

SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

BEHAALOTECHA

Haftarah: Zechariah 2:14-4:7

JUNE 5-6, 2015 19 SIVAN 5775
Happy Birthday Henriette and Joseph Jemal

SEPHARDIC CONGREGATION OF LONG BEACH ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SCHEDULE

Friday, May 29nd

Friends – We need assistance and a commitment for Friday nights and all evening services this weekend
Minha & Arbit 7:00 PM
Candle Lighting 8:04 PM

Shabbat

Class with Rav Aharon 8:00 AM – Latest Shema 8:16AM
Shahrit 8:30 AM, Torah 9:45 and Musaf at 10:30

Danny and Rina Hirsch are sponsoring this week's kiddush in honor of Bobby and Hindy as well as Tina and Uri for hosting Danny's family the week of their wedding.

Please sponsor a Kiddush or Seudah Shelishi or breakfast in memory or in honor of a loved one. Our weekly Kiddush will be subject to sponsorship. We would love to see the sponsorship board filled.
Dairy Kiddush sponsorship will be \$300, \$400 for Deluxe and \$ 500 for Super Deluxe
Meat Kiddush sponsorship will be \$400, \$600 for Deluxe and \$1000 for Super Deluxe
Seuda Shelishi at \$100 for the class each week. And Sunday and weekday breakfasts are \$100 ea
We have no sponsors going forward through the summer

Shabbat June 6 / Shabbat June 13
Shabbat June 20th – See below
Shabbat June 27th / Shabbat July 4th
Shabbat July 11th / Shabbat July 18th
Shabbat July 25th / Shabbat August 1
Shabbat August 8 / Shabbat August 15th
Shabbat August 22nd / Shabbat August 29th / Shabbat Sept 5th

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 afternoon program with the Bach at Sephardic April and May at 5:00 PM
Ladies Class at the Lembergers at 5:30

Class with Rav Aharon: 6:55 - Minha 7:25 PM - Seudat Shelishit 7:55 PM
Birkat HaMazon 8:40PM Arbit 8:45 PM – Shabbat Ends at 8:59

DAILY MINYAN – Sunday followed by breakfast and class 8:00AM
Monday, Thursday 6:55, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:00AM
Sunday evening – Mincha and Arbit at 7:45 PM

LOOKING FORWARD:

Sisterhood Meeting...Sunday June 14th at 9:30 am

Graduation Kiddush – Shabbat June 20th
Looking for a group of sponsors at \$100 ea
Rebetzin Ida sponsors in honor of Nicole Abittan who will be graduating HALB as valedictorian

To subscribe or to unsubscribe, please reply to
ShabbatShalomNewsletter@gmail.com
 Newsletter archives now at BenaiAsher.Org

**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

We finally received the results of the U.S, Zionist Elections and there is good news and bad news.

The good news is that the World Sephardic Zionist Organization - Ohavei Zion, finally has a seat at the table and will be represented at the next Zionist Congress. We received a little more than half the votes that the ZOA with their well-established organization received and about a sixth of the votes the Religious Zionists received.

The bad news is that even combining our three parties, we are still only about half of what the reform party received which means that although we will have a voice, it won't be much of a voice.

Its shocking to me that after all the synagogue and yeshiva emails from their supporting organizations the Religious Zionists received less than 10,000 votes. And when I was certain that after getting more than 1000 nominations even before the vote began, we would get at least 5000 votes, we only received 1650. We don't understand that and we will be looking into it.

This week we read about the Jewish people's departure from Sinai. We are told they were like school children running from class at the bell even though the teacher may have still been speaking. I kind of understand the teacher's feelings.

With so much money at stake, it's a pity that as a community we didn't support this with more fire and fervor. While the communities schools and rabbi should have been pressing us to vote, they didn't. We were all very apathetic.

But maybe that seat at the table will give us insight and strength to bring us to much greater heights next time. And maybe our four seats will get us something. All we can do is try.

Shabbat Shalom, David Bibi

"We cannot bring them back. We can perpetuate their name."

Project Keshet Lanetzah, Bond for Eternity in English, has for mission to dedicate a Sefer Torah to all of the victims, military (67) or civilians (5) of "Operation Protective Edge" as well as our three teenage boys killed back in June 2014, so as to perpetuate their name.

To this end, we invite all the Jewish communities around the world to join us in commissioning 75 Sifrey Torah which will be dedicated to them.

These Sifrey Torah are destined to synagogues in Israel affiliated with communities and organizations that have expressed a need for them. Many new synagogues and military based are in need of Sifré Torah.

Under the sponsorship of the organization Libi of Israel and its worldwide subsidiaries, Keshet Lanetzah will also dedicate a Sifrey Torah to each of the 8 IDF brigades: Golani, Givati, Nahal, Tsanhanim, Chiryon, Handassa, Bead1, Bislak, involved in this operation. These Sifrey Torah will be donated to the IDF.

A formal enthronement ceremony will be held at the Kotel on Wednesday, August 12th 2015, BH" attended by rabbinical authorities, the bereaved families, IDF officers, dignitaries and government officials

Mr. Laurent Amram, a Montreal business personality, who is very involved in Jewish community life, initiated this project. A committee of Montreal's leading Jewish community figures took it up immediately. Indeed, here we are, only a few weeks after the initial spark was ignited and already many Sifrey Torah have been pledged for, as well as several donations.

The formal launch of this Project was held at Netanya on Thursday, September 11th in the presence of Kvod Harav Rishon Letsion Harabi Itzchak Yossef Shlita. The first letters of three Sifrey Torah were inscribed before several thousand people. The first Sefer Torah was dedicated to the soldier Hadar Goldin z"l thus launching the official beginning of Project Keshet Lanetzah.

The purpose of this project is four fold:

To elevate the neshamot of the fallen by means of this mitzvah

To strengthen our love for our sacred Torah.

To cement Jewish unity all over the world.

To bring a complete Refouah Shelema, healing, to all the wounded of Operation Protective Edge.

This initiative has a strong spiritual significance that will perpetually benefit all Jews. The two Chief Rabbis of Israel, Rabbi David Lau Shlita and Rabbi Itzchak Yossef Shlita, have welcomed this initiative with great emotion. Their blessing will undoubtedly ensure the success of this project. Their letters are posted on our website along with letters from many other world renowned personalities.

Since this ceremony we have 55 Sifré Torah that have been pledged for from all over the world: Montreal, Toronto, Florida, Paris, Los Angeles, New York, Chili, Mexico, Venezuela, Spain, Morocco and Israel.

Everything is moving at such a momentum that we really feel that this project is blessed.

Regular updates will be available on our website in English and French. Hebrew and Spanish translations will follow. Media and press will be involved and closely follow this project. You can also follow us on Facebook by clicking here.

May the merit of this great Mitzvah provide donors and their families' health and serenity and bring comfort and courage to the families of the victims.

May the merit of this great Mitzvah also bring Refouah Shelema to all the wounded of Operation Protective Edge.

For more information and to donate visit: <http://www.bondforeternity.com> , email, info@bondforeternity.com or call 514 344-8022 ext. 270

BLOOMINGBURG, N.Y. (JTA) – This is how you launch a Hasidic shtetl in 21st-century America. By Uriel Heilman

Step 1. Find a place within reasonable distance of Brooklyn where the land is cheap and underdeveloped.

Step 2. Buy as much property as you can in your target area – if possible, without tipping off locals that you plan to turn it into a Hasidic enclave.

Step 3. Ensure the zoning is suited to Hasidic living: densely clustered homes big enough for large families and within walking distance of the community's vital infrastructure.

Step 4. Build the infrastructure: Houses, a synagogue and beit midrash study hall, kosher establishments, a mikvah ritual bath. Lay the groundwork for a school. Launch a shuttle service so Hasidim who don't drive or don't own cars can get from the new shtetl to shopping outlets and other Hasidic communities in the region.

Step 5. Market to the Hasidic community and turn on the lights.

That, essentially, is the playbook developer Shalom Lamm is following for what is shaping up to be America's newest Hasidic shtetl — the town of Bloomingburg in upstate New York.

Located in Sullivan County about 80 miles north of Brooklyn, Bloomingburg is a tiny village of 400 people dotted with small farms, run-down homes and a couple of old churches. There's just one stoplight, and there's not much to the small businesses clustered around it: a hardware store, bank, tattoo parlor, barbershop and thrift shop.

This is the way things were for decades until Lamm — son of Rabbi Norman Lamm, Yeshiva University's president from 1976 to 2003 — came to town a few years ago and started snapping up properties like they were sample-sale sweaters.

He bought the white house with blue shutters and a front porch just across from the barbershop. He bought the Hickory apartments just off Main Street, adjacent to a trailer park. He bought the hardware store and a pizza shop. He bought a large warehouse built to house antique cars with the idea of turning it into a girls school.

Lamm didn't stop there. He bought a group of farms on 200 acres of unincorporated land about half a mile from the stoplight and in 2006 got the village to annex it and rezone it for residential development in exchange for building a new \$5 million sewage treatment plant for the area. He bought the airport in the nearby village of Wurtsboro. He bought 635 acres five miles away. He also bought a house for himself in Bloomingburg and moved in (Lamm also lives in West Hempstead, on Long Island).

Soon, changes started happening in the village. Homes were fixed up and repainted. The Hickory apartments, originally built as a senior housing development, were renovated and turned into 12 units, with a synagogue and study hall built in a basement. Most notably, in 2012 rows of attached five-bedroom townhomes began going up on the 200 acres he had gotten rezoned from agricultural — the first of at least 396 units planned for construction in a development Lamm dubbed Chestnut Ridge.

Meanwhile in Brooklyn, a two-hour drive away, Yiddish-language newspapers began to run advertisements touting a new Hasidic housing development going up in Bloomingburg. The ads noted its location near the Catskill Mountains and just 30 minutes north of the Satmar village of Kiryas Joel, home to more than 20,000 Hasidim.

Once the locals upstate caught onto what was happening — when Chestnut Ridge broke ground in 2012 — opposition materialized almost immediately. Village meetings were organized, accusations flew, angry protesters took to the streets and lawsuits were filed. The Town of Mamakating (pop. 12,000), in which the village of Bloomingburg is located, tried to annex the village so that it could gain zoning power over Bloomingburg and thwart the Hasidic-friendly construction, but the bid failed.

Lamm and his defenders, including the public relations consultant he eventually hired, cast their opponents as anti-Semites or anti-Hasidic, and for some that characterization seemed apt. The window of the kosher grocery was repeatedly shattered, and some early protests outside Shabbat prayer services included anti-Jewish epithets.

But for many locals, it was a case of not-in-my-backyard syndrome: They lived in a quiet, albeit poor, country village, and the dense housing and Hasidic influx would indelibly alter Bloomingburg's character. They believed Lamm and his investment partner, Kenneth Nakdimen, had hoodwinked the village into annexing and rezoning the agricultural land he was turning into a dense residential development.

Last month, Mamakating and Bloomingburg filed a federal lawsuit against Lamm, accusing him of fraud, bribery, racketeering, voter fraud and corruption of public officials — saying he bribed a former mayor, used a frontman to help mislead the village about his intentions for Chestnut Ridge and engaged in racketeering by promoting an enterprise that was corrupt on multiple levels. Lamm denies the accusations and has filed lawsuits of his own against the town.

If Bloomingburg was going to look like any of the other Hasidic communities north of New York City — New Square, Kiryas Joel, or the hamlet of Monsey in Ramapo — there were plenty of cautionary tales to give local residents pause. Overcrowding in those places was taxing local infrastructure to the breaking point, and in Ramapo the school board had been taken over by a Hasidic majority that was stripping local public school budgets and selling off public school buildings to yeshivas at cut-rate prices. For the Hasidim, the appeal of Bloomingburg over Brooklyn was clear. It offered much cheaper living, less congestion and fewer of the sorts of urban

temptations that could ensnare a devout Jew. With so few residents, the village also offered the prospect of something else: political power that could give local Hasidim nearly unfettered control over their own destiny.

It wasn't long before the first Hasidic families began to arrive.

Some were older couples from points south looking for a quiet place near the mountains in which to spend summers or weekends. But soon full-timers started coming, too — mostly young families from Satmar and other Hungarian Hasidic sects looking for more affordable alternatives to Brooklyn's Williamsburg neighborhood and a quieter lifestyle than that available in Kiryas Joel or in Monsey, the sprawling Orthodox stronghold in Rockland County an hour to the south.

Bloomingburg's first Hasidic pioneers arrived with almost no Orthodox infrastructure in place. There wasn't much suitable food available locally — one early newcomer quipped that the only produce available at the local grocery store was two-week-old tomatoes — and kosher food had to be delivered by special order from Kiryas Joel or nearby Middletown. There was no weekday minyan. There was no women's mikvah (and still isn't — the zoning appeals board has rejected Lamm's site for one).

Then, last summer, the city got its first kollel — a Jewish study collective where men learn Torah full time and receive stipends in return from community supporters (in this case, apparently, Lamm). Lamm also bought a 22-seat minibus and a passenger van and began running shuttles to large shopping areas and to Kiryas Joel, where some of Bloomingburg's adults work and kids go to school.

By fall, there were enough Orthodox families in Bloomingburg to support a daily minyan — the quorum of 10 men needed for public prayer. Weekday services start at 9 a.m.

Mendel Kritzler, 25, moved to Bloomingburg in mid-April with his wife and three boys from a fourth-floor walkup in Williamsburg. Now he lives in a ground-floor apartment within walking distance of everything he needs: the shul and study hall where he spends his days, the kosher grocery Lamm opened up right before Passover, and the new Hasidic day care that now has 10 kids enrolled between the ages of 3 and 4. He doesn't own a car.

"I was a little nervous before coming here, but since I moved I've really been enjoying it; it's the Garden of Eden," Kritzler said. "It's quiet. There's peace of mind. It's much, much cheaper — half the price of Williamsburg."

Lamm's rentals begin at \$350 per month for small one-bedrooms to \$1,200 for large three-bedrooms.

One of his tenants noted that, unlike her landlord in Monsey, Lamm isn't so strict about the rent. At the now-fully occupied Hickory apartments, young Hasidic women gather in the late afternoons and sit on plastic lawn chairs, rocking infants in their laps and watching their toddlers run around while they chitchat in the springtime sun. Once a month, the Hasidic women in town get together in someone's house or the local kosher pizza-and-sandwich shop for an evening devoted to bonding, noshing and spiritual inspiration. A recent gathering featured slides on the Jewish value of modesty. The men studying at the kollel come home in the early afternoon for a break. Some walk up the hill to the small kosher grocery, where the shelves are well stocked but the aisles mostly empty of customers. Those who commute to work in Kiryas Joel are generally home by early evening. Despite the sleepy feel in town, there's a sense of excitement among the Hasidim – a feeling that they're the trailblazers in a noble experiment of establishing a new outpost for Hasidic life in New York State.

"I'm the pioneer, really," said a young Belgian-born Hasid named Yossele who said his was the second full-time family to move in.

So far, only 27 Hasidic families live full time in the village, according to Yechiel Falkowitz, a 22-year-old Hasid who moved in last summer and compiled a head count of the families in early May. Another 20 or so families live part time in Bloomingburg, he said. Lamm, who is the landlord of all but a handful of the Hasidic families' homes, says there are 176 Orthodox Jewish residents in Bloomingburg, comprising 40-50 families.

(The true Hasidic population of Bloomingburg is the subject of a legal dispute. Over the winter, the county board of elections challenged the eligibility of more than 150 individuals, almost all of them Hasidim, to vote in local elections, and said it would remove them from voter rolls. Hasidim responded with a civil rights lawsuit against the board.)

Strong community opposition in Bloomingburg to the new Chestnut Ridge development has resulted in numerous delays. (Uriel Heilman)

The main obstacle to growth at present is the town of Mamakating and the village's government, which has declined to grant certificates of occupancy for the 51 townhouses at Chestnut Ridge that have been move-in ready for months, according to Lamm. Without those certificates, Lamm can't close the sales of the homes.

"Almost nothing gets permitted," Lamm told JTA. "I get the sense that they'd like us to give up, but that's not in the cards."

Lawyers for Mamakating and Bloomingburg say modifications are needed to bring the homes up to code first and that the process for evaluating the homes and granting certificates of occupancy is underway.

If Lamm's vision comes to fruition, there soon will be hundreds more Hasidic families in Bloomingburg – maybe thousands.

At Chestnut Ridge, the newly built 2,800-square-foot attached townhomes look like they're straight out of a brochure for the American dream, with identical facades, fresh white garages and bright green lawns. Inside, the décor is bright, modern and spacious, with 9-foot ceilings, an upstairs laundry room, and kitchens with granite countertops and stainless-steel appliances.

The houses also have all the accoutrements Hasidim, with their large families and Orthodox practices, might desire. The kitchens feature two stoves, sinks, ovens and microwaves – one each for dairy and meat. There's an outdoor sukkah deck just off the dining room. Special sinks are located outside the bathrooms for ritual hand-washing, and a small room near the front is designed for a miniature library or study.

The five bedrooms upstairs have sleeping space for up to a dozen. The master bedroom easily fits two full-sized beds – Hasidic couples do not share beds during women's menstrual periods and for a week afterward – and the walk-in closet in the master bedroom is big enough for a crib, which Lamm doesn't doubt Hasidic parents will notice when their babies are born.

The homes are priced between \$299,000 and \$334,000. Once the remaining 350 or so houses are built, there will also be four playgrounds for the kids. Many longtime Bloomingburg residents say they're taking a wait-and-see approach even as they're still stinging from the way Lamm got his housing development approved. They blame Bloomingburg's former mayor for agreeing to the deal and say the village population was told the site was going to be a golf course surrounded by luxury homes, not dense development suited to Hasidim.

"It was a shady deal. The politicians we had here threw us under the bus," said Patti, the owner of a thrift shop in the village who, like all the locals interviewed for this story and many of the Hasidim, asked that her last name not be used. After so much conflict and bad press, people here are wary of reporters.

Patti lives across from the Chestnut Ridge development, which she said has dramatically altered the local landscape. "I used to look at farm fields every day, with silos and animals grazing," she said. Now she looks out at Lamm's townhouses.

Despite her misgivings, Patti says she's reserving judgment about what's to come.

"Things are definitely going to change. Whether it'll be for the better or worse it's too soon to tell," she said. "It's in limbo right now."

Summary of The Weekly Torah Reading by NATHAN I DWECK

Be'ha'alotecha - The Leviim are made kadosh, Benei Israel's first traveling from Har Sinai (year 2)

1- Menorah, The Leviim and purified and made kadosh

2- The Leviim replace the bechorim to do the avodah

3- Korban Pesach in the midbar, pesach sheni for those who were tameh

4- How Benei Israel traveled in the midbar by way of the the amood ha'anan, amound ha'esh, and trumpets

5- Israel's first traveling from sinai - order of camps and how they traveled. Yitro returns home

6- Complaints about the traveling and about the manna. Moshe's despair. 70 Zekenim are chosen to help Moshe

7- Hashem sends the quail. Miriam speaks lashon hara and gets tzaraat

EXCERPTS FROM THE JERSEY SHORE TORAH BULLETIN

They journeyed from the mountain of Hashem a three day distance." (Bemidbar 10:33)

The Midrash says that when the Jewish people left Har Sinai they were happy. They were like children who run away from school. They said if they stay, more misvot will be added. This was their first mistake, for if not for this, Hashem would have brought them into the Promised Land right away.

Of course this feeling was very subtle, and deep down. But on their lofty level they should have known better. There was a certain lacking in appreciating the true great benefit of each misvah. If one doesn't realize the enormous benefit of every misvah the misvot will feel like a burden.

There is a famous oft-quoted statement that we say at the end of every class. "Rabbi Hananya ben Akashya said: Hashem wanted to give merit to Israel, therefore He gave them an abundance of Torah and misvot etc." (Makot 23b). One might ask a simple question that really the opposite is true! The more Torah and misvot the more the danger that we won't keep it properly? Maybe Hashem should have given us just a few misvot and we could observe them with ease!

The Otzrot Hatorah answers with a simple parable. Once two men came to the

unemployment agency to seek a job. One was offered a hard job with many hours but very high pay. The second guy was offered a watchman's job for only a few hours a day and a low salary. The first guy was very happy but the second was depressed. Along came a third friend and saw them and said he didn't understand why they felt the way they did. The second one should be happy because he got an easier job! They both laughed at him and called him a fool. They said that obviously they were both coming to work in order to earn a good living. They weren't coming to relax; they need to feed their families.

This is what Rabbi Hananya was saying. Hashem wanted to give us merit, since our goal in this world is to save up as many merits as we can in order to earn a "livelihood" in the next world. We are not here to relax.

Shabbat Shalom.
Rabbi Reuven Semah

"Why should we be excluded from sacrificing?" (Bemidbar 9:7)

When a group of Jews who were ritually impure could not participate in the Korban Pesah, they reacted in an unusual way. They complained to Moshe and said, "Why should we be exempt from this misvah just because we are tny (unclean)? Isn't there something for us to do?" In the merit of this response, they were given a new misvah of Pesah Sheni, where a person can "make up" the misvah of Korban Pesah.

This attitude is very precious in the eyes of Hashem, and it is something we should think about. Many times we start to do a misvah, but it doesn't work out. How do we feel about being off the hook? Are we relieved, as if another burden is off of us, or do we feel the lack of opportunity to serve Hashem?

There was once a great Rabbi who came to a large yeshivah with a proposal. Whoever could answer his difficult question would have a chance to marry his daughter. The question was extremely difficult, and although many potential answers were suggested, no one came up with the right response, so the Rabbi headed back to his town. On the way back home, the Rabbi saw someone trying to catch up to him, and when he stopped, he realized it was one of the students from the yeshivah. "Did you think of another answer?" the Rabbi asked. "No, but I couldn't bear not to know the right answer," the student replied. The Rabbi then exclaimed, "You are the one for my daughter if you feel that way about Torah!"

We should analyze our approach to Torah and misvot and realize they are opportunities rather than burdens. That way we will fulfill them in a better

way, and it will further enrich and uplift our lives.
Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Shmuel Choueka

COMPLAINT DEPT.

"But now, our life is parched, there is nothing; we have nothing to anticipate but the Manna. Now the Manna was like a coriander seed and its color was like the color of b'dolach." (Bamidbar 11:6,7)

Rashi explains that the individuals who complained, "We have nothing to anticipate but the Manna," were countered by Hashem, Who said, "The Manna was like a coriander seed with a color similar to crystal." As the commentators explain, it had the taste of dough saturated with oil. Rashi understands that Hashem was alluding to the world, "Look at about what My children are complaining! They say the Manna is nothing worth waiting for, and I show you that it is indeed quite special."

This does not mean that the Jewish People were full of complaints. It is possible that they conceded that indeed everything else was actually great, but there was one issue about which they had criticism: the Manna. Horav Gamliel Rabinowitz, Shlita, notes that, sadly, there are people whose lives are filled with good fortune: wealth, great wife, wonderful children, nahat, satisfaction and acceptance in the community. Everything in their lives works - except for one issue which they have. Do they pay gratitude for all of the good and positive aspects of their lives, or are they consumed by - and obsess constantly about - the one area of their lives that does not work to perfection?

This is what angered Hashem. Everything about Klal Yisrael's life was just about perfect. They were no longer in Egypt serving as slaves to a despotic ruler. Whatever they asked of Hashem, they received. Were they thankful? No - all they could do was issue complaints about the Manna, complaints which were not valid.

This is an important lesson for all of us. No one has a perfect life. One thing is not always one hundred percent the way we would like it. Do we make the effort to thank Hashem for everything else, or do we focus all of our energies to complain about one thing that does not meet our standards? Before we complain, or even ask for that one thing that is missing, it might be a good idea to first look around and thank Hashem for our many blessings.
(Peninim on the Torah)

RABBI ELI MANSOUR **Cultivated Cravings**

Parashat Beha'alotecha tells the tragic story of Kivrot Ha'ta'ava – Benei Yisrael's complaints to Moshe about the "menu" in the wilderness, and Hashem's

harsh response to their complaints. We read (Bamidbar 11:4) that the Erev Rav, the riffraff that joined Benei Yisrael when they left Egypt, experienced a craving for meat, and Benei Yisrael ultimately joined them in protesting against the lack of food. They complained that they had only the Manna, and did not have the variety of meat and other foods that they enjoyed in Egypt.

The Torah describes this craving with the expression, "Hit'avu Ta'ava," which literally means, "they desired a desire." This is an unusual construction, as it repeats – at first glance unnecessarily – the word "desire." What exactly does the expression "Hit'avu Ta'ava" mean?

A person confronts two kinds of tests during his life. The first kind is tests that God sends upon a person to grant him the opportunity for spiritual growth. Life is about confronting challenges and working to overcome them. These tests are very positive and beneficial for a person. When God sends a test, He does so only because He knows that the individual is endowed with the ability to succeed, and therefore tests of this kind present the opportunity for great spiritual achievement. But there are other tests, as well – tests that a person brings upon himself. The Yetzer Ha'ra (evil inclination) often tries to convince a person to enter a situation of spiritual peril, convincing him that he will have the strength to withstand temptation and overcome the challenge. These tests are dangerous and destructive. When a person willingly brings upon himself a test to his devotion, when he instigates an encounter with the Yetzer Ha'ra, there is no guarantee that he is capable of withstanding the test.

Correspondingly, there are two kinds of cravings. Some cravings result from man's normal, natural condition. Man by nature has certain desires, such as hunger, which he instinctively feels the need to satisfy. But sometimes a person cultivates a craving, he brings upon himself a self-induced desire for something. The Romans, for example, found that they were unable to eat all the delicacies served at a meal, because their stomachs would feel full after the first several courses. They would therefore take a break in the middle of a feast to empty their stomachs through induced vomiting, so that they would again feel hungry and enjoy more food. This is a "cultivated craving." They did not feel hungry, but they wanted to feel hungry. They cultivated a desire for more food, so that they could enjoy more.

This is what the Torah means when it describes that the riffraff among Benei Yisrael "desired a desire." They were not hungry. The Manna was sufficient to

feed and nourish them, and fill their stomachs. But they wanted to feel hungry, they longed for the experience of desiring food and then satiating their appetites.

Why would somebody cultivate a craving? What motivates a person who feels content to bring a feeling of desire and need upon himself?

The answer, as the Rambam explains, is in one word: boredom. A person who experiences boredom is in need of some excitement. There is a vacuum within him, and he looks for stimulation. The incident of Kivrot Ha'ta'ava occurred just after Benei Yisrael's departure from Mount Sinai, where they had spent nearly a year studying Torah and learning about God's commandments. Now, as they traveled, a certain feeling of boredom set in, and they began looking for cravings. They needed something to fill the vacuum created by their departure from Sinai, and so they brought upon themselves a desire for meat.

Statistics consistently reveal a sharp rise in crime during the summer months. People have more free time on their hands, and so they begin looking for trouble, they cultivate a craving for "excitement" in the form of mischief. For a Jew, the relaxed atmosphere of summer poses a difficult challenge. One must ensure to fill the vacuum created by this laidback atmosphere with Torah study. While certainly it is important for a person to allocate time for relaxation and enjoyment, he must avoid the experience of boredom that triggers the need to cultivate cravings, to bring upon himself additional tests and challenges. Torah is the antidote to the vacuum that so often develops during the summer. It is therefore critical to maintain a certain degree of intensity in one's Torah study even during the summer, so that he will not feel the need to cultivate dangerous cravings and desires.

Rabbi Wein 'FIFE' ON FIFA

Last week there were many dramas that took place regarding the international soccer association known as FIFA. Many of its top officials were arrested and more were indicted in the United States for brazenly corrupt practices. They were charged with accepting millions of dollars in bribes in assigning venues for the World Cup and other major soccer sporting events.

The head of the association, Sepp Blatter, himself under suspicion, with rumors of improper personal and financial behavior, nevertheless was reelected to serve for a fifth term as the executive head of FIFA. His declared rival for the position was from a Moslem country and was backed by the large Moslem representation in FIFA.

For reasons that remain unclear and somewhat murky, this rival withdrew his candidacy at the last moment thus allowing the reelection of Sepp Blatter unopposed. But as far as we here in Israel were concerned, all of this was only a sideshow to what to us was the main issue under discussion and up for voting in the convention of FIFA - the resolution put forward by the Palestinian Authority to expel Israel from membership in the august body of FIFA.

This tactic of the Palestinian Authority was part of its overall strategy of conducting a diplomatic intifada against Israel in all international bodies where Israel is now a member. It is part of the Palestinian campaign to have the United Nations pass Security Council resolutions against Israel and to make the State of Israel vulnerable to international sanctions, in the event that these resolutions are somehow not abided by. So this question, as to whether Israel would be expelled from the world soccer federation, carried with it grave potential for future more serious damage to the Jewish state.

The attempt of the Palestinian Authority to accomplish its goal failed when it became apparent, even to the Palestinians that the resolution would not pass at this year's conference. There were attempts in the days before the resolution would have to come to a vote to engineer a compromise. This would give the Palestinians a moral victory and some concessions on the grounds that they demanded.

Israel stood firm in opposing such a resolution, claiming correctly that it would only open the door to constant resolutions regarding Israel. So at the end of the day, nothing really happened. Israel is still a member of FIFA and the Palestinians have promised to continue to kick the can down the road and bring up the issue again when the soccer association once meets in its annual gathering.

But it is interesting to note that there is no moral hesitation on the part of an organization riddled with corruption and exposed as being venal, indecent and unfair, to sit and pontificate about absurd charges of oppression and discrimination brought against the State of Israel. Since hypocrisy is the gristmill of all diplomacy, one should not be surprised, shocked or

disappointed about the behavior of FIFA. Those who proclaim themselves to be the champions of sport, fairness and inclusion are really robbers, exploiters and unprincipled haters.

It makes no difference to me whether Israel belongs to FIFA or not. I am not that much of a soccer fan. I find it disturbing though that many of the soccer matches that take place here in Israel involve desecrating the holiness of the Sabbath day. If I were a holy person that had intimate connections with Heaven, I would be tempted to say, in this instance, it is no accident or coincidence that the attempt to expel Israel from a world organization should involve FIFA and soccer.

Nevertheless, I am delighted that the efforts of the Palestinians have failed and that Israel still remains a member in good standing of FIFA. However, I am reminded of the famous quip of Groucho Marx that he really would not want to be a member of any group that would accept him as a member. It seems to me that there is little honor being associated with FIFA and its corrupt practices and officials. But apparently we are not in a position to refuse even the smallest of crumbs extended to us by the international community.

So, we should feel some satisfaction in the fact that we are still a member in good standing of an organization that itself is not in such good standing. I know that there is irony in this but we live in a very ironic world. In Yiddish word the "fife" is a word of derision and scorn. Well I for one say, 'fife' on FIFA.

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks From Pain to Humility

David Brooks, in his new best seller, *The Road to Character*,^[1] draws a sharp distinction between what he calls the résumé virtues – the achievements and skills that bring success – and the eulogy virtues, the ones that are spoken of at funerals: the virtues and strengths that make you the kind of person you are when you are not wearing masks or playing roles, the inner person that friends and family recognize as the real you.

Brooks relates this distinction to the one made by Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik in his famous essay, *The Lonely Man of Faith*.^[2] There he speaks of Adam I – the human person as creator, builder, master of nature imposing his or her will on the world – and Adam II, the covenantal personality, living in obedience to a transcendent truth, guided by a sense of duty and right and the will to serve.

Adam I seeks success. Adam II strives for charity, love and redemption. Adam I lives by the logic of economics: the pursuit of self-interest and maximum utility. Adam II lives by the very different logic of morality where giving matters more than receiving, and conquering desire is more important than satisfying it. In the moral universe, success, when it leads to pride, becomes failure. Failure, when it leads to humility, can be success.

In that essay, first published in 1965, Rabbi Soloveitchik wondered whether there was a place for Adam II in the America of his day, so intent was it on celebrating human powers and economic advance. Fifty years on, Brooks echoes that doubt. "We live," he says, "in a society that encourages us to think about how to have a great career but leaves many of us inarticulate about how to cultivate the inner life."

That is a central theme of *Behaalotecha*. Until now we have seen the outer Moses, worker of miracles, mouthpiece of the Divine word, unafraid to confront Pharaoh on the one hand, his own people on the other, the man who shattered the tablets engraved by God himself and who challenged Him to forgive His people, "and if not, blot me out of the book You have written" (Ex. 32: 32). This is the public Moses, a figure of heroic strength. In Soloveitchik terminology, it is Moses I.

In *Behaalotecha* we see Moses II, the lonely man of faith. It is a very different picture. In the first scene we see him break down. The people are complaining again about the food. They have manna but no meat. They engage in false nostalgia: "How we remember the fish that we used to eat in Egypt for free! And the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic!" (Num. 11: 5). This is one act of ingratitude too many for Moses, who gives voice to deep despair. "Why did You bring all this trouble to your servant? Why haven't I found favor in your eyes, that You are placing the burden of this entire people on me! Did I conceive this people or give birth to them, that You tell me to carry them in my lap the way a nurse carries a baby... I cannot carry this whole nation! The burden is too heavy for me! If this is how you are going to treat me, please kill me now, if I have found favor in your eyes, because I cannot bear seeing all this misery!" (Num. 11: 11-15).

Then comes the great transformation. God tells him to take seventy elders who will bear the burden with him. God takes the spirit that is on Moses and extends it to the elders. Two of them, Eldad and Medad, among the six chosen from each tribe but left out of the final ballot, begin prophesying within the camp. They too have caught Moses' spirit. Joshua

fears that this may lead to a challenge to Moses leadership and urges Moses to stop them. Moses answers with surpassing generosity, "Are you jealous on my behalf. Would that all God's people were prophets and that He would rest his spirit on each of them" (Num. 11: 29). The mere fact that Moses now knew that he was not alone, seeing seventy elders share his spirit, cures him of his depression, and he now exudes a gentle, generous confidence that is moving and unexpected.

In the third act, we finally see where this drama has been tending. Now Moses' own brother and sister, Aaron and Miriam, start disparaging him. The cause of their complaint (the "Ethiopian woman" he had taken as wife) is not clear and there are many interpretations. The point, though, is that for Moses, this is the "Et tu Brute?" moment. He has been betrayed, or at least slandered, by those closest to him. Yet Moses is unaffected. It is here that the Torah makes its great statement: "Now the man Moses was very humble, more so than any other man on the face of the earth" (Num. 12: 3).

This is a novum in history. The idea that a leader's highest virtue is humility must have seemed absurd, almost self-contradictory, in the ancient world. Leaders were proud, magnificent, distinguished by their dress, appearance and regal manner. They built temples in their own honour. They had triumphant inscriptions engraved for posterity. Their role was not to serve but to be served. Everyone else was expected to be humble, not they. Humility and majesty could not coexist.

In Judaism, this entire configuration was overturned. Leaders were to serve, not to be served. Moses' highest accolade was to be called eved Hashem, God's servant. Only one other person, Joshua, his successor, earns this title in Tanakh. The architectural symbolism of the two great empires of the ancient world, the Mesopotamian ziggurat (the "tower of Babel") and the pyramids of Egypt, visually represented a hierarchical society, broad at the base, narrow at the top. The Jewish symbol, the menorah, was the opposite, broad at the top, narrow at the base, as if to say that in Judaism the leader serves the people, not vice versa. Moses' first response to God's call at the burning bush was one of humility: "Who am I to lead?" (Ex. 3: 11). It was precisely this humility that qualified him to lead.

In Behaalotecha we track the psychological process by which Moses acquires a yet deeper level of humility. Under the stress of Israel's continued recalcitrance, Moses turns inward. Listen again to what he says: "Why have you brought all this trouble

to your servant? ... Did I conceive all these people? Did I give them birth? ... Where can I get meat for all these people? ... I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me." The key words here are "I," "me" and "myself." Moses has lapsed into the first person singular. He sees the Israelites' behaviour as a challenge to himself, not God. God has to remind him, "Is the Lord's arm too short"? It isn't about Moses, it is about what and whom Moses represents.

Moses had been, for too long, alone. It was not that he needed the help of others to provide the people with food. That was something God would do without the need for any human intervention. It was that he needed the company of others to end his almost unbearable isolation. As I have noted elsewhere, the Torah only twice contains the phrase, lo tov, "not good," once at the start of the human story when God says that "It is not good for man to be alone" (Gen. 2: 18), a second time when Yitro sees Moses leading alone and says, "What you are doing is not good" (Ex. 18: 17). We cannot live alone. We cannot lead alone.

As soon as Moses saw the seventy elders share his spirit, his depression disappeared. He could say to Joshua, "Are you jealous on my behalf?" And he is undisturbed by the complaint of his own brother and sister, praying to God on Miriam's behalf when she is punished with leprosy. He had recovered his humility.

We now understand what humility is. It is not self-abasement. C. S. Lewis put it best: humility, he said, is not thinking less of yourself. It is thinking of yourself less. True humility means silencing the "I." For genuinely humble people, it is God, and other people and principle that matter, not me. As it was once said of a great religious leader, "He was a man who took God so seriously that he didn't have to take himself seriously at all."

"Rabbi Jochanan said, Wherever you find the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He, there you find His humility." [3] Greatness is humility, for God and for those who seek to walk in His ways. It is also the greatest single source of strength, for if we do not think about the "I," we cannot be injured by those who criticise or demean us. They are shooting at a target that no longer exists.

What Behaalotecha is telling us through these three scenes in Moses' life is that we sometimes achieve humility only after a great psychological crisis. It is only after Moses had suffered a breakdown and prayed to die that we hear the words, "The man Moses was very humble, more so than anyone on

earth.” Suffering breaks through the carapace of the self, making us realise that what matters is not self regard but rather the part we play in a scheme altogether larger than we are. Lehavdil, Brooks reminds us that Abraham Lincoln, who suffered from depression, emerged from the crisis of civil war with the sense that “Providence had taken control of his life, that he was a small instrument in a transcendent task.”[4]

The right response to existential pain, he says, is not pleasure but holiness, by which he means, “seeing the pain as part of a moral narrative and trying to redeem something bad by turning it into something sacred, some act of sacrificial service that will put oneself in fraternity with the wider community and with eternal moral demands.” This, for me, was epitomized by the parents of the three Israeli teenagers killed last summer, who responded to their loss by creating a series of awards for those who have done most to enhance the unity of the Jewish people – turning their pain outward, and using it to help heal other wounds within the nation.

Crisis, failure, loss or pain can move us from Adam I to Adam II, from self- to other-directedness, from mastery to service, and from the vulnerability of the “I” to the humility that “reminds you that you are not the centre of the universe,” but rather that “you serve a larger order.”[5]

Those who have humility are open to things greater than themselves while those who lack it are not. That is why those who lack it make you feel small while those who have it make you feel enlarged. Their humility inspires greatness in others.

[1] David Brooks, *The Road to Character*, Allen Lane, 2015.

[2] Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, *The Lonely Man of Faith*, Doubleday, 1992.

[3] Megillah 31a.

[4] *Ibid.*, 95.

[5] Brooks, *ibid.*, 263.

Above (11:20) it was stated “Because you rejected Hashem that is in your midst”, but here they are declared to have been punished for their lust of eating. We learn that the sin of becoming enslaved by desire is equivalent to rejecting Hashem. To serve Him “with all your heart” requires freedom from everything else, and to be enslaved by excessive passion for anything is equivalent to rejecting Hashem.

In addition, men that are never satisfied but always lust for more and newer pleasures are never truly appreciative and grateful to Hashem. And because the chief function of life is gratitude, they are undeserving of the gift of life.

The purpose of life is not the pursuit of pleasures but rather the pursuit of Perfection and of finding favor in the sight of Hashem. The seeker of Perfection is justified in living properly and even happily, but Hashem desires that His people should never lose sight of the supreme intention for which He created them: To know Hashem. Quoted from “Journey Into Greatness” by Rabbi Avigdor Miller ZT'L

Parts of this newsletter are courtesy of Project Genesis: Torah on the Information Superhighway. Permission is granted to redistribute, but please give proper attribution and copyright to the author and Project Genesis, and refer to learn@torah.org and <http://www.torah.org/>. Both the authors and Project Genesis reserve certain rights. For full information on copyrights, send email to copyrights@torah.org.

Shabbat Shalom From Cyberspace E Mail Edition is published each week since 1995 and is distributed to 18,000 readers. Our goal is to spread torah knowledge. Articles are downloaded from sites and from e-mail forwarded to us. We encourage you to reprint the newsletter and distribute it to co-workers, friends and family. You can retransmit copies by fax, mail or by hand. Be a part of the Mitzvah of spreading torah. It takes so little to make copies and distribute them. And with E Mail it just takes a click to send this along. To subscribe directly or have us send to a friend or family member Send a request to ShabbatShalomNewsletter@Gmail.com with your name, phone, fax and E-Mail Address

AS HEARD FROM RABBI AVIGDOR MILLER Z'TL

“ And he called the name of that place ‘graves of lust’ for there they buried the people that had lusted” (11:34)

Although Hashem had smote them with “a very great plague” (11:33), yet compared to the nation in general only a small number perished. We see that those “that lusted” were the sole culprits, which demonstrates that the survivors who constituted the overwhelming majority were not the lusters.