

**SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE**

DEBARIM

JULY 25, 2015 9 AB 5775

DEDICATIONS: Refuah Shelemah - Simcha bat Sara and Chana Yochevet Bat Janis

Rabbi Dr Meyer Abittan and Rabbi Dr Chaim Abittan and their families  
Will join us for Shabbat

Friends – We need assistance and a commitment for Friday nights and all evening services this weekend  
Minha & Arbit 7:00 PM -Candle Lighting 8:00 PM

Shabbat

Class with Rav Aharon 8:00 AM – Latest Shema 8:32AM

Shahrit 8:30 AM, Torah 9:45 and Musaf at 10:30

Kiddush celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Mr David Golden – Abal 120 Happy and Healthy  
The Kiddush is also in memory of Ether Golden – Her Yahrzeit is next week  
After Lunch we will have a class and pray Mincha at 1:25 – Amidah not before 1:37  
Return home for Seudah Shelishi

Shabbat Morning Children's Program 10:30 - 11:30 with Jennifer

Ages 2-5 - in the Playroom/

Girls Ages 6-12 - In the Upstairs Library / Treats, Games, Stories, Prayers and Fun!

Children's program at Bach at 5:30PM

The Fast begins at 8:17PM but it is still Shabbat

Shabbat ends at 9:00PM ... Say Baruch HaMavdil Ben Kodesh LeChol

Put on sneakers and clothes (not freshly laundered) and come to Synagogue

Arbit Tisha Be'Ab at 9:20PM

See Halachot for this year on page 3

Sunday (July 26) באב העשת מוי

Shaharit: 8:30 am

Torah Reading with Haftara, Megilat Eicha &amp; Kinot

On Tisha B'Av day, starting at 11:30AM, LEARN TORAH will be hosting a live video broadcast of various  
Rabbanim from the Synagogue of Deal, NJ. This year the schedule is as follows:

11:30 AM - 12:20 PM	Rabbi Shlomo Diamond	12:20 PM - 1:10 PM	Rabbi David Ozeri
1:10 PM - 2:00 PM	Rabbi Meyer Yedid	2:00 PM - 2:45 PM	Rabbi David Ashear
2:45 PM - 3:30 PM	Rabbi Joey Mizrahi	3:30 PM - 4:15 PM	Rabbi Eli Mansour
4:15 PM - 5:00 PM	Rabbi Raymond Beyda	5:00 PM - 5:45 PM	Rabbi Nathan Escava

Minha with Tefilin and Sefer Torah followed by Arvit: 7:30 PM

Fast Ends: 8:46 PM

DAILY MINYAN

Monday, Thursday 6:55, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:00AM

LOOKING FORWARD:

Next Shabbat is Shabbat Nachamu - Saturday August 1<sup>st</sup>

We will be having a Shabbaton with the Carlebach Synagogue

Rabbi Naftali Citron will be with us

We will have a Friday night dinner and a special Motzei Shabbat program

Details to follow

To make a payment or donate on line

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**Daily Minyan Mon – Thurs at 979 Third Avenue,  
 17th Floor, Artistic Frame at 4PM – Please join us!  
 212-289-2100 – Mincha– The most important  
 tefilah of the day –Give us 11 minutes and we'll  
 give you the World To Come!**

## Editors Notes

### G-d Doesn't Go To Ibiza

I have to admit that I stopped in my tracks when I first heard a brilliant young woman make the statement. It encapsulated so much of what has become a growing disassociation we have with the period between the 17 of Tamuz and the 9 of Ab where we are to focus more clearly on the loss of the Temple in Jerusalem and recognize that we, as our fathers before us bear responsibility for not seeing it rebuilt in our lifetimes.

We can replace Ibiza with Monaco, Portofino, Capri, Porto Cervo or Saint Tropez. And in announcing the lack of a Heavenly presence, the statement refers to the growing practice of vacationing during the three weeks at one of the Mediterranean Hot spots. During much of the season from June through September, we are blessed with weddings, engagement parties, bar mitzahs and other celebrations five nights a week from Sunday through Thursday. Throw in the Friday afternoon Mazaa parties and Shabbat afternoon poolside get togethers ( both subjects worthy of their own articles) and we've got seven days a week. So what does one do when the music stops at home for the three weeks? Hop a plane to the Riviera where the music doesn't stop. It's the place without the three weeks.

But lest we think this desire to avoid the period is limited to those planning to jet away for a week or two. Nope, its right here in our own back yard.

How shocking to read in Yeshiva World News a reprint of an article by Rabbi Yair Hoffman for the Five Towns Jewish Times which begins: "It is one of the fanciest kosher fleishig ( that's meat for us non Yiddish speakers) restaurants in Manhattan. Numerous movers and shakers eat at " xyz " – for both lunch and dinner. And the email that went out recently reads as follows:

"Your family at "XYZ restaurant in Manhattan" is pleased to inform our guests that we will host a Siyum/ Seudat Mitzvah each evening during the Nine Days, July 19th through the 23rd. The Siyum will take place at 6:15pm and Hors D'oeuvres from the Seudat

Mitzvah will be available until 10:30pm. For reservations please call... We would like to thank all of the Rabbis who coordinated and aided us in these important and cherished events." (A siyum (Hebrew: סיום) ("completion") means the completion of any unit of Torah study, or book of the Mishnah or Talmud in Judaism. A siyum is usually followed by a celebratory meal, or seudat mitzvah, a meal in honor of a mitzvah, or commandment. Siyum also refers to the celebration.)

We give up meat and wine for a week in commemorating the loss of the Mikdash, yet even that is too much for some. It is true that Chazon Ovadia in explaining the laws of fasts writes that one may eat meat at a meal held for a siyum and this includes the friends and family invited to the meal, But does a person coming to a restaurant and paying for his own meal at his own table and having no relationship whatsoever with the person making the siyum fit under the heading friends and family? And if given the opportunity at any other time of the year, would he attend this person's siyum and would he eat meat there?

During the nine days, one shouldn't buy new clothes, furniture, appliances, a car or other items that would bring pleasure. That is unless there is a special sale. In the Jewish community the nine days usually coincide with those special sales so that one can buy.

These are simply symptoms of an attitude where we simply don't realize what we lost and find it difficult to mourn in a time where society emphasizes our freedoms. I have heard people say, "So we don't have a Temple, don't we have the wall and our Synagogues and Torah centers throughout the world"?

Additionally and especially in the Sephardic community we have emphasized that we return to our customs. This call has unintentionally also resulted in a desensitizing of the mourning aspect. For example a little child I recall being warned that we do not swim in the ocean at Bradley Beach for the three weeks or at least for the nine days. This brought a sense of recognition of the time. Now I have repeated again and again that our custom is really only to avoid swimming during the week in which Tisha BeAv falls (Shevua SheChal Bo), which this year is nullified – so swim to your hearts delight. The same is true for haircuts. As a child, we stopped taking haircuts for three weeks, again adding some recognition of the period, but the number one inquiry for the last few weeks has been about haircuts and I have responded that based on Shulchan Aruch and Yalkut Yosef, this year we can take a haircut all the way through to the

Friday before. We can say the same for hot showers, freshly laundered clothes and other Shevua SheChal Bo customs.

Perhaps our rabbis of the last generation allowed us to take on the extra stringencies, not in falling prey to our superstitions of it being a time of "bad luck", but rather in recognizing the desensitizing environment of America. No we don't need to add laws and customs, but we do need to find ways to make us aware that this period is different and we need to contemplate it and read about it and feel it. It is interesting that among Syrian related communities, although weddings are only forbidden during the nine days, this is the one place we continue to follow Ashkenazi Custom. Perhaps it shouldn't be the only place.

And I must admit I am as guilty as the rest. It's hard to feel the loss. ( SEE RABBI MANSOUR below - Appreciating What We Lost) It's hard to even imagine what we are missing without stopping and reading and contemplating. What was it like to have a prophet? What was it like to see miracles on a daily basis? What was it like before Hashem hid behind the curtain or maybe it's us who hid from Him? What would it be like to really connect with G-d? Those are the questions we should be asking and the answers we should be searching for during these three weeks and especially on Sunday when we commemorate our most painstaking national loss. Loss is something we hate to face, but sometimes we are supposed to face it instead of racing away to Ibiza.

Shabbat Shalom and In the merit of mourning properly over Jerusalem, may we be rewarded to rejoice in its rebuilding!

Rabbi David Bibi

PS ... I left the name of the restaurant out as I heard following the bad publicity this offer created they rescinded the offer. Unfortunately I can't say the same for the isle of Ibiza where the party goes on.

PSS ... So interesting that this year Tisha Be'Av falls on Shabbat so we really can experience what it will mean in a future world when the 9th of Av is transformed from a day of sadness to one of joy and perhaps we can celebrate and connect so strongly this Shabbat that G-d wont have the heart to allow us into the mourning period that falls. To the rebuilding of Zion, Jerusalem and the Temple speedily in our days.

**When the 9th of Ab falls on Shabbat  
Halakha of the day  
<halakhaoftheday@gmail.com>**

**This year, 2015, the 9th of the month of Ab will fall on Shabbat. When that happens our Rabbis instructed to postpone the fast for the next day, Sunday, because it is forbidden to mourn or express any sign of sadness during shabbat. So, this year Tish'a beAb will begin Saturday July 25th at night, once Shabbat ends.**

**Some things are different when Tish'a beAb is commemorated Saturday night/ Sunday**

WEEK OF TISHA BEAB: This year we do not have "the week of Tish'a beAb. Let me explain: the "mood" of mourning gradually grows as we approach the fast day. Among Ashkenazi Jews there are two periods of semi-mourning before Tisha beAb. 1. from the 17th of Tamuz. 2. from the beginning of the month of Ab. For Sephardic Jews there is also (or alternatively) a period called: the week of Tish'a beAb. "The week of Tisha beAb" refers to the weekdays before the day of fast. For example, if Tish'a beAb would begin a Thursday, then "the week of Tish'a beAb" would begin from the previous Sunday. During that week it will be forbidden not only to participate in weddings, celebrations, eating meat, etc. but also, washing our clothing (or used washed clothing), bathing or showering, etc. (For Jews from Damascus, Syria, the restriction of eating meat applies only during the week of Tish'a beAb. Thanks to my friend Rabbi Shelomo Mizrahi, from Buenos Aires, for this clarification). Now, this year, because Tish'a beAb falls on a Sunday, there is no week of Tish'a beAb, and for sephardic Jews, those restrictions would not apply.

SHABBAT HAZON: Another important point to bear in mind this year, is that on this coming Shabbat, Shabbat Hazon, on Saturday night we will have to change direction from Shabbat, a joyous day, to Tish'a beAb, a day of mourning. In the following lines we will explain how this transition is normally done.

Minha: On this Shabbat, many communities would pray Minha earlier than usual (the earliest time for Minha Gedola is 1:38PM, New York Time, 1:37 in LB) and people would have Se'uda Shelishit at home. No preparations for Tish'a BeAb should be done until Shabbat is over (8:58PM, NYT).

Se'uda Shelishit: because the eve of Tish'a beAb falls on a Shabbat, we will not have a Se'udat haMafseqet, i.e., the last meal that we would usually have before the fast begins, sitting on the floor as

mourners, etc. During this Se'uda Shelishit there are no restrictions in terms of what we can eat (meat, wine, etc) and celebrate. The only limitation is timing: we must finish this Se'uda Shelishit and stop eating before sunset (8.18PM, NYT. 8:17 in LB).

Transition: As we have said, in many communities people would have se'uda shelishit at home. This is done so people can prepare themselves at home and come back for Arbit ready for Tish'a beAb as we will now explain. There is an interlude, a recess between the end of Se'uda Shelishit (8:18PM) and the beginning of Tish'a beAb (8:58PM). During that time we still wear Shabbat clothing and we do nothing in preparation for Tish'a beAb but we do not eat anything. At 8:58PM, NYT, we say "barukh hamabdil ben qodesh lehol" (=Blessed is He, Who established the difference between holy and profane) and thus Shabbat will be over for us.

Beginning of the mourning: After we say Barukh haMabdil we change our leather shoes for sneakers or for other non leather footwear. This will be the first act of mourning in preparation for Tish'a beAb. When we change, for example, our shirt for Tish'a BeAb clothing, we must use a shirt that has been already used – not freshly laundered.

Habdala: We do not recite the Habdala at home, other than the words "Barukh haMabdil ben Qodesh leHol". After we change our footwear and clothing for Tish'a beAb, we should go to the Synagogue. The Synagogues should have Minyan for Arbit later than usual, at least 15-20 minutes after Shabbat is over, so people have time to change their clothing and come or drive from home to the Synagogue. In the Synagogue we will say "bore me-ore haEsh" before reading Meguilat Ekha. We will say the Habdala Sunday night once the fast is over ("haGefen" and "haMabdil").

ALSO: Pregnant and nursing women, who are exempt from fasting on Tisha Be'av this year (5775) since the fast is postponed until Sunday, must likewise recite Havdala on a cup of wine before eating. They must recite the "Boreh Me'orei Ha'esh" blessing on a candle on the night of Tisha Be'av and then recite Havdala on a cup of wine during Tisha Be'av ("haGefen" and "haMabdil").without reciting a blessing on a fragrant object or a candle.

## **Can Schumer Finesse His Iran Deal Vote Dilemma?** **Jonathan S. Tobin**

For a politician who normally would do anything for publicity or attention, Senator Chuck Schumer has been mighty quiet the last week. The reason isn't a mystery. The signing of the Iran nuclear deal has put Schumer into a tight spot. As the designated successor to Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, Schumer is obligated not to lend assistance to the effort to stop a pact that is President Obama's signature foreign policy achievement. Yet, at the same time, he is under enormous pressure to make good on his past promises to oppose a weak Iran deal and to stand up in defense of the State of Israel, whose security is compromised by the administration's appeasement policy. Schumer has spent his entire political career positioning himself as an outspoken supporter of Israel as well as a fearsome partisan Democrat. Under most circumstances, that needn't be a contradiction in terms, but with President Obama lobbying Congress hard to back his deal, they are now. For once, Schumer must choose. But the question is not only what choice will he make but also whether his attempts to keep his feet firmly planted in both the pro-Israel camp and that of the administration can possibly succeed.

Though the administration is seeking with the assistance of left-wing groups to promote the notion that the Iran deal is good for Israel that flimsy argument is deceiving no one. The pact grants Western approval for Iran's status as a nuclear threshold state enriches it via the collapse of sanctions and provides few safeguards (a 24-day warning period for inspections makes promises about monitoring cheating a joke) against its eventual acquisition of a nuclear weapon once the deal expires. The deal will not only enable Iran to give more support for Hamas and Hezbollah terrorists but will assist Tehran's goal of regional hegemony. It is one thing for those whose support for Israel has always been secondary to their left-wing ideology or pro-Obama partisanship (such as the J Street lobby or the National Jewish Democratic Council) to endorse this brazen act of appeasement. For Schumer, a man who has staked his career on being the shomer (Hebrew for guardian) of Israel's security in Congress, it would be a stunning betrayal that he would never live down.

As I wrote back in April, Schumer's stance on the Iran deal won't be the whole story. Even if he chooses to vote in favor of a resolution that seeks to nullify the pact, he may also work behind the scenes to ensure that at least 34 Democrats back the president so as to ensure that an Obama veto won't be overridden.

Such vote trading is routine in Congress and allows House members and senators to tell constituents that they voted one way when they are really conspiring to help those who are working against that goal. But whether he finesses this vote in that manner or not, it would be mistaken to think that there won't be serious political consequences for Schumer no matter how he votes.

It may be that the administration will give Schumer a pass for voting against the deal provided that he ensures that other Democrats give the president the votes he needs. But Schumer must also know that his succession as minority leader may be threatened by a vote against Obama. The Senate may be the world's most exclusive club, but it is entirely possible that his vote will be reason enough for some liberal colleague to challenge him. Any senator that does so will be counting on the active support of the party's increasingly ascendant left wing that regards Schumer as an ally of Wall Street.

On the other hand, the cost of doing Obama's bidding could be even higher for Schumer. New York has become a virtual one-party state and Schumer faced only token opposition from Republicans while gaining re-election in 2004 and 2010. But if he were to vote for the Iran deal, it would virtually guarantee that his 2016 re-election race would become very interesting if not competitive. While there is no obvious formidable challenger on the horizon, Schumer knows that the GOP wouldn't have much difficulty finding one and that such a person would have no trouble raising all the money needed for a race that would become a referendum of Schumer's possible betrayal of Israel on the Iran nuclear threat.

The first shot fired over his bow comes today in the form of what pro-Israel activists hope will be a massive demonstration in New York's Times Square. Billed as a "Stop Iran Now" rally, the purpose will be to ensure that Congress knows that the overwhelming majority of the pro-Israel community is united behind the effort to oppose the deal.

If Schumer, and other pro-Israel Democrats stick with Obama they will be allying themselves with J Street over AIPAC, a strategic decision that would be the moral equivalent of choosing a water pistol to use in a fight with a tank when it comes to future electoral support.

But the real problem for Schumer and other Democrats goes beyond the danger of alienating pro-Israel donors. Only those so blinded by their support for Obama fail to see that the Iran deal vote is one of those rare Congressional decisions that present a clear moral choice. If Schumer sticks with Obama, that may secure his future as the Democrats' Senate leader. But if will come at the cost of his reputation as a defender of Israel and make his seat a lot less safe than it might otherwise be.

### Unraveling the Iran Nuclear Deal on "Day One" Elliott Abrams - July 2015

Two of the Republican candidates for president, Gov. Scott Walker and Gov. Jeb Bush, are in an argument over how the United States can best get out of the Obama nuclear agreement. This argument has now become the subject of press comment too: for example, by Steve Hayes in an article entitled "Bush-Walker Dispute Catches Fire Over Iran Nuclear Deal" in *The Weekly Standard*, and by CFR's own Max Boot in a Commentary blog post entitled "Can the Iran Deal be Reversed on Day One?"

In my view the argument is not much ado about nothing, because both men are making strong and valid observations. They are both right—just right about different aspects of the problem opponents of the Iran deal face.

The argument began when Gov. Walker said "We need to terminate the bad deal with Iran on the very first day in office." Bush then commented that "At 12:01 on January, whatever it is, 19th [2017], I will not probably have a confirmed secretary of state; I will not have a confirmed national security team in place; I will not have consulted with our allies. I will not have had the intelligence briefings to have made a decision. If you're running for president, I think it's important to be mature and thoughtful about this." Both men have expanded on their views. Gov. Bush stated his opinion this way to Hayes:

I have repeatedly said is a terrible deal. Congress should reject it and it would be best to do so before Iran is given more than \$100 billion in sanctions relief that they can use to further destabilize the region. Should it be upheld, as President I would begin immediately to responsibly get us out of this deal, with a comprehensive strategy that is responsive to the conditions at the time and confronts Iran's continued pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability, its support for terrorism and instability, its ballistic missile proliferation, and its horrific human rights record. Such a strategy will require a new national security team that is committed to rebuilding our defenses and restoring our alliances, starting with our relationship with Israel. It will require sustained diplomatic efforts to put significant financial, diplomatic, and military pressure on Iran to change its behavior. And because of the massive sanctions relief provided by this terrible deal, the impact of unilateral U.S. sanctions will be limited and it will be important to work with our allies to reimpose multilateral sanctions and pressure.

Walker's view was this:

I believe that a president shouldn't wait to act until they put a cabinet together or an extended period of time. I believe they should be prepared to act on the very first day they take office. It's very possible – God

forbid, but it's very possible – that the next president could be called to take aggressive actions, including military action, on the first day in office. And I don't want a president who is not prepared to act on day one. So, as far as me, as far as my position, I'm going to be prepared to be president on day one. Bush's argument is right in the sense that unraveling the agreement after 18 months, and against possible opposition from the British, French, and Germans (and other allies), will be complicated politically. If we intend to reimpose sanctions, we will want to let them know this and we will hope to get them on board (or at least mute their opposition). The new president will want to think about possible Iranian responses and how to blunt them as well. And Bush is right in saying that we need a comprehensive Iran strategy—something the Obama administration has lacked. Reversing the JCPOA is only part of that, and blunting Iran's terror and aggression in the region are critical.

Some of the work needed can begin during the transition, which now starts after the nominating conventions—not, as was the case until 2012, after Election Day. Certainly, the President-Elect and Vice President-Elect can get full intelligence briefings, and these can be extended to the secretary of state-designate, national security adviser-designate, chief of staff-designate, and a few other top officials. But it would be wrong to conduct an independent foreign policy during the transition. During the first part of it, in September and October, the candidate will only be a candidate—not President-Elect. And even when President-Elect, it's wrong to act as if you're president and start conducting your own foreign policy. Moreover, on "Day One" it is correct that the government will be manned by Obama holdovers in many key posts. The new secretary of state will just be arriving in his or her office on January 20th, and the assistant secretaries who must carry out the new policy will not usually be confirmed for weeks or months. (In 1981, I was confirmed as an assistant secretary of state in the new Reagan administration in mid-April. This was typical.) The National Security Council team can be selected during the transition and can be in place on January 21st, but will they have mastered their new responsibilities? Their own teams will consist almost entirely of Obama holdovers, likely for weeks or months. Because presidential records leave with the president, NSC file cabinets will be empty and it will be take time to figure out exactly who said what to whom when in the Obama years about Iran and the JCPOA. Moreover, won't we want to talk with the Israelis and Arabs about all of this?

So Bush is right as a matter of governance. Gov. Walker is right in a different way: about international politics and psychology. Max Boot explained this well

in his Commentary blog. It's critical to send the strongest possible message that the JCPOA will not be a ten-year deal but an 18-month deal, because the United States will turn away from it under a Republican president. That message must come through loud and clear. European and other investors will start making calculations soon about how they will act next year, when sanctions are removed. Opponents of the deal want them to go slowly, figuring that they may be better off to wait until November, 2017 to see who is elected president. It's true that the JCPOA, in one of the provisions most favorable and beneficial to Iran, grandfathers in contracts signed while the deal is in effect. But the reimposition of U.S. sanctions of various kinds can become very expensive for banks and companies, and the idea would be to tell them now that the United States will investigate and prosecute violations vigorously.

More generally, the goal is to affect everyone's behavior: Iran, the Arabs and Israelis, investors and oil purchasers, and on and on. Here's one example: switching to Iran as an oil supplier may seem less attractive if you're not sure how easy it will be to purchase and ship the oil after January, 2017. But this is about more than sanctions: the goal is also to avoid defeatism by our friends in the Middle East. The danger is wide adoption of the view that Iran is the rising regional power now, the United States sees it as a partner, and countries had better just adapt. Gov. Walker is emphasizing the importance of sending a crystal-clear one-line message, that the deal and the policy it represents are dead if he is president.

In my view, both men are right—about the JCPOA, the difficulty of unraveling it, and the need both to do so and to say clearly now that we will do so. Because they are political opponents today, the differences between them are being stressed—and there are differences in emphasis, though also of style. But both Gov. Bush's message and Gov. Walker's carry serious points that were worth making.

## Summary of The Weekly Torah Reading

Sefer Devarim takes place over the course of 36 days where Benei Israel is encamped outside Erets Israel awaiting to enter the land. The general theme of the Sefer is that Moshe is rebuking Benei Israel before his death but the Sefer seemingly can be divided into 3 parts. The first three parshiot (Devarim, Va'etchanan, Ekev) involve Moshe rebuking Benei Israel reminding them of all the sins they did in the Midbar (and warning them not to stray once they get into the land of Israel). The next 3 parshiot (Re'eh, Shoftim, Ki Teseh) deal with Mitzvot. The mitzvot are largely related to mitzvot Benei Israel will need in the land of Israel (i.e., mitzvot related to the land, to establishing a society and related to relationships between people). The last 5 parshiot deal with Moshe saying goodbye before his death. Ki Tavo and Nitsavim generally deal with Benei Israel renewing their covenant with Hashem (seemingly to strengthen our commitment to Hashem considering Moshe will no longer be with them) and in Va'yelech, Ha'azinu, and Ve'zoat Ha'beracha, respectively, Moshe says goodbye, gives Benei Israel a prophecy of what will be in the future and blesses Benei Israel. The Sefer sadly ends with the death of Moshe. The books of Neviim continues on to tell the story of Benei Israel's journey in conquering the land of Israel under the leadership of Yehoshua.

### Devarim- Moshe rebukes Benei Israel recounting the sin of the spies and their stay in the midbar as a result

- 1- Moshe begins to indirectly rebuke Benei Israel before his death recounting the various places where Benei Israel sinned
- 2- Moshe recounts the appointing of judges and how they left Sinai poised to enter Israel
- 3- Moshe recounts the sin of the spies
- 4- Moshe recounts how they were forced to turn back into the midbar as a result of this sin
- 5- Moshe recounts when, in the 40th yr, Hashem told them to turn northward passing Seir and Moav towards the land of Sichon as they stopped circling and began back on their path towards Israel.
- 6- Moshe recounts how they conquered the lands of Sichon and Og on the way to Israel. And how Reuben, Gad and part of Menashe inherited this land.
- 7- Moshe recounts how he commanded Reuben and Gad to come conquer the land of Israel.

### EXCERPTS FROM THE JERSEY SHORE TORAH BULLETIN

**“How has the faithful city become a zonah? It was formerly filled with justice, righteousness would**

lodge in it, but now murderers...your princes are wayward.” (Yeshayahu 1:21-23 – Haftarah of Shabbat Hazon)

The prophet laments, “How did it happen that Yerushalayim has fallen so badly?” The Ben Ish Hai gives a mashal (parable). Two business partners appeared before a judge during wartime. The first litigant had acquired weapons to sell, while the partner had found buyers to purchase the weapons. Each claimed that he should receive a larger portion of the profits, because his actions were more necessary for the sale.

The judge ruled that he, the judge, should receive the bulk of the profits, reasoning to the shocked litigants that the Mishnah in Pirkei Abot (5:11) states that the sword (warfare) comes to the world because of perversion of justice. “If it weren't for my deceitfulness,” he said, “there wouldn't be a war in the first place, and you wouldn't be able to sell any weapons.”

The prophet laments that “your princes are all wayward” and that is the cause of the current warfare and suffering.

A Jew must always strive to live with integrity and honesty. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

### RABBI ELI MANSOUR

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[MishnaBerura.com](http://MishnaBerura.com), [LearnTorah.com](http://LearnTorah.com)

### Appreciating What We Lost

The Arizal (Rav Yishak Luria of Safed, 1534-1572) taught that all the troubles we experience are due to the destruction of the Bet Ha'mikdash and our exile. That catastrophic event is the source of all our problems. The Mikdash served as a protective force that shielded us from harm, and thus its loss is the cause of all our problems.

This itself would be sufficient reason for us to cry over and mourn the Temple's destruction. All the suffering and anguish which Jews are experiencing are a direct result of this tragedy, and we continue to feel its effects each and every day.

But there is also another reason for us to cry and mourn.

The Midrash relates that when the Romans came to destroy the Temple, they wanted to first loot the building. Before entering, they decided to send in a Jewish traitor named Yosef Meshita to take something from the Bet Ha'mikdash, promising him that he could keep whatever he took. Yosef went

inside the Temple and emerged carrying the beautiful Menorah. The Romans were impressed, but they said that such an elaborate article is not suitable for a private individual. They told him to go choose something else.

"Is it not enough that I angered my Creator once," Yosef said, "that you ask me to go again?" The Romans pressured him to go, but he refused. They threatened to kill him, but he still refused, adamant in his insistence not to anger G-d. Finally, the Romans tortured him to death.

Yosef Meshita, as mentioned, had been a traitor, who turned his back on his nation and joined the Romans. What suddenly changed? Why was he now wary about angering the Almighty? The commentators explain that he experienced the sanctity of the Bet Ha'mikdash. Once he just walked into the building and sensed G-d's presence, he was changed, he was inspired, and he could no longer bring himself to betray his Maker.

The Mikdash was a place of unmistakable spiritual power. Just being at the site filled one with awe and drew him closer to G-d. It was the Almighty's residence, and His residence among us brings blessing. This is another reason why we cry on Tisha B'Ab, lamenting the loss of this spiritual life source. The Vilna Gaon commented that he longed to meet even a simple person who lived at the time of the Mikdash. The simpletons in that age were on a higher level than the Vilna Gaon. They had access to the spiritual power of the Temple, which has since been taken away from us, denying us this precious opportunity for elevation and closeness to G-d.

But the most important reason why we must mourn the Temple's destruction is because of the "pain," as it were, that G-d Himself experiences. The Gemara teaches in Masechet Berachot that several times each night, G-d "roars like a lion" and expresses His anguish over the Temple's destruction. We are not the only ones in exile; G-d in in exile, as well, and in a sense, His exile is worse than ours. Even in exile, we have homes to live in, whereas G-d does not have His home, so-to-speak. We might say that He's been "homeless" for nearly two millennia.

The story is told of a man who came to pray at the Kotel. A certain Sadik saw him praying, and asked him what he was praying for. He explained that he was praying because he needed a new house and did not have the money for it.

"Before praying for your home," the Sadik told him, "pray that G-d should have a home."

The great Sadikim truly empathize with the anguish of the Shechina which has no home. They pray Tikun Hasot each night, weeping bitterly over G-d's exile. They do not worry about their own troubles because they are too pained by G-d's troubles, as it were.

We, of course, are not on this level, and there is certainly nothing wrong with praying for our needs and praying for Mashiah so our problems will be solved. But it cannot end there. We must not think only about ourselves. We must pray for the redemption for G-d's sake, with the realization that G-d's honor is compromised as long as the Temple is in ruins and we are in exile. This exile is not only about us and our troubles; it is also, and primarily, about G-d and His "troubles." We long and pray for the day when the Temple will be restored, when this long period of "homelessness" will end, and all inhabitants of the earth will recognize and give praise to the one, true G-d of the universe.

**RABBI ELI MANSOUR**  
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**Doing Our Job as Parents**

In Parashat Debarim, Moshe Rabbenu recalls the time when he lamented to Beneh Yisrael, "Echa Esa Lebadi Torhachem U'masa'achem Ve'ribechem" – "How can I handle on my own your troubles, your burdens and your fighting?" (1:12).

The Midrash Echa draws an association between this verse and the opening verse of Megilat Echa, Yirmiyahu's lament for the destruction of the Temple: "If they would have heeded, 'Echa Esa Ledadi,' there would not have been 'Echa Yasheba Badad'." Yirmiyahu's lamentations would have been avoided if Beneh Yisrael had heeded Moshe's cry, "Echa Esa Lebadi."

Moshe bemoaned the fact that he alone bore the burden of criticizing and reprimanding the people for their wrongful behavior. The rebuke of a Rabbi and leader can only go so far. His knowledge of the people's spiritual ills is limited, as is his influence. He cannot bear this burden alone. The people will grow and change only if they are looking out for each other and respectfully offering constructive criticism. Indeed, the Gemara in Masechet Shabbat comments that Jerusalem was destroyed because people did not criticize one another. They focused only on themselves and their own behavior, and felt no responsibility for what others were doing. In such a society, there is no possibility of change, because nobody is working to correct other people's wayward



behavior. Thus, since the people ignored the plea of "Echa Esa Lebadi," Jerusalem was destroyed.

Many Halachic authorities have noted that the Misva of "Tocheha" – criticizing and reprimanding fellow Jews for their sinful behavior – no longer applies. This Misva requires not simply criticizing, but criticizing effectively. This means that our motives must be pure and sincere, and we must express the criticism without any tinge of anger, resentment or arrogance, for only in this way can the criticism achieve its desired effect. Criticism expressed angrily or condescendingly will not only fail, but will, in all likelihood, cause the other person to persist in his wrongful conduct. Giving criticism the right way has become very difficult, and most people are ill-equipped to meet this challenge. The question thus arises, how do we fulfill the Misva of "Tocheha"? If this was the mistake that led to the Temple's destruction, then how can we correct this mistake so we can earn the Temple's restoration?

To find an answer, let us turn our attention to the famous story of Kamsa and Bar Kamsa, which the Gemara tells in Masechet Gittin. A man hosting a celebration sent an invitation to his friend Kamsa, but it was mistakenly delivered to Bar Kamsa, a man he despised. When Bar Kamsa arrived at the party, the host threw him out, in full view of the all guests. Enraged, Bar Kamsa traveled to Rome and falsely reported that the Jews were planning a revolt against the empire. This led the emperor to wage war against the Jews, resulting in the destruction of Jerusalem.

The Gemara introduces this story by commenting, "Jerusalem was destroyed because of Kamsa and Bar Kamsa." The implication seems to be that both Kamsa and Bar Kamsa were guilty of bringing about the destruction. The Gemara faults not only Bar Kamsa, who reacted to his humiliation by falsely reporting about his fellow Jews to the hostile government, but also Kamsa – the man who was supposed to receive the invitation. What did he do wrong? Why is he blamed for the tragedy of the fall of Jerusalem?

The answer emerges from a very brief comment made by the Maharsha (Rav Shemuel Eidels, 1555-1631) on this Gemara. He writes that Kamsa and Bar Kamsa were father and son. "Bar Kamsa" means "son of Kamsa," and thus Kamsa was Bar Kamsa's father.

This brief remark sheds light on this entire story. Kamsa is blamed because he raised a child to become Bar Kamsa, to do something as criminal as bring false accusations to the emperor. He did not

train his son to be forgiving and sensible. His son learned to react impulsively to anger and frustration, and this led to Jerusalem's destruction. Kamsa, who failed to properly educate his child, is thus blamed for this calamity.

This is the aspect of "Tocheha" which we are still capable of doing, and still required to do. We may be unable in our day and age to effectively criticize our neighbors and relatives, but we can and must train and educate our children. It is wrong to let our children act as they wish and hope or expect that someday it will change. Of course, there is never any guarantee of success, but it is our job as parents to try to train our children to act properly. This might very well be the Gemara's intent when it says that Jerusalem was destroyed because people did not criticize one another. Parents did not criticize their children. They made no attempt to correct their children's wayward behavior, and thus the Jews ended up with a Bar Kamsa, who caused the Roman government to wage war against the Jews.

The Temple's destruction occurred during the month called "Ab," which means "father." This is a time to remind ourselves of our role as parents, of our responsibility to try and steer our children in the proper direction. The tragedies of Ab happened because we failed to fulfill the role of "Ab," of steering our children towards the right path. Part of our efforts to earn our long-awaited redemption is to reassert our role as parents, and to make a concentrated effort to educate our children effectively, so that the next generation will be worthy of greeting Mashiah and serving Hashem in the rebuilt Bet Ha'mikdash, speedily and in our time, Amen.

### **Rabbi Wein SHABBAT AND TISHA B'AV**

It is an established fact that Shabbat trumps almost every other commandment, custom and practice in Jewish life and law. Allowing circumcision on Shabbat is the exception and not the rule. Whether confronting the fast days or feast days, Shabbat takes precedence. It rules, by rabbinic decree, over shofar and lulav as well as over the mournful commemorations of personal and national grief, loss and tragedy. It seems fair to say that Shabbat is the linchpin of all Jewish observances and of Judaism itself.

Shabbat has two components to it: remembrance and observance. Both of these qualities are demanded of us in order that Shabbat may be experienced in its fullest holiness and beauty. Nevertheless, it is possible to observe the laws of Shabbat without

retaining any of its spirituality or aura of unique holiness.

This is especially true in our time when technology allows us somehow to do almost anything on Shabbat without technically violating any of the proscribed "work" prohibitions of the day. It is also possible, though this is becoming increasingly more difficult in our society, to inject the remembrance of Shabbat in the house even though the observance of Shabbat is not really present any longer.

In most of the Diaspora, especially in North America, tragically, Shabbat is no longer remembered nor observed by millions of Jews. There are enclaves and neighborhoods that are populated by Orthodox Jews where the Shabbat can be felt by the large number of stores that are closed and streets that are empty of traffic.

This is a great achievement which reflects the resilience and renewed strength of Torah observance amongst certain sections of the Jewish people. However, again, this is the exception and not the rule in most Jewish societies. When I was a rabbi in Monsey New York, there was a non-Jew who lived in the midst of our otherwise completely Orthodox Jewish area. I remember that he was once asked why he remained living in such a neighborhood when all of his coreligionists had left. He replied: "I cannot give up the Saturday serenity that I experience here." Even though he was not Jewish, he certainly understood what Judaism was about.

The supremacy of Shabbat over Tisha B'Av is a prime example of the priorities of Jewish values. The Jews built magnificent Temples and were a powerful nation in both First and Second Temple times. But none of this was permanent. It was always subject to destruction and decadence. However, the Jews believed, in the main, that God would not allow their sovereignty or Temples to be taken away from them and they treated them as permanent fixtures to which they were entitled in perpetuity.

But in disregarding the warnings of the prophets of Israel and their message, the Jews doomed these benefits to be temporary and not permanent. Tisha B'Av has come to represent the transient and temporary in Jewish life and history. However, the Shabbat, which has almost single-handedly enabled us as a people to survive all of the vicissitudes and tragedies of exile, remains permanent and dominant in our thoughts and lives. It is no wonder that Shabbat supersedes Tisha B'Av in observance and commemoration. It is axiomatic that the permanent will always dominate the temporary.

Here in Israel, the remembrance of Shabbat, if not quite yet the observance of Shabbat, has somehow become strengthened over the past few decades. In our neighborhood of Rechavia, which has a number of main thoroughfares running through it to get from one end of Jerusalem to the other, automobile traffic on Shabbat is noticeably less than it was more than twenty years ago when I first moved into the neighborhood.

Here in Israel it is almost impossible to forget that Shabbat exists. This is one of the main and perhaps most vital differences between living in Israel and living in the vast regions of the Jewish diaspora. And it is the Shabbat that not only dominates Tisha B'Av but it is also the mechanism that can weaken and destroy Tisha B'av completely.

We all pray for security and permanence in dwelling, for this our third attempt to do so in our ancient homeland. Permanence is achieved by associating with permanence. And it is the Shabbat above all else that can give to us a sense of permanence and serenity, both through its remembrance and observance. This coming Shabbat, which would otherwise be a day of mourning and fasting, we should recall and internalize this concept of the permanent Shabbat and of its supremacy over all else.

#### **Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks Why are there so many Jewish lawyers?**

At the beginning of Devarim, Moses reviews the history of the Israelites' experience in the wilderness, beginning with the appointment of leaders throughout the people, heads of thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. He continues:

And I charged your judges at that time, "Hear the disputes between your people and judge fairly, whether the case is between two Israelites or between an Israelite and a foreigner residing among you. Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of anyone, for judgment belongs to God. Bring me any case too hard for you, and I will hear it. (Deut. 1: 16-17)

Thus at the outset of the book in which he summarized the entire history of Israel and its destiny as a holy people, he already gave priority to the administration of justice: something he would memorably summarize in a later chapter (16: 20) in the words, "Justice, justice, shall you pursue." The words for justice, tzedek and mishpat, are repeated, recurring themes of the book. The root tz-d-k appears eighteen times in Devarim; the root sh-f-t, forty-eight

times.

Justice has seemed, throughout the generations, to lie at the beating heart of Jewish faith. Albert Einstein memorably spoke of “the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, an almost fanatical love of justice, and the desire for personal independence – these are the features of the Jewish tradition which make me thank my lucky stars that I belong to it.” In the course of a television programme I made for the BBC I asked Hazel Cosgrove, the first woman to be appointed as a judge in Scotland, and an active member of the Edinburgh Jewish community, what had led her to choose law as a career, she replied as if it was self-evident, “Because Judaism teaches: Justice, justice shall you pursue.”

One of the great Jewish lawyers of our time, Alan Dershowitz, is about to bring out a book about Abraham,[1] whom he sees as the first Jewish lawyer, “the patriarch of the legal profession: a defense lawyer for the damned who is willing to risk everything, even the wrath of God, in defense of his clients,” the founder not just of monotheism but of a long line of Jewish lawyers. Dershowitz gives a vivid description of Abraham’s prayer on behalf of the people of Sodom (“Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justice?”) as a courtroom drama, with Abraham acting as lawyer for the citizens of the town, and God, as it were, as the accused. This was the forerunner of a great many such episodes in Torah and Tanakh, in which the prophets argued the cause of justice with God and with the people.

In modern times, Jews reached prominence as judges in America: among them Brandeis, Cardozo, and Felix Frankfurter. Ruth Bader Ginsburg was the first Jewish woman to be appointed to the Supreme Court. In Britain, between 1996 and 2008, two of Britain’s three Lord Chief Justices were Jewish: Peter Taylor and Harry Woolf. In Germany in the early 1930s, though Jews were 0.7 per cent of the population, they represented 16.6 per cent of lawyers and judges.

One feature of Tanakh is noteworthy in this context. Throughout the Hebrew Bible some of the most intense encounters between the prophets and God are represented as courtroom dramas. Sometimes, as in the case of Moses, Jeremiah and Habakkuk, the plaintiff is humanity or the Jewish people. In the case of Job it is an individual who has suffered unfairly. The accused is God himself. The story is told by Elie Wiesel of how a case was brought against God by the Jewish prisoners in a concentration camp during the Holocaust.[2] At other times, it is God who brings a case against the children of Israel.

The word the Hebrew Bible uses for these unique dialogues between heaven and earth[3] is *riv*, which means a law-suit, and it derives from the idea that at the heart of the relationship between God and humanity – both in general, and specifically in relation to the Jewish people – is covenant, that is, a binding agreement, a mutual pledge, based on obedience to God’s law on the part of humans, and on God’s promise of loyalty and love on the part of heaven. Thus either side can, as it were, bring the other to court on grounds of failure to fulfill their undertakings.

Three features mark Judaism as a distinctive faith. First is the radical idea that when God reveals himself to humans He does so in the form of law. In the ancient world, God was power. In Judaism, God is order, and order presupposes law. In the natural world of cause and effect, order takes the form of scientific law. But in the human world, where we have freewill, order takes the form of moral law. Hence the name of the Mosaic books: Torah, which means ‘direction, guidance, teaching,’ but above all ‘law.’ The most basic meaning[4] of the most fundamental principle of Judaism, *Torah min ha-Shamayim*, ‘Torah from Heaven,’ is that God, not humans, is the source of binding law.

Second, we are charged with being interpreters of the law. That is our responsibility as heirs and guardians of the Torah *she-be-al peh*, the Oral Tradition. The phrase in which Moses describes the voice the people heard at the revelation at Sinai, *kol gadol velo yasaf*, is understood by the commentators in two seemingly contradictory ways. On the one hand it means ‘the voice that was never heard again’; on the other, it means ‘the voice that did not cease,’ that is, the voice that was ever heard again.[5] There is, though, no contradiction. The voice that was never heard again is the one that represents the Written Torah. The voice that is ever heard again is that of the Oral Torah.

The Written Torah is *min ha-shamayim*, “from Heaven,” but about the Oral Torah the Talmud insists *Lo ba-shamayim hi*, “It is not in heaven.”[6] Hence Judaism is a continuing conversation between the Giver of the law in Heaven and the interpreters of the law on Earth. That is part of what the Talmud means when it says that “Every judge who delivers a true judgment becomes a partner with the Holy One, blessed be He, in the work of creation.”[7]

Third, fundamental to Judaism is education, and fundamental to Jewish education is instruction in Torah, that is, the law. That is what Isaiah meant when he said, “Listen to Me, you who know justice,

the people in whose heart is My law; do not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their insults" (Is. 51: 7). It is what Jeremiah meant when he said, "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31: 33). It is what Josephus meant when he said, nineteen hundred years ago, "Should any one of our nation be asked about our laws, he will repeat them as readily as his own name." The result of our thorough education in our laws from the very dawn of intelligence is that they are, as it were, engraved on our souls. To be a Jewish child is to be, in the British phrase, "learned in the law." We are a nation of constitutional lawyers.

Why? Because Judaism is not just about spirituality. It is not simply a code for the salvation of the soul. It is a set of instructions for the creation of what the late Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein z"l called "societal beatitude." It is about bringing God into the shared spaces of our collective life. That needs law: law that represents justice, honoring all humans alike regardless of colour or class, that judges impartially between rich and poor, powerful and powerless, even in extremis between humanity and God, the law that links God, its Giver, to us, its interpreters, the law that alone allows freedom to coexist with order, so that my freedom is not bought at the cost of yours.

Small wonder, then, that there are so many Jewish lawyers.

[1] Alan Dershowitz, Abraham: the world's first (but certainly not the last) Jewish lawyer, New York, Schocken, 2015.

[2] Elie Wiesel, The Trial of God, Schocken, 1995. The story is believed to be fictional, though on one occasion Wiesel said that it happened and that he was there.

[3] On the subject in general, see Anson Laytner, Arguing with God: A Jewish Tradition, Jason Aronson, 1977.

[4] Not the only meaning, to be sure. See Rambam, Hilchot Teshuvah 3: 5.

[5] Deut. 5: 19, and see Rashi ad loc., who gives both interpretations.

[6] Baba Metzia 59b.

[7] Shabbat 10a.

### **AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL "And I shall bless those that bless you" (12:3)**

From the very beginning Hakadosh Baruch Hu decreed: "va'avarecha mevarachecha" – I will give berachot to all those who bless Am Yisrael. The Talmud (Hullin 49A) states that this promise extends also to the descendants of Abraham Abinu. Therefore, the first thing for us to understand is how great is our duty to bless the Jewish nation. When you come to the last beracha in the Amida, you put all you have into it as you pray for Am Yisrael you

say, "Establish peace, goodness and blessing, life, grace and kindness, and compassion over us and over all of Israel Your nation." This beracha is so important because it is a mitzvah in the Torah to bless Am Yisrael.

When you walk down a Jewish street and every house has a big mezuzah on the door, say a beracha for the people who live in those houses. Say aloud that everyone in those homes should be well for many happy years. They should all have a comfortable livelihood, pleasure and satisfaction from their children, fine matches for their children, only semahot/happy occasions in their houses, nothing but joy.

And Hashem will say: I'm listening, and I shower my blessings on you.

When you gain this attribute of constantly blessing Jews you will:  
receive blessings from Hashem,  
and fulfill a mitzvah from the Torah,  
and emulate Hashem who "Loves His Jewish nation" (Daily Prayers),  
and you will cause yourself to increase your own love of your Jewish brothers which is another misvah of loving your fellow Jew, Ahavat Yisrael.

May we thereby gain the merit to see the rebuilding of The Bet Hamikdash soon.

Daily Prayer: "I hereby accept upon myself the Positive Commandment to: "Love my fellow Jew as I love myself." And I hereby Love every one of the Bene Yisrael as I love myself and all I possess."

Adapted from "The Beginning" by Rabbi Avigdor Miller ZT'L

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