the cause of similar confusion.

As Shabbat Approaches

The Individual and the Community in Yisrael and in the Other Nations

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

In our article for the Torah portion of Tetzaveh (Issue 1664) we discussed the paradoxical phrase, “There is **one nation, scattered and dispersed**” [Esther 3:8], and the explanation by Rav Kook – that externally the nation appears to be **scattered**, but that in reality it is **one nation** internally. In this article, we will discuss how Rav Kook views the essence of the unity of our nation.

Peace is an exalted value even in the eyes of the other nations, but the concept as seen by the nations is very different from our own idea. Rav Kook writes, “Peace is not an

independent objective but it is rather a means to achieve what every person desires in his heart." That is, it is a way to improve the conditions of a person's life. However, for Yisrael peace has an intrinsic value of its own. We yearn for the appearance of the Shechina, "and G-d will not send the Shechina unless there is peace within Yisrael." This implies another important difference: For the other nations the concept of peace is mainly relevant in the world of action, while for Yisrael it also refers to thought processes. "Every person must feel love for his brothers in his heart and in his soul."

And this is the principle that is involved with collecting the Shekalim. A census of the nation was performed by taking half a Shekel from each person. This teaches us about the unity which is typical of Yisrael. In other nations, when individuals gather in the interests of unity, in essence their personal interest remains. When all is said and done, the final goal is to improve the lot of the individual, while the community acts as a "large group of mutual responsibility," which can be thought of as a large national insurance company. Since it is impossible for every person to directly supply all of his own needs, it is necessary for his own comfort to gather into unified groups. All of this is not true for Yisrael, which in the end does everything it can for the benefit of the nation as a whole. "With respect to all the sanctity of the mitzvot and the service of the Holy One, Blessed be He, performed by Yisrael, the main objective of their labor is to generate justice and praise **for the nation as a whole.**"

And that is how Rav Kook analyzed the contents of the Grace After Meals. The first blessing was written by Moshe in thanks for the manna, food which gave nourishment to the individual bodies of the people. The second blessing was written by Yehoshua for Eretz Yisrael, based on nationalistic feelings. The third blessing was written by David and Shlomo. David had Jerusalem in mind, the nationalistic spiritual form, while Shlomo thought of the Temple, which has the ability to repair the bad ways of humanity. As Shlomo said in his dedication of the Temple: "... so that all the nations of the world will know that G-d is the Lord" [Melachim I 8:60].

"The common thread throughout all the pathways of the Torah is to connect the whole of humanity to all the individuals, so that the individuals will find their happiness within the whole... Therefore it is fitting that every person in Yisrael must recognize the value of his personal food, which lays down a single stone in the edifice of the world in general." Even though the act of eating is in essence selfish, when a person from Yisrael starts to eat he sees before him the general need – and by this personal act he contributes his part in building up the edifice of nationalism and humanity in general.

And that is why every person in Yisrael donates the same amount, and that these coins were used to make the sockets in the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle is an indication of the sanctity of the whole, and the sockets are placed at its foundation, showing that "the desired root of all the individual service of G-d in Yisrael is the success of the whole nation." Therefore it was established that the foundation of the service of the whole nation would be made up from the half Shekel that every individual from Yisrael contributed.

A PARSHA INSIGHT

It is a Sin be too Strict

By Rabbi Asaf Harnoy, Rabbi of "Aderet Eliyahu" Community, Gilo, Jerusalem

It is said that a Chassid used to regularly give part of his profits to his Rebbe, and with G-d's help his business was very successful. One day he went to his Rebbe's home, but he wasn't there. When he asked where the Rebbe was, the members of the household said that he had gone to visit his own Rebbe, the Seer of Lublin. The Chassid was surprised to learn that his mentor had a Rebbe of his own, and as an experienced businessman he quickly made a logical decision: Why should I give a regular donation to the disciple? I will go to the master, the Seer of Lublin himself.

And from then on, the Chassid visited the Seer directly and stopped going to his local Rebbe. And lo and behold, his business slowly began to fail, until he went bankrupt. The bewildered Chassid went to his Rebbe, the Seer of Lublin, to ask him why his business had failed when he visited him but prospered when he gave his

contributions to his local Rebbe. The Seer told him: *“As long as you were not so strict about whom you give the money, the heavens also did not go into detail about whether you deserved your success or not. But when you started to investigate and to decide who best deserved your money, they started in heaven to check if there wasn't somebody else who deserved it more than you...”*

“Look at Your Watch!”

The crisis of the Golden Calf which is reported in this week's Torah portion began because of a misunderstanding between Moshe and the people about the time when he could be expected to return from heaven.

At the very moment that Moshe did not arrive, Bnei Yisrael immediately began the intensive labor of searching for a replacement in the form of a Golden Calf. Even Aharon's desperate attempt to delay them until the next day was unsuccessful. Bnei Yisrael expected Moshe to arrive precisely “on schedule.” And when he did not arrive, the Golden Calf was made – within a few short hours.

If the people had taken a safety precaution and added even one day before making a final decision – everything would have been radically different. Moshe would have arrived at the camp with the Tablets in his hand, and everything would have gone as planned. However, their lack of patience and their stringent attempt to apply the rules with great precision to the moment that they understood Moshe would arrive led to the greatest sin in the annals of the nation of Yisrael.

“Just as He is Patient and not Strict”

Several of the Thirteen Traits of the Holy One, Blessed be He, which appear in this week's Torah portion, teach us that He shows us great patience and that He is not strict and does not judge us harshly. Even though at times we are evil and we sin, we see that the Holy One, Blessed be He, is patient – He is even willing to let our sins go by without punishing us immediately for every sin.

Rabbi Moshe Kordoviro explains in his book “Tomer Devarim” that the patience of the Holy One, Blessed be He, is so great towards us that even at the very moment that we sin He gives us life, which we then utilize for our own evil purposes.

He Never has an Insulted Reaction

Rabbi Eliezer Ben Hurkonus was one of the greatest of the Tana'im, the masters who wrote the Mishna. He is described as “a pit sealed with lime, which does not lose a single drop” [Avot 2:8]. And we are taught that no man was ever able to come to the Beit Midrash before him.

One year there was a harsh drought in Eretz Yisrael, and Rabbi Eliezer was asked to lead the prayers, in an effort to soften the decree. The people were surprised to see that the rabbi's prayers were not answered. But when Rabbi Akiva was then sent to lead the prayer, rain started to fall.

All the people in the synagogue were thoroughly shocked when they saw this. They could not understand how it could be that the prayers of the great Rabbi Eliezer went unanswered while Rabbi Akiva received a response. In the end they heard a heavenly voice which said, **“It is not that one is greater than the other, rather one of them is never insulted while the other one sometimes reacts in an insulted way”** [Taanit 25b].

Rashi explains the term “not to be insulted” as follows: **“He did not react in a strict way** to those who upset him. He would maintain his traits and continue on his path.”

The Holy One, Blessed be He, has a special affinity and love for people who, as He does, do not react to their colleagues for every small act that they perform.

In this week's Torah portion the human operation of building the Tabernacle begins, following the Divine command in the previous portions. The Rebbe of Husiatyn decided to take advantage of the opportunity to discuss his views on the value of labor and workmanship in general.

The Rebbe felt that it is a direct mitzva to perform labor for the sake of heaven. He commented on the opening verse of the Torah portion: "And Moshe gathered the entire community of Bnei Yisrael, and he said to them: These are the things which G-d has commanded that they be done" [Shemot 35:1]. The Rebbe notes that there are two "things" that follow, the mitzva of resting on Shabbat which introduces the command of the Tabernacle, and the labor performed during the other six days of the week, which is also a mitzva.

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And this is what is referred to in the passage: "Love labor, for just as the Torah was given in a covenant, so labor was given in a covenant. As is written, 'Labor for six days and do all of your work. And the seventh day is Shabbat, dedicated to your G-d.' [Shemot 20:9-10]."[Avot D'Rebbe Natan 11a].

And that is what is written in the book "Ma'or Einayim" [written by Rebbe Menachem Nachum of Chernovil, a disciple of the Maggid of Mezerich – R.O.] in the name of the Baal Shem Tov: After 120 years, people are asked, 'Were you faithful in your business dealings?' (See Shabbat 31a.) A person is asked about his behavior in business and labor. And this factor is also a facet of holy labor and Torah – to see whether the person studies Torah in order to follow the ways of the Holy One, Blessed be He. For example, if he studies the Mishna which discusses exchanging a cow for a donkey, which is something that is very important to the Creator. And whether a person acts in this way and behaves according to the Torah is very important to the Holy One, Blessed be He. And also in performing labor, if he acts according to the Torah then he is involved in the Torah even while he performs his work.

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The Labor of the Tabernacle and Regular Work

The Rebbe thus teaches us a very innovative concept. We always thought that to study the Mishna about exchanging a cow for a donkey is a mitzva, while to act according to the Mishna is a secular activity, outside the bounds of the Torah. But the Rebbe teaches us that if I actually exchange a cow and a donkey according to the rules of the Mishna, or if I perform any other labor for the sake of heaven while I observe the halacha, then this labor itself is also a mitzva!

And at this point the Rebbe quotes another passage from Avot D'Rebbe Natan:

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In fact, the Holy One, Blessed be He, did not reveal His Shechina to Yisrael until they actually performed manual labor, as is written, "Let them make a Tabernacle for Me, and I will dwell within them" [Shemot 28:8].

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But we might still ask: What connection is there between weekday work and the labors of the Tabernacle? After all, this Midrash quotes the verse about building the Tabernacle to prove that the Holy One, Blessed be He, sends His Shechina within Yisrael only after they have begun to work. But isn't this verse referring to the labors of the Tabernacle and not mundane regular work?

The Sanctity of the Tabernacle as Part of Practical Life

And therefore, the Rebbe teaches us another lesson from the book Ma'or Einayim. The purpose of giving the Torah to the nation of Yisrael was that they themselves would play the role of a Temple: "And I will dwell within them." The labors of the nation during weekdays can be compared to the work on the Tabernacle, and the holy service on Shabbat is the secret of the building of the Tabernacle.

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That is what is called the labor of the Tabernacle – making a Tabernacle for the Creator of the entire universe using all thirty-nine types of secular labor. [That is, when work is done during weekdays and all thirty-nine types of labor that are forbidden on Shabbat are performed, a Tabernacle is made for G-d by installing Divine sanctity throughout the world – R.O.] That is, this includes earthly elements that are necessary for living, for it would be impossible for every Jew to spend all of his time learning Torah. As is written, 'Many people acted in the manner of Rabban Shimon Bar Yochai, and they failed' [Berachot 35]. [They tried not to do any work but only to learn Torah – O.S.] However, every person who performs his labors faithfully and honestly, with the intention of serving G-d and clinging to Him, is thereby participating in the construction of the Temple.

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I have written before that the Rebbe of Husiatyn draws his entire fund of knowledge from Chassidic writings. But in this case he spreads out before us the principles of "Torah and Labor" which was the motto of religious Zionism as it crystalized in Eastern Europe. He does not mention or even hint at the writings of the originators of these ideas, such as Rabbi Reiness, Rabbi Alkai, or Shachal (Shmuel Chaim Lando).

Does modern religious Zionism continue on an ideal path of "Torah and Labor" which we see here is founded at least in part in Chassidic roots? Perhaps we should strive for both us and for various modern Chassidic sects to follow this path, which sanctifies weekday labor in order to impart the holiness of the Tabernacle to all segments of our lives.

THE ROOTS OF FAITH – Basic Tenets of Jewish Philosophy

Faith in the Sages

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

One of the forty-eight traits by which the Torah is acquired is "faith in the sages" (Avot 86:6). This is usually taken to mean that one of our basic elements of faith is that the Jewish sages do not make mistakes. But it is eminently clear that this interpretation cannot be right, for there is no person on earth who is completely immune from making a mistake. In fact, we have seen many cases where the sages admitted their mistakes. Who is greater than Moshe himself, about whom it is written, "And Moshe heard, and it was good in his eyes" [Vayikra 10:20]? Rashi explains, "He was not ashamed to admit that he had not heard this before." The following also appears in the responsa literature: "The praise of the rabbis is that they admit their mistakes." That is, the fact that the wise men admit that they were wrong is to their credit.

The very existence of the tractate of Horayot, which contains a list of mistaken rulings by the high courts, also shows that errors occur. In fact, the Torah has forbidden us to follow a halachic ruling if we are absolutely certain that the court has made a mistake. "We might think that if they tell you that right is left and that left is right that you should follow them. However, it is written, 'to go to the right and to the left.' They should tell you that the right is the right and the left is the left." [Yerushalmi Horayot 1:1]. And when the Sifri instructs us to follow "even though they show you what you have seen in your eyes is right and tell you it is left," this is referring only to matters of personal discretion.

This position, the feeling that our wise men are never wrong, is dangerous from two points of view. One aspect is simple, and that is that when a person encounters a mistake made by a wise man his entire spiritual world might crumble before his eyes. The second aspect

is deeper, in that it attributes to a created entity a characteristic which is only true in reference to the Creator Himself. This is the meaning of what the Rambam wrote: “Only He is the truth” [Hilchot Yesodei HaTorah 1:4].

What, then, is the wondrous trait of faith in the sages which is needed in order to gain possession of the Torah? Rabbi Yehuda Ashkenazi explains that it means to believe that the sages are wise. That is, their words are not pronounced in a chance or haphazard way. Therefore, if one thinks that it is necessary to reject their words, the idea that is being rejected must be scrutinized in great depth, because we can be sure that it is based on great wisdom and can teach us a great lesson. If the wise men taught us that “there is nothing that does not have its proper place” [Avot 4:3], this must certainly be applied to the words of the sages themselves.

While we commonly see a contradiction between admiration and free criticism, our sages have taught us that one of these traits enables the other one. They said, “Let your house be a meeting place for wise men, and you should roll around in the dust of their feet” [Avot 1:4]. Here is how this was interpreted by Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin: “the word ‘lehitavek’ is related to the word for a struggle. No student should ever blindly accept the words of his rabbi if he has questions about his approach, and there are even times when the student is right and not the rabbi. But while we have permission to bring evidence to prove our position, we must still maintain an attitude of humility – to be ‘in the dust of their feet.’”

Nature and the Torah Portion

Purple Cloth (*Argaman*)

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

“And every man who had blue, purple (*argaman*), scarlet, fine linen, goat hair, red skins of rams, and goat skins – brought them.” [Shemot 35:23].

“Argaman” is a color in the violet-red range. In modern Hebrew, it is also used as a synonym for “red,” especially of a deep or strong color. In the scriptures and in the literature of the sages, *argaman* refers to wool dyed with this color or to a cloth made from this wool. Rashi explains in the Gemorra, “‘A stripe of Argaman’ – this is wool combed out in the shape of a stripe with the color of argaman. And it is a common material.” [Bava Metzia 21a].

It is clear that *argaman* refers specifically to wool from the fact that it is prohibited to put it on linen garments. “It is prohibited to tie cords of argaman around a loose garment since before they are tied the cords are stitched onto the garment” [Mishna Kelayim 9:9]. The Rivmatz comments: “Cords of argaman refer to cords made of wool. As is also said, one is not allowed to tie cords of woolen argaman if a person is wearing linen.”

An Animal Dye

The dye was manufactured in a complicated process which was evidently kept as a trade secret, from mucus secreted by the hypobranchial gland of snails, specifically from the family Muricidae (*murex*). *Argaman* is often considered as being closely related to the blue color “techelet,” and indeed they are both very similar in their importance, their source, and the process in which they are used as dyes. Based on historical sources and archeological evidence, we can assume that these two dyes derived from the *murex* snails were the main animal-based dyes available in the Mediterranean area in ancient times.

Argaman is mentioned 38 times in the Tanach as a cloth or as a raw material for precious cloth. Of these instances, 29 are related to the Tabernacle and its utensils, and to the Temple. As opposed to *techelet*, which appears very frequently in the literature of the sages – because of the day-to-day use of this material for the mitzva of tzitzit, which remained relevant even after the destruction of the Temple – *argaman* does not appear as often.

The most ancient sources which we have that may be useful for solving the enigma of the identity of *argaman* are ancient translations. In Greek and Latin *argaman* is called “*purpura*.” In Aramaic it is “*arguna*” and in Arabic it is called “*arju’an*.” Only from later sources can we conclude that all of these refer to the same material, and that *purpura* is a dye produced from

sea snails. This color can be “purpura red” or “purpura blue.” Evidently the dye for argaman was produced from two sea snails: spiny dye-murex (*Murex brandaris*) and red-mouth rock shell (*Stramonitahaemastoma*), while techelet was produced from banded dye-murex (*Murex trunculus*).

Royal Garments

The passage quoted above from Bava Metzianotes that argaman is “important,” which evidently refers to the fact that it is expensive. “Come and hear: Stripes of argaman belong to the finder. Why is this so? Isn’t it true that he is not aware that they fell? Here too because of the importance he checks for them all the time.” [Bava Metzia 21b]. This declaration in the Talmud is compatible with many other sources among Yisrael and the other nations. Many verses in the Bible indicate that argaman was a prestigious raw material. Argaman, together with other precious raw materials – such as gold and silver – was part of the assets of kings, and it signified their wealth. About Tzur it is written, “Linen with embroidery from Egypt was what you spread forth for your banner; techelet and argaman from the islands of Elisha was your cover.” [Yechezkel 27:7]. Argaman was one of the elements used to describe the great wealth of King Achashverosh: “There were white, green, and techelet hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and argaman, on silver rings and marble pillars...” [Esther 1:6].

Argaman is mentioned in the literature of the sages in halachic contexts that are related to the fact that it was expensive. In the Mishna we see that argaman is a cloth that is protected in special ways: “A man who touches... the double thread that is drawn over argaman... becomes unclean.” [Keilim 21:1]. This is explained as follows: “The double thread – A piece of cloth that is sown onto argaman so that it will not become dirty is considered attached to the garment.”

In another halacha, argaman is mentioned together with “shani,” scarlet cloth, as an expensive item: “... a swatch three by three fingers wide which has been thrown into the garbage is pure, but if it is retrieved it becomes impure. In every case throwing cloth away makes it pure and retrieving it makes it impure except for argaman or crimson...” [Keilim 27:12]. Rambam comments: “Crimson’ – Silk colored crimson. Since argaman and silk cloth are very expensive, a swatch three by three fingers wide is so important that it can become impure even if it is thrown away.”

With respect to the minimum amount to be liable for carrying outside on Shabbat, we are taught: “... One who takes out the smallest amount of something with a bad odor, any amount of good oil, any amount of argaman...” [Shabbat 90a]. Rashi writes, “‘Argaman’ – The dye which is used to treat cloth, and the reason for this rule was not given. It seems to me that the dye can also be smelled.” This is not clear, since argaman has a bad smell, and therefore it is included in the category of “a bad odor.” For this reason industrial manufacture of techelet and argaman was situated far away from population centers or to the east (because of the prevailing winds). According to our line of reasoning, perhaps the fact that “the smallest amount” of argaman may not be carried was because of its great value.

Argaman was so precious that in the Roman Era it was considered a symbol of royalty, and anybody not connected to royal circles was forbidden to wear it or use it in commercial transactions.

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Straight Talk

Why is it So Hard to Pray?

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

The congregation had already started to sing “Lecha Dodi” on Friday night when the door of the synagogue burst open and he stood there. He was a boy of about 15, wearing a colored striped shirt and flaunting a head of hair that had not seen a barber in a very long time.

He passed by the shelves lined with siddurim without taking any one of them into his hands, and continued at a steady pace to the middle row of seats. He sat down heavily next to his father, who hastily handed him a hefty pile of colorful Shabbat bulletins, while making sure to keep a few for himself. "I managed to pick up all the bulletins that you like."

The Root of the Problem

The growing tide of Shabbat bulletins that washes through our synagogues and serves for many of the people as an interesting occupation and a good way to while away the time spent in the synagogue is not the problem. It is merely a **symptom** of the problem. The root of the problem is that the alternative – that is, to sit and pray – simply **does not interest the people**. Many youths and adults find it very hard to get close to the prayers, to have the proper intentions, and to see this as a focus of our service to G-d and a source for enhanced spirituality.

This was also true two thousand years ago, and it is not in vain that the sages called prayer "labor of the heart" – a matter which requires **labor** in order to accomplish the goal. However, the matter has gained greatly in importance today, in a generation which is so strongly attached to the world of media and of social networks that prayer seems to it to be no more than a bland and boring shadow. One of the greatest difficulties that parents and educators encounter with respect to the children is this subject of prayers. In order to cope with the problems in a proper way, it is important to realize that the youths are not trying to fool us. Prayer is indeed a very challenging and difficult matter, and if we can manage to define the main focus of the difficulty, perhaps this will give us an opening to the way to cope. Perhaps we can even discover some valuable gifts that proper prayer can give us but which usually remain hidden beneath the known difficulties.

The Pitfalls along the Way (A Partial List)

(1) So, what's new? – We live in a generation that is addicted to innovation and is full of record-holding channel-hoppers. To repeat the same words three times a day, hundreds of times a year, is something that we find hard to do.

(2) Who wrote these words? – Prayer is a personal and intimate contact between a person and his G-d. But instead of being able to speak freely and authentically, from the heart, we are instructed from the outside to recite words and appeals which were composed thousands of years ago. This makes for obvious difficulties.

(3) Plural or singular? – Large sections of the prayers are in the plural, and this makes it difficult for one who wants to express and represent his or her personal needs. "Who am I, a representative of Yisrael in the United Nations? I have enough trouble managing for myself..."

(4) "Excuse me, just what does this mean?" – It is true that the words of the prayers are in Hebrew, but many of the sentences do not make sense to us, even those of us whose native tongue is Hebrew. Here is a verse from the daily prayer for Wednesday: "Shall the seat of iniquity, which frames mischief by law, have fellowship with you?" [Tehillim 94:20]. Can somebody explain this to me?

(5) "Who cares about all this, anyway?" – Much of the prayers involve general and future subjects (ingathering of the exiles, Mashiach, and so on), which are far removed from the burning needs of most of the people (such as problems of health, money, studies, and so on). It is hard for people to make requests about matters that don't seem directly relevant to them here and now.

(6) "Talk to the wall..." – It is not easy to keep on speaking when you don't see any sign of a response from the object of your speech. When we are in a phone conversation and there is a pause when the other side is quiet for too long, we stop and reach out: "Hey, are you still there?" This is just to make sure that the connection wasn't cut off. In prayer we do all the talking, without any feedback from the other side, which would help us make sure that somebody is listening after all.

(7) Problems of faith – Many weighty questions pertaining to faith can be heard from young people and adults with respect to prayer. How does it work, anyway? Do our prayers somehow modify the will of G-d? Can it really be that He made a decree about us and then,

because we applied “pressure” or “got on His nerves” He changed His mind and cancelled the decree? And what about all the respectful titles of G-d that fill the prayers, isn't that a bit too much flattery? And what about all those heart-felt prayers that came out of us spontaneously in the past that we feel the Holy One, Blessed be He, rejected at the time, without any positive result at all?

(8) A high threshold of stimulation – We live in a generation which is used to very strong emotions. Our movies are filled with action and drama, we watch amazing and exciting musical video clips. If we just sit in front of a book with straight lines and printed words, we feel bored and insulted.

(9) Distractions – In this world of multi-texting, when we are always glued to a cellular phone that vibrates, it is very hard to concentrate on one thing and to silence all the noise and distractions that attack us all the time.

(10) The internet culture – In the microwave world, where 30 seconds is enough to achieve so much, we find it hard to make an investment in things that require an effort. But quality prayer demands of us an investment in energy and in diligence.

(11) “Wow, I haven't seen you in a long time!” – Quite often, the time for prayer gives us an opportunity to renew old relationships after a very long time when we have not met our friends. This is true for the morning prayers of students who have not seen each other since yesterday, and even more so for Friday night prayers of adults who have not seen each other for a whole week. The temptation to share our feelings is great indeed.

Problems and Treasures

The long list above has not been presented in order to make our prayers even harder to do than they were before. Rather, its purpose is to get a better understanding of the challenges which we encounter. We should note, however, that almost every one of the above items can open up a pathway that leads to a great gift, a habit, or an important spiritual trait that prayer can teach us to appreciate. Can you see what I mean? Can you identify many treasures that lie behind all of the above problems with prayer?



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