

בס"ד

# פורים שמחה



OUR BELOVED RABBI SOKAVA REBBE



BRINGING ONE TOGETHER  
"E Pluribus Unum"  
Latin for "Out of Many, One" - Achdus



## בית מדרש אור חיים BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF RABBI AARON LANKRY  
18 FORSHAY ROAD, MONSEY, NEW YORK 10952



**SHIURIM FOR ENTIRE COMMUNITY**

**RABBI YY JACOBSON WEEKLY CLASS**

Separate Seating

**SHABBOS**  
9:00 AM - CHASSIDUS AND SERMON BEFORE MUSAF  
20 FORSHAY RD  
OPEN FOR MEN & WOMEN

**TUESDAY**  
TUESDAY MORNING  
9:30 - 10:30 AM SHARP - 20 FORSHAY RD  
FOR WOMEN ONLY

AMAZING NEW SHIURIM  
DAF HASHAVUA SEE PAGE 9  
ZERA SHIMSHON SEE PAGE 3

NEW

DAF YOMI FOR THE SHABBOS DAF EVERY FRIDAY AT 12:45 PM BY RABBI COREN IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 12:30 PM MINCHA MINYAN

THE CONVENIENCE STORE AT 18 FORSHAY SEE PAGE 8



OUR BELOVED RABBI  
SOKAVA REBBE

# Dear Kehilla,

BET Parashat Ki Tisah and Purim

The Parasha opens with the Mitzvah of Machatzit Hasakel as a means to count the B'nei Yisrael. By counting the coins and not counting the people you save them from Eyin Harah, the funds are then given to the Bais Hamikdash as a gift to Hashem. Rabbe Akiva said the famous quote "Tezadaka Tatzil Memavei" charity will save a person from death. The Mitzvah of Machatzit Hasekel is Tzdaka to the Bais Hamikdash, why should it only save a person from Eyin Harah? Surely it should save him from even death? Why is the amount of 1/2 a shekel required and not a full amount like a whole shekel? Additionally, a person can't add more or subtract from that amount, what kind of Tedaka does not allow more money?

Haman said to Achashverosh the G-d of the Jews hates promiscuity let's make a big party and invite them, provide them with drink and food and it will lead them to sin. We won't force them to come this way in the heavenly realm they will be responsible as they came voluntarily. Mordechai stood up and told the people not to go yet the people ignored him and 18,544 people attended the party. The Satan exclaimed to the Master of the Universe, "How long are you going to cling to these people that separate themselves from you?" Hashem replied "what will be with the Torah?" The Satan responded "You should be satisfied with the Torah being in Heaven". At that moment Hashem agreed with the Satan. Hashem sighed and said "The nation that every day I do wondrous acts for lets remove them from history." Hashem requested a document so that He could write a decree of annihilation. The Satan ran and brought forth such a document. The Torah witnessed this and began to mourn and dressed in the clothing of a widower and cried bitterly. The Angels did the same, and they cried, "if there is no Jewish nation we will also cease to exist". The sun and the moon joined in tears and mourning.

Eliyahu Hanavi stood up and proclaimed "how can it be that the people that go from place to place to teach Torah, observe the Shabbat, brit mila and all other mitzvot should be destroyed?!!" He ran to the greatest Tzadikim and the prophets and told them what occurred. Moshe Rabainu asked if there is one man that is righteous in the generation. Eliyahu told him of Mordechai Hayehudi. Moshe instructs Eliyahu to tell Mordechai to pray and we will pray from here. Eliyahu tells Moshe the document has been signed already it's too late. Moshe proclaimed if it is signed in tar it can be corrected if it is written in blood it's too late. Eliyahu came to tell Mordechai all that took place and what to do. Mordechai gathered all the children and had them fast. As we know Hashem reversed everything. (Yalkut Shimon Esther)

The concept of Machatzit Hashekel is to internalize that we are all a half, a part of a nation and we all have national obligation. We are all responsible for one another and if some of us sin it is a collective liability.

Let's take a deeper look into the sin of participating in the seuda of Achashverosh. Everything was kosher, the wine had the best Hashgacha, yet even if the banquet was not kosher, the punishment would not be the destruction of the entire nation. How do we understand the proportion of sin to the verdict? We know in the generation of Noach their action of stealing

is what caused the global destruction, but that was only after many years of committing this sin? Why did the Jews of Shushan receive such a harsh judgment after one event?

We all understand that we are here for a purpose, and that purpose is unique to each individual. However, there is a national purpose and that is for the Jewish nation to be a light unto the other nations. In the generation of the flood when humanity stole from each other and became like animals, it was the survival of the fittest. That is not what Hashem intended for his world, rather a world of kindness where one helps one another. So Hashem buried that generation and the world was reborn again with more of clarity of what is expected from us.

When as a nation all our leaders (18,544 of them) excluding only Mordechai, joined the other nations and mingled with them they no longer had the status of a guiding light. If the Jewish nation desires to be one with the other nations then we become part of the darkness. Hashem is merely fulfilling our request that we expressed via our actions; to forfeit our job as a light unto the nation. The decree was not simply a punishment but a consequence of forfeiting our national purpose. When the Jewish nation regretted their actions and re-enacted Matan Torah by "kiyimu v'kiblu hayehudim", they reaccepted their commitment to their mission of being a light unto the nation. Thus Hashem reversed the decree, v'nahapachu.

Purim is an auspicious moment in time to re-affirm our commitment to work together as a whole nation and be the guiding light for the rest of the world in these dark times.

Purim Sameach!

**SIMCHAS HACHAIM :  
OUR MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION.**

Purim Torah  
Question: why did המלך דוד place the מצפור of קביטול (which is all about שמחה) the # 100 = קי (spelled out as קוק) ?  
Answer: he's letting us know that HASHEM would rather have a happy MONKEY (קוק is a monkey), than a depressed YID (Chas ve'shalom).  
Have a "shared" happy & deLIGHTful Purim & Shabbos.

*Ani Weinberg*  
Contact us at  
Happinessbyaviv@gmail.com

# SHUL SCHEDULE



## SHABBOS ZMANIM

EARLY MINCHA ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON at 12:40 & 1:30

|                     |                               |                         |                       |                       |                      |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| SHABBOS NIGHT / DAY | Candle lighting               | 5:30pm                  | SHABBOS DAY / Evening | Shachris Bais Chabad  | 10:00am - 20 Forshay |
|                     | Mincha Tent                   | 5:40pm                  |                       | Mincha                | 2:00pm               |
|                     | Shkiya                        | 5:48pm                  |                       | Pirchei - Bnos        | 2:00                 |
|                     | Mincha Bais Chabad 20 Forshay | 5:55pm                  |                       | Daf Yomi              | 4:45pm               |
|                     | Shachris Vasikin              | 6:10am - DAF YOMI SHIUR |                       | Mincha Shalosh Seudos | 5:30pm               |
|                     | Shachris                      | 8:00am - Kiddush        |                       | Shkiya                | 5:49pm               |
|                     | Shachris                      | 9:15am - 18 Forshay     | Maariv                | 6:29 & 6:34pm         |                      |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| WEEKDAY MINYANIM  | <b>SHACHRIS</b>  |
|   | 20 Minutes before Neitz<br>S 6:05   M 6:04   T 6:02   W 6:01   T 5:59   F 5:57 |
|   | <b>MINCHA &amp; MAARIV</b>   |
| 12 Minutes Before Pelag<br>S 4:27   M 4:28   T 4:29   W 4:29   T 4:30 |  |
| 12 Minutes Before Shkia<br>S 5:38   M 5:39   T 5:40   W 5:42   T 5:43 |  |

**MAR. 4 – MAR. 09**  
**NEITZ IS 6:25 am - 6:17am**  
**PELAG IS 4:39 pm - 4:42 pm**  
**SHKIA IS 5:50 pm - 5:55 pm**

סוף זמן קריאת שמע  
**MAGEN AVRAHAM**  
 8:41 AM – 8:37 AM  
**GRA- BAAL HATANYA**  
 9:17 AM – 9:13 AM

**WEEKDAY MINYANIM**  
WINTER '17-18 חורף תשע"ח

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>שחרית</b>   | <b>מעריב</b>                                 |
| כ"ת י"ג  | AT פלג 18↓ Repeat Krias Shma after nightfall |
| 6:15AM 20 Forshay ↑ (Brochos 30 min/Prudu 20 min before Neitz) | AT שקיעה 18↓                                 |
| 7:00 18↓   | 10 MIN. AFTER שקיעה 18↑                      |
| 7:30 20↑   | 30 MIN. AFTER שקיעה 18↓                      |
| 8:00 18↓   | 60 MIN. AFTER שקיעה 18↓                      |
| 8:30 18↑   | 7:30 18↓                                     |
| 9:00 18↓   | 8:00 18↓                                     |
| 9:30 18↑   | 8:30 18↑                                     |
| 10:00 18↓  | 9:00 18↑                                     |
| 10:30 18↑  | 9:30 18↑                                     |
| 11:00 18↓  | 9:45 18↓                                     |
|  | 10:00 18↓                                    |
| <b>מנחה</b>  | 10:30 18↓                                    |
| 12:30PM 18↓  | 11:00 18↓                                    |
| 1:00PM 18↓   | 11:30 18↓                                    |
| 1:30PM 18↓   | 12:45AM 18↓                                  |
| 2:00PM 18↓   |  |
| 2:30PM 18↓   |  |
| 3:00PM 18↓   |  |
| <b>מנחה ומעריב</b>   |  |
| 12 MIN. BEFORE פלג 18↓   |  |
| 12 MIN. BEFORE שקיעה 18↓                                       |  |
| AT שקיעה 18↑   |  |
| 20 MIN. AFTER שקיעה 18↓  |  |
| 50 MIN. AFTER שקיעה 18↓  |  |

↑ Upstairs  
↓ Main Floor

FOR MORE INFO: www.18forshay.com // ohrchaim18@gmail.com



## Purim:

### Lessons in Unity

I was recently schmoozing with a Rebbe about the incredible feeling we have when reading the Megilah on Purim. There are times when one just feels the need to cry and other times one wants to burst with joy and begin to dance. What is it about Megilat Esther more than any other scroll or biblical book that grabs us so deeply?

Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev in his introduction to the four Kedushos of Purim explains that there are four unique aspects about Purim, three of which we don't find in any other holiday. The first is the reading of the Megilah, the second is the mitzva of matanos to the poor, the third is mishloach manos and the fourth is the meal.

These four unique mitzvos parallel four unique aspects that surround the holiday of Purim. First is the idea that what may seem to be an ordinary story actually has many secrets embedded within it. The second connection is Kabalas Hatorah—the receiving of the Torah. The third element is the fact that prayer can overturn declared decrees and the last feature points to the idea that what may seem bad can actually be good.

For now I would like to focus on the first aspect--the reading of the megilah and the idea that there seems to be so many strings being pulled behind the scenes that appear at first glance to be just reading a nice story but in fact when delving deeper one encounters some fascinating secrets.

One of the prime examples of Hashem hovering behind the scene is that His name is not mentioned at all throughout the text. This is very odd and yet in the book of Esther this makes sense as He must remain concealed to most people and only revealed for those who are truly looking for him.

The Vilna Gaon writes that the word Hamelech (the king) mentioned without being accompanied with the name Achashveros means that Hashem is specifically orchestrating the events as they unfold.

On one of the Whatsapps I received this week I mentioned a mesmerizing explanation from the Apta Rav. His explanation is in reference to a conversation that takes place between Haman and Zeresh, his wife. Haman turns to her and proudly states that they are like Mordechai and Esther and Zeresh responds no we're "Acher" (different.) What is going on here? The Apta's explanation is as follows: if one takes the small numbers of Gematria for Mordechai and Esther's names each one equals 13, together 26, which is Havayah—Hashem's main name. Haman told his wife that together they too make up 26 because his name is 14 and her name is 12. Zeresh then says that they are not the same as Mordechai and Esther because they come from the other side-- the far and dark side--with 14 equal to Samael, the main Yetzer Hara and 12 equal to Lilith, a female demon. So although they add up to 26 it's not a positive unity. Rav Shimon from Astropia adds that this discussion is hinted in Haman's words Vechol zeh einenu shaveh li --all this isn't worth it for me. The Zeh is equal to 12.

I was thinking how beautiful this is because the first letters of the four words--zeh ennienu shaveh li-- spell Havaya—Hashem's name--meaning that Haman realized that he doesn't stand a chance if the Jews are united and in unity with Hashem and he is unable to attain this position.

Good Shabbos



BY SHALOM BER MUNITZ

## V'KIBLU HAY'HUDIM EIS ASHER HEICHEILU LAASOS

The following telegram was sent by the Rebbe to his Chassidim around the world in connection with the approach of Purim, 5711.

I request that the farbrengens be held on Purim and also on [the following] Shabbos. A special [emphasis should be placed] on vigorously arousing [the participants] to work for the cause of G d-fearing education.

With blessings for a joyous Purim,

Menachem Schneerson

Note: that year Purim was on a Thursday as this year. The Rebbe had accepted the leadership of Chabad just one month earlier

**Night Kollel**  
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER שליט"א

**NEW SHIUR!!!**

In Sefer  
**זרע שמשון**  
By Rabbi Shimshon Chaim z"l  
Which is known to be mesugel for yeshuos and brochos

Starting March 8  
Every Thursday night  
8:15 – 9:00  
18 Forshay Main Bais Medrash  
Maariv 9:00

For more info or to join the Kollel, please contact: Rabbi Nachum Scheiner  
845.372.6618 // ohrchaimmonsey@gmail.com



## New schedule in Rabbi Coren's Office

|                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 5:30 to 6:00   | Minhag Yisroel Torah |
| 6:25 to 7:25   | Daf Yomi             |
| 7:30 to 8:00   | Shachris             |
| 8:00 to 8:20   | Tamid                |
| 8:20 to 9:00   | Megilah              |
| 9:00 to 10:00  | Daf Yomi             |
| 10:00 to 10:30 | Mishna Berura        |
| 10:30 to 11:00 | Pirush Tefilah       |



## *Machatzis Hashekel: Part of a Whole*

*By: Rabbi Berach Steinfeld*

The posuk in Shemos, Perek Lamed, posuk yud gimmel says that every Jew who was to be counted needed to give half a shekel. The Alshich says in the name of Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz that there are two reasons the Jews were commanded to donate the machtzis hashekel. The first reason is to show that every individual is really only a half (not complete) when he is on his own. The second reason is to show that when a Jew joins the klal he then becomes a whole person.

The Malbim says that as long as the Jews join together as one person, the zechus of the rabim is great. On the other hand, if you count the Jews separately, each individual gets judged by himself and then the vulnerability to plagues and other punishment is that much greater. To counteract this problem Hashem commanded Bnei Yisroel to bring a half a shekel, which shows that they are only part of a larger unit. Only when he joins with others will he be considered a whole.

This can also explain the famous Gemara in Megilah, daf yud gimmel, amud bais where Reish Lakish said that Hashem projected ahead to Haman in the future who would pay shekalim to plot against the Jews; therefore, Hashem preceded Haman's shekalim with the command that the Jews should donate shekalim. This half shekel donation served as an antidote to Haman's shekalim.

We can try to explain why the machtzis hashekel was sufficient to counteract the shekalim of Haman. The main power of how Amalek tried fighting against the Jews was by causing the Jews not to get along (pirud levavos.) The Yaaros Dvash in chelek alef, drush gimel says if the Jews are be'aguda achas (of one mind and agreement) then no other nation can rule over them. If you look in the megillah when Haman tries to plead his case for the annihilation of Bnei Yisroel he says, "There is a nation who is mefuzar and meforad (separated and spread out) between all other nations, indicating that the Jews are not united. Esther, to counteract Haman's complaint, said the opposite when she asked that "knos es kol haYehudim" (gather together) all the Jews. If the Jews are together, then the Reshaim are unable to cause any evil to befall them.

The Midrash Rabba, Vayikra, Perek Chof Vov, posuk bais tells us that during the era of Dovid Hamelech, the Jews would lose battles when going out to war as a result of the people who spoke lashon hora, effectively causing separation between one Jew and another. When Haman gave the ten thousand shekalim, he had the intention of showing that just like each shekel is an important coin and can't become bateil, (nullified) the same concept applies to the Jews when they are not mevateil themselves to one another and people are only in it for themselves. Hashem counteracted this divisive idea with the machatzis hashekel to prove that we can only have a complete matbea when we join with one another. Only when we are part of a whole can we become invincible.

This can also explain why Moshe and Yehoshua carried out the initial war against Amalek. The reason for this was that we find that Moshe was the greatest anav (humble person) to have ever lived. We also find that the Targum Yonasan explains why Moshe added a letter to Yehoshua's name because "chama Moshe anvasenusei" (Moshe saw his humility.) Humility shows that one is a part of a whole. The humble man is totally united with all the Jews, hereby not feeling the need to be "nisgaeh" (think you are greater than others.) That was the power needed to beat Amalek.

May we be zocheh to be united and be zocheh to erase Amalek and live to see the Bais Hamikdosh Hashlishi so we can contribute the machtzis hashekel. Amen!

## Ki Sisa

The parsha opens with the conclusion of the details of the Mishkan's construction. The Bnei Yisroel are commanded to give the half Shekel toward a national census and the purchasing of the public offerings. The copper washstand, the Kiyor, is described along with the ingredients and laws of the anointing oil and the Ketores – the incense. Betzallel, the grandson of Chur and great-grandson of Miriam, is identified as the chief artisan and architect of the Mishkan. The Mitzvah of Shabbos is commanded. It is in juxtaposition to the details of the Mishkan which provides the Gemara with the source for determining the 39 categories of Melacha prohibited on Shabbos.

The story of the Golden Calf is told. Moshe ascended Sinai on the morning of Sivan 7, and remained 40 days and nights. The 7th didn't start with a night, so it wasn't included in the total of 40. The Jews mistakenly assumed that it was to be included and expected Moshe back on the morning of Tamuz 16. Instead, he returned the morning of Tamuz 17. By midday of the 16th, the Jews were already desperate. Chur attempts to reason with them and is killed. They approach Aharon who attempts to redirect their terror which results in the Golden Calf. Moshe appears the next morning, breaks the Luchos, marshals the tribe of Levi, and 3000 people are killed. Moshe demands Hashem's forgiveness for the people, but moves the Ohel Moed out from the midst of the camp. Yehoshua is proclaimed the main student of Moshe.

Moshe requests to understand Hashem's system of justice. He is granted a greater understanding of Hashem than any other person in history, but is denied the ability to comprehend divine justice.

Moshe is instructed to cut two new Luchos and ascend Sinai. Moshe is taught the secret formula for Teshuva (the Thirteen Names of G-d as He Manifests His Mercy) (34:6) and G-d forgives the Bnei Yisroel.

Hashem establishes a new covenant with the people. He forewarns them against the influences of assimilation and intermarriage and forbids them to make any treaties with the inhabitants of Canaan. The holidays of Pesach, Shevout, and Succos are reviewed, as well as Shabbos and the basic law of Kashrus.

Moshe remains on Sinai another 40 days and nights and returns on Yom Kippur carrying the second Luchos. The people see that the very being of Moshe had been transformed and that his face radiated with an inner light. Moshe fashions for himself a veil that he would wear at all times, except when receiving a prophecy and when transmitting the word of G-d to the people.

## Melachim Aleph

18:1-39

Our Haftarah begins with Eliyahu experiencing a prophecy from Hashem saying it's time to go back to the Evil King Ahab, and let him know that it will begin to rain again. Eliyahu went to Samaria which was to the North of Jerusalem to meet Ahab. Ahab's wife was the Evil Queen Ezevel. She tried to kill every G-d fearing Jew in the land of Israel. She almost succeeded except for Obadiah, a convert from Edom, who was in the Royal administration and he hid 100 of the remaining prophets in two caves and paid for their food & oil for lamps from his own money. Ahab asked Ovadia to go all over the land of Israel, to look for water, otherwise all their animals were going to die of thirst.

King Ahab & Obadiah split up and went looking in different directions. Suddenly Elijah appears in front of Ovadia. Elijah tells Ovadia to go bring King Ahab to him. Ovadia asks "what did I do wrong?" "I'm going to go get King Ahab & when I get here you'll be gone and he will kill me. Elijah assures Ovadia that he will be there when King Ahab comes.

When King Ahab set eyes on Elijah he said "So there's the trouble maker" & Elijah "You are the trouble maker. Let's settle the score for once and for all". "We'll go up to Mount Carmel. We'll take two slaughtered bulls and put them up on their respective altars and let's see whose g-d replies to them with a flame from the heavens.

Eliyahu commands the king to assemble the people and the idolatrous priests of Ba'al & Asherah. All 950 of them. Eliyahu suggests an experiment to determine who the true G-d is. After dancing, singing & drumming, the Ba'al & Asherah Priest's get no response from their gods. Eliyahu prepares for the sacrifice and tefilla. Hashem responds with a heavenly fire that burns the ox of the Israelites. . Everyone who witnessed this miracle fell to their knees and said "Hashem hoo ha'Elokim" "G-d is the lord"



# פורים – כי תשא

## Don't Give Up Hope!

Living in this world means preparing yourself for change.

Situations, losses and gains, good and bad; they are all in a day's work.

Our job is to look behind the façade, to see what is really happening to us and why.

But most of all we must never give up hope, for hope is what drives our future and steers us to a more positive outcome.

In the opening words of Parshas Ki Tisav, Hashem commands Moshe to count the Jewish people.

But the words carry a cryptic message, meant to show us what really counts in our lives.

**כי תשא את ראש בני ישראל לפקודיהם ותנתן איש נופר נפשו לד'**

(lit. meaning- When you count Bnei Yisroel, count them via an object rather than a headcount, and this will be an atonement for their lives).

Learning these words differently from their simple meaning reveals the following-

Hashem is telling us - remember, when you encounter losses (Pekudim) raise your head and look to the future (Ki Sisa Es Rosh)- but remember, every Nisayon is only a test that carries with it the opportunity of coming closer to G-d (Venasnu Ish Kofer Nafsho Lashem)

We must feel in the deepest fiber of our being that every single thing that occurs is a direct message from Shamayim, meant to help us on our journey.

We may need to wait a bit, though, for the complete message to come through.. but it is always one that brings us closer in the end.

As illustrated in the following parable:

A wealthy merchant in the old country fell upon hard times.

Thieves had broken into his successful store, cleaning out his cash assets and most of the inventory (including some rare stones and jewelry).

Not one to be deterred easily, he invested the remaining funds into buying more stock and he was "back in business"- as the crowds patronized him once more.

Vayehi Hayom, unfortunately the robbers had been tracking him and striking again, they cleaned out whatever had remained along with the new merchandise he had purchased...

Left without choices, and needing to support his large family- he was limited, store-keeping was the only thing he knew..

He located a small little store in town.

In order to open once again he needed to sell his wife's jewelry along with whatever was of value at home, taking loans to open a tiny outlet, helping his family survive.

But it didn't take long until the thieves visited him once again and he was left with absolutely nothing.

A new store was out of the question for him .

Sadly, he was reduced to borrowing small amounts of money in order go from town to town peddling tiny quantities of goods with other desperately poor people who barely made enough to provide their families with bread, milk and other bare essentials.

The road was long and lonely and many a time, for lack of sales they were reduced to bartering with each other for these essentials.

He had reached rock bottom.

It was a cold and windy journey and he carried with him barely enough food to survive the rough winter.

On a lonely country road, the worst that could happen, happened.

He was robbed by a marauder on a fast horse. Everything he was carrying with him was now gone.

Breaking down he cried uncontrollably at his situation- remembering times past when he had riches only added to his misery- and he cried out to Hashem, pleading in anguish from the depths of his soul.

But wait, through the corner of his eyes, in his rush to leave- the robber had fallen off his horse and was immediately trampled on by the large animal-

The thief lay lifeless on the road, dead but still holding onto a large leather bag.

Approaching the robber, our storekeeper examined the contents of this bag and in it he found large amounts of cash and invoices that showed all this cash to be from his stores (all of them)- unbelievably, this was the man who had tracked and robbed him at every juncture of his life!

He was even carrying the rare diamonds and jewelry he had once taken from him- all of these riches would now be returned to their rightful owner!

Returning to his town, he started up his business and it didn't take long till great success was his again B"H!

The message of this story is clear.

No matter how great the loss, how hard the situation- how many times we fail, we must cry out to our Creator for mercy every step of the way.

For the alternative-falling into despair, into Yeush.. carries with it a dark future..a closed and cloudy uncertain path.

But as the possuk tells us, if we raise our heads (Ki Sisa Es Rosh) - we can ask Hashem to bring us success once more and to remember us (Lifkudeihem).

If bad news brings us closer to Hashem, then we have passed our Nisayon, those most important tests - the tests of our faith .

By realizing that everything is in the hands of G-d; every action custom designed for us (Ish Kofer Nafsho Lashem) we will surely be rewarded with tremendous goodness.. and Bezras Hashem witness miracles beyond our comprehension.

Good Shabbos!

מורנו ורבינו רשכבה"ג גאון הגאונים הגר' שמואל אוירבעך זצוק"ל זיע"א שהיה לו ימים אלו של פורים ימי ששון שמחה ממש והיה מדבר אך ורק על חיזוקים בתורה ועבודה וגדלות וקירבת ה' והיה במאר שיסוד הדין שמחה בפורים בין בשיעור של עד דלא ידע מגילה ז: וידוע מה שמדויק ברמב"ם שאין זה חוב עד עד דלא ידע ואז יוצאים החיוב אלא שזה פטור שכשמגיע לעד דלא ידע אזי פטורים מדין שוטה שפטור מהמצות, עכ"פ הר"י זצוק"ל ביאר שזה הקרבה גופנית של כולה לה' וזהו תוכן דבריו שדבר בסעודת פורים תשנ"ט ובמעלת היום פורים יש גם את ענין קדושת הגופניות, הקדושה של הכלי המקבל, לא רק ברוחניות השכל והדעת, גם הגוף בשר אדם של ישראל, הכל הוא קדוש קודשים, ולזה צריך מדרגה גבוהה יותר מהדעת הרוחנית, מדרגה שבה גם הגוף הוא קדוש.

תמיד כשמקבלים את ההשגות הרוחניות הגבוהות, הגוף החומרי חוצץ ומפריע, ובפורים כוח המקבל הגוף שהוא הכלי קיבול גדול יותר מכל השנה ביום הגדול הזה מתגלה הכח של הכלי קיבול, הגוף, והוא לא חוצץ כל כך, מה שאין בימים אחרים בשנה, ואף בראש השנה וביום הכיפורים, ואמנם בכח הרוחניות יש ימים שהם גבוה יותר מפורים, ומכל מקום בכח זה כח של המקבל כשהרוחניות נכנסת לתוך הגוף, בזה יום הפורים הוא המיוחד יותר מכל ימות השנה, וזהו חיוב איניש לבסומי עד דלא ידע לצאת מהדעת ומכח השכל לבדו, בגלל רצון ה' ולגלות את האדם הרוחני שבגוף בכלי הקיבול ובבחינה הזו של קיימו וקיבלו, בחינת המקבל, זהו יום המיוחד בשנה, ועוד הרחיק הר"י זצוק"ל כדרכו בתורת הגר"א זיע"א שהיה בקי בו ישר והפוך ממש לבאר הדברים של הכשרת הכלי קיבול ואכמ"ל.

והדברים מבהילים ונוראים ורואים למי שאמרם, כעת אחר שעלה השמימה ונתגלה לעין כל שהמשה רבינו של הדור כלשונו של ר' אלי בער ואכספיוגל שליט"א בהספידו,הוא היה חד בדרי ממש בתורה בנגלה בנסתר ממש, אבי אבי רבב ישראל, היה אבי בשם ופוסקים היה אבי טבור ושולחן ערוך אבי בתורת הקבלה אבי בתורת האריזל ( כמו שמפורסם מש"כ בהקדמה לספרו דרכי שמואל לא מצאתי כן בכל כתיבי האריזל) וכן אבי בכל תורת הגר"א, אבי בחסד היה ליבן של יתומים ואלמנות, מוסר ששכנסה אלמנה לר"י וסיפרה שגרה בבני ברק ויש לה לחתן בת ואין לה כלל איך לחתן את ביתה, הראש ישיבה בירר את המצב, ואמר שלאחרונה מכר את הבית שלו בגשר החיים ונתן לאלמנה את כל הכסף לחתונה, אין תפיסה שאבדנו מהעולם היה ליבן של ישראל ממש, כל מציאותו היה מציאותו של כלל לא היה לו שום חישוב ואינטרס כי הוא זה ממש.

וזה נבע משקיעות בעומק העיון כל ימי חייו, לא היה נמצא בשמחה של אחד מתלמידיו בלי גמרא, ולא אירוע בלי גמרא, כמו שהספיד אותו הגאון הגדול ר' צבי פרידמן שליט"א שהיה מוצא אותו לא בגמרא שנלמדת בישיבה אלא בקדשים וטהרת בסוגיות התמורות והקשות שבש"ס, בידי היה עובדא נכנסתי לדבר אם הר"י זצוק"ל על הקשר שלו אם הגר"ש בירנבוים זצוק"ל והזכרתי לו שהגר"ש בירנבוים בלוויה של הגר' שמחה זיסל ברויזא חיפש אותו ומצאו ברכבו ומיד נכנס לרכב ומיד התחילו לדבר במלחמתה של תורה ממש, והתבטא הר"י זצוק"ל על הגר"ש שהיה "ארי הח"י חיבבו אחד את השני עד אין שיעור, ובכל זמן היו מדברים אם הר"י זצוק"ל בלימוד בכל התורה כולה היה מונח ממש כמו שלמד את זה באותו רגע להפליא.

אבד חסיד מהארץ!!! היתי מתאמץ ללכת להתפלל אצל הראש ישיבה זצוק"ל והיתי מביא איתך בחורים ממיר, ובתוכם חסידים, ופשוט היו יוצאים מדעתם ואומרים שזהו דבר פלאי לראות איך מתפללים ממש עומד לפני המלך, בכזה התעוררות וכונה בבכיאות ממש, ומי שלא היה רגיל לזה היה יוצא מדעתו ממש, עבד קמיה מריה ממש ללא שום גוזמאות, היה קדוש וטהור כל ימיו בנקיית הלב והרגיש הכל ולא נתן די לכל אחד אשר היה דבר ידוע לרגילים בביתו, ובעל המות נלצח ומחה ד' כל דמע מעל כל פנים ונאמר אמן.

שבת שלום  
ואפריליין פורים  
דוד יהודה פייירסטון  
ישיבת יורה דעה ליברטי

Erev Shabbos Plag Mlynan for Mincha & Maariv  
**BLUEBERRY HILL AREA**  
KI-SISA  
**Mincha 4:15 Plag: 4:37**  
30 Dr Frank Rd. Entrance From Humbert



# Searching for Self-Esteem?

## How Do You Judge Your Worth?

### **Counting the Jews**

The opening verses of this week's Torah portion, Ki Sisa, convey G-d's instruction to Moses on how to count the Jewish people. When it is necessary to conduct a census, Jews are to be counted not in an ordinary manner, person by person, but rather, every member of the community should contribute a coin for charity, and then the coins should be counted to determine how many people contributed.

What is the rationale behind this instruction? Why the need to count the community in such a round-about fashion, rather than simply counting the people directly?

Two messages, it seems, are being conveyed here.

### **What Are You Worth?**

First, the Torah is suggesting that you are counted not based on who you are but on what you give. Your genuine value and worth spring forth from your contribution to another soul, from the love and kindness you impart to another heart.

Sir Moses Montefiore, a 19th century Jewish international diplomat and philanthropist, was once asked how much he was worth. The wealthy man thought for a while and named a figure. The other replied, "That can't be right. By my calculation you must be worth many times that amount."

Moses Montefiore's reply was this: "You didn't ask me how much I own. You asked me how much I'm worth. So I calculated the amount I have given to charity this year and that is the figure I gave you. You see," he said, "we are worth what we are willing to share with others."

### **Evaluating a people**

Yet, there seems to be a one more vital message presented in this instruction, one that would reverberate throughout history.

To appreciate the value and greatness of a people, the Torah is suggesting, you must study not the number of its bodies, but

the breadth of their contributions. What matters most is not the quantity of its adherents, but rather their commitment towards making a difference and their inspiration and readiness to make sacrifices for their values and ideals. Numbers can be deceiving. Large groups of people often barely leave a trace. On the other hand, there are times that small groups, when committed heart and soul to their mission statement, have left an enormous impact, totally disproportionate to their numbers.

To appreciate the significance of Jewish existence, the Bible is telling us, you must study not its numbers: Jews never constituted more than one percent of society. Rather, you must examine the impact this little monotheistic group has had on the world. Other nations, cultures and civilizations enjoyed far greater numbers, larger territories and mightier armies. But no other person or nation has left an impression on the very fabric of civilization as the relatively few and often hunted and persecuted descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

As Catholic writer Thomas Cahill wrote in his national bestseller *The Gifts of the Jews: How a Tribe of Desert Nomads Changed the Way Everyone Thinks and Feels*:

"Most of our best words in fact - new, adventure, surprise; unique individual, person, vocation; time, history, future; freedom, progress, spirit; faith, hope and justice—are the gifts of the Jews ... We can hardly get up in the morning or cross the street without being Jewish. We dream Jewish dreams and hope Jewish hopes."

Here is a passage by contemporary historian Paul Johnson in his bestseller *"History of the Jews"*:

All the great conceptual discoveries of the intellect seem obvious and inescapable once they have been revealed, but it requires a special genius to formulate them for the first time. The Jew has this gift. To them we owe the

idea of equality before the law, both divine and human; of the sanctity of life and the dignity of the human person; of the individual conscience and so of personal redemption; of the collective conscience and so of social responsibility; of peace as an abstract ideal and love as the foundation of justice, and many other items which constitute the basic moral furniture of the human mind. Without the Jews, it might have been a much emptier place."

### **The Power to Love**

Just as this is true concerning our national identity, it is true concerning every individual person. At times you may think to yourself, "I am worthless; I amount to nothing."

Comes the Torah and says, that you on your own, cloistered in your vanity and egotism, detached from your true core of absolute dignity and majesty, may indeed amount to a small, futile creature, unworthy of counting ("If I am only for myself, what am I," Hillel is quoted as saying in the *Ethics of the Fathers*). However, each of us, at our core, is a "spark of the Divine," a "fragment" of His light, a free, wholesome, confident and happy spirit. As such you have the power to contribute something to the world, to reach out to an individual in need. Each of us has the ability to touch a heart, to lift a spirit, to kindle a soul, to look a fellow human being in the eyes and say "I Love you." You may be small indeed, but the love and light you can bring to another life through a simple gesture, a sincere "good morning," or an act of goodness and kindness, is immeasurable and cannot be counted.

And when you reach out to others, you will discover the depth of the love that G-d has for you. You are part of His light, thus you can share His light with so many others.



## *Hilchos challah for Purim*

In honor of the yom tov of Purim, I would like to share with you a shiur on hilchos chalah that was given when the Night Kollel learned hilchos challah, and is relevant to Purim.

The following are some common questions that come up in regards to the halachos of challah that are relevant to Shalach Manos:

- Do chocolate cake and sponge cake require hafrashas chalah?
- How do we apply the rules of tziruf sal – combining all one’s shaloch monos in one place – will that require one to now take off challah?

This is especially relevant this year, with Purim so close to Shabbos and many people giving challos for shaloch manos.

**Sponge cake and chocolate cake:** Although these cakes are made with a batter and not dough, the consensus of the poskim is that sponge cake and chocolate cake do, in fact, require separating challah and should be separated after it is baked.

Throughout the year, people do not usually separate challah, when baking cakes, because in general, people do not bake cakes in large

quantities and do not use the amount that requires separating challah. However, before Purim, with people baking up a storm, in quantities that do require separating challah, they should be separating challah

### **Tziruf sal - combining all one’s shaloch monos in one place:**

In regards to challah there is a special halachah called tziruf sal, the combining all one’s dough or bread in one “basket.” In a nutshell, this regulation is that if one baked less than the amount required to separate challah and subsequently put all of the baked goods together in one box or basket, he will then become required to separate challah.

This is the procedure used when baking matzos: although each batch is not large enough to require taking challah, once they put it all together in one big box or container, the requirement of challah kicks in.

This question is very applicable to shalach manos – both on the giver’s end as well as for the recipient. Often, a person will bake a little at a time and then put all the baked items together in a big box or the freezer. Similarly, one may

receive a variety of shalach manos from people who did not have the sufficient amount to require the separating of challah and then puts them all together in a big box or the freezer. In these cases, does one become required to separate challah, now that he has the proper amount in one “basket”?

This question is a source of great discussion among the contemporary poskim. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt”l raises the question whether a freezer will have the halachic status of a “basket,” since it is plugged-in to the wall and attached to the house. Additionally, he points out that, often the various batches of shalach manos are individually wrapped and are considered separate entities and are not associated one with the other, even when they are placed in the freezer or one big container. One more factor will be when a person puts the various shalach manos into the freezer and wants them to be kept separate, the regulation of being in one basket also does not apply, since he wants them to stay as separate entities and they are therefore not associated one with the other.

Wishing you a Freilechin Purim and a Wonderful Shabbos,

*Rabbi Nachum Scheiner*



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# Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk

**Never drive after drinking (even locally)**

**Give your car keys to a friend before you drink**

**Be careful crossing streets**

**Providing alcohol to underage children is not only inappropriate, IT IS ILLEGAL**

**Let's keep the simcha in Purim by acting responsibly**

**Make Purim Great again**

## Convenience @ 18

(In the shed between 18 & 20 Forshay)

Sunday-Friday 7am-12pm

- Danishes
- Sandwiches
- Juice
- Iced Cappuccino & Coffee

Thursday Night Extended Hours 7:30pm-10:30pm

- Dips (Dipz)
- Challah (Tam Eden)
- Flowers
- Popinsanity (Artisanal Popcorn)

There is a snack and soda machine in the shed and a gourmet coffee/cappuccino machine in 20 Forshay (downstairs) available 24/6.



## Critical Signs and Symptoms of an Alcohol Overdose

Mental confusion, stupor, coma, or person cannot be roused, Vomiting, Seizures, Slow breathing (fewer than eight breaths per minute),

Irregular breathing (10 seconds or more between breaths)

Hypothermia (low body temperature), bluish skin color, paleness

## What Should I Do If I Suspect Someone Has Overdosed?

- Know the danger signals.

- Do not wait for all symptoms to be present.

- Be aware that a person who has passed out is in extreme danger.

If there is any suspicion of an alcohol overdose, call **Hatzalah or 911** for help. Don't try to guess the level of drunkenness.

**If there is any suspicion of an alcohol overdose, call Hatzalah or 911 for help. Don't worry that your friend may become angry or embarrassed—remember, you cared enough to help. Always be safe, not sorry.**

**HATZALAH OF MONSEY 845-425-1600**



בעוה"ש

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הבח' שמעון ני"ו לנועם עול תורה ומצוות

הננו מתכבדים בזה להזמיןכם להשתתף בשמחתנו

שתתקיים אי"ה

ביום שני פרשת ויקהל פקודי

ח"י אדר תשע"ה

באולם 20 אשל

מאנסי, ניו יורק

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משעה 8:30

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בלאמו"ר הרה"ח ר' אברהם הכהן סנה שליט"א  
חתן הרה"ח ר' שמואל כהנא שליט"א



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**Profound Thoughts**

If the rich could hire other people to die for them, the poor could make a wonderful living.

The wise man, even when he holds his tongue, says more than the fool when he speaks

What you don't see with your eyes, don't invent with your mouth.

A hero is someone who can keep his mouth shut when he is right.

One old friend is better than two new ones.

One of life's greatest mysteries is how the boy who wasn't good enough to marry your daughter can be the father of the smartest grandchild in the world.

A wise man hears one word and understands two.

**Purim Puns**

How do we know that the people of Shushan were hard of hearing?

It says in the Megillah:

Vayi'he bemay Achasvarosh.. who? Achashvarosh!

Question: Why didn't Esther receive Mordechai's e-mail, warning her about Haman's plan to kill the Jews? Answer: She had the Achash-virus on her computer.

**Health Advice**

Q: Doctor, I've heard that cardiovascular exercise can prolong life. Is this true?

A: Your heart is only good for so many beats, and that it...don't waste on exercise. Everything wears out eventually. Speeding up heart will not make you live longer; it like saying you extend life of car by driving faster. Want to live longer? Take nap.

Q: Should I cut down on meat and eat more fruits and vegetables?

A: You must grasp logistical efficiency. What does cow eat? Hay and corn. And what are these? Vegetables. So steak is nothing more than efficient mechanism of delivering vegetables to your system. Need grain? Eat chicken. Beef also good source of field grass (green leafy vegetable).

Q: Should I reduce my alcohol intake?

A: No, not at all. Wine is made from fruit. Brandy is distilled wine that means they take water out of fruity bit so you get even more of goodness that way. Beer also made of grain. Bottoms up!

Q: Will sit-ups help prevent me from getting a little soft around the middle?

A: Definitely not! When you exercise muscle, it get bigger. You should only be doing sit-up if you want bigger stomach..

**Double Check**

The Chelmer reported for his University final examination which consisted of "yes/no" type questions. He stares at the question paper for five minutes, and then in a fit of inspiration removes a coin from his pocket and starts tossing the coin and marking the answer sheet - Yes for Heads and No for Tails.

Within a half an hour, he is all done whereas the rest of the class is sweating it out.

During the last few minutes, he is seen desperately throwing the coin.

The moderator, alarmed, approaches him and asks what is going on.

"I finished the exam in half an hour. But," he says, "I am rechecking my answers."



# A Unique Purim Present for the Bride

Submitted by Mr.M

**Rabbi Shlomo HaLevi Alkabetz**

(author of Lecha Dodi) grew up in dire poverty. Then, as a young man, he became engaged to the daughter of Reb Yitzchak - - a man of wealth and property.

As Purim approached, R. Shlomo's mother called him over with a worried frown.

"As you know, my son, it is the custom, to send along with the mishloach manot a nice gift for the kallah - - a piece of jewelry made of gold or precious stones. How will we follow this custom, when we have nothing?" She sighed deeply.

R. Shlomo did not want to distress his kallah. For some time he sat sunk in thought. Finally, he answered, "Don't worry, Mother. Leave it to me. With G-d's help, by Purim I'll manage to arrange for her something very nice!"

The weeks passed. And then it was Purim.

"Mother," said R. Shlomo, "please prepare cakes and other baked goods to send to the kallah and her family for mishloach manot. As for my gift to her, it is ready." As he spoke, he handed her a package.

His mother was radiant with joy. But when she opening the package to peek inside, she blurted in astonishment, "A manuscript? You're sending a commentary on Megillat Esther to your kallah!?"

"She has plenty of jewelry and fine stones from her rich parents." R' Shlomo said. "But a commentary on the Megillah that I composed myself is something she will not receive from anyone else."

When the kallah's family opened the mishloach manot and found the precious commentary within, her and her father's joy knew no bounds.

"Blessed is He and blessed is His Name!" R' Yitzhak exclaimed happily after reading several pages of what his future son-in-law had written, "that we have gained the merit of having such an outstanding talmid chacham [Torah scholar] fall to our lot. He is worth a thousand jewels!"

Years later, when he published the commentary, Rabbi Alkabetz named it "Manot HaLevi," because it had served its first purpose as part of a mishloach manot.



## What Can We Learn From the Mitzvah of Purim: 7 Important Points

Naamah Green

**1. THE FAITH THAT EVERYTHING HAS DIVINE PROVIDENCE:** The purpose of Purim is that the faith in Divine Providence should take root in us even in a time when things seem hidden and darkness still surrounds us. We should publicize and reveal that this is the main point of the day; to believe that everything is run by Divine Providence with an exact account.

**2. CASTING YOUR BURDEN ON GOD:** This is why Purim is called Purim; because “pur” means lottery. In a lottery a person nullifies his own thoughts and takes away all his calculations and casts his burdens on God Alone.

**3. ERASING AMALEK:** In Jewish books of character development it is brought down that erasing Amalek on Purim and on the Shabbat of Zachor is not a one day thing, it's really for the whole year. The purpose of every man is to uproot his part of Amalek from inside him and to put into his heart the love and fear of God. It is asked why the verse says, “I will erase Amalek, in future tense? The answer is that it's not enough to have already erased Amalek in the past but it has to be an erasing for all of the generations. That means tomorrow again and every day from now on, erase Amalek again and again. In the war against Amalek which is the war against our evil inclination, a man has to always stand on guard and he gets the strength to fight his personal Amalek on Purim.

**4. READING THE MEGILLAH:** The Minchat Eleazar of Munkacz explains the words of the Mishnah: “One who reads the Megillah out of order does not fulfill his obligation. In Hebrew “Iemafrica” out of order has the same root as the word payment because really if he reads the Megillah in a way just to pay his obligation and doesn't read it enthusiastically contemplating on all the kindnesses of God with his children, the children of Israel he didn't fulfill his obligation. He actually missed the opportunity of reading the Megillah: to contemplate what's written there about G-d's great kindness that He did with the Jews his Chosen Nation with Divine Providence and exact detail. If you read it in this way then you fulfill your obligation.”

**5. THE SENDING OF FOOD GIFTS:** Purim is an auspicious time to merit conceiving children. in the name of the Chozeh (The Seer) of Lublin it is brought down that God fulfills the Commandment of sending gifts a man to his friend through sending children to his friends which are the Jews.

**6. GIFTS TO THE POOR:** The Shulchan Aruch (Code of Laws) rules: “We are not overly careful with money on Purim rather anybody who sticks out his hand and asks you should give him.” Since we give in this manner on Purim, God also forgives our sins in any situation we find ourselves in as long as we put out our hand to accept that forgiveness. Then in the same manner without looking too closely, Heaven won't look at him carefully to see if his thoughts of repentance were proper or not.

**7. THE PURIM MEAL WITH WINE** is a Mitzvah of Purim and is a great auspicious time. About the party of Esther it says: “The king said to Esther during the party with wine, what do you ask and I will give it to you.” Our sages explain that during the meal is an auspicious time to ask G-d what you need and He will answer: “What do you ask and I will give it to you”!



## The Half-Shekel Census: Economy Class Giving For Everyone

Rabbi Yissocher Frand

In relation to the Census of the Half-Shekel the Torah tells us “The wealthy should not give extra and the poor should not give less” [Shmos 30:15]. Rav Yeruchem points out that there is an opinion among the enumerators of the commandments that this is one of the 365 negative prohibitions of the Torah.

It is understandable why the Torah must prohibit giving less than a half Shekel. We all know that when we are asked to give ‘X’ amount of dollars, we always have excuses to give less. However, there has probably never been a Building Campaign in the history of the Jewish people where there was a need to emphasize “The wealthy should not give more”.

What kind of person is the Torah referring to here when specifying that he shouldn't give too much?

Rav Yeruchem tells us an insight into human psychology. He says there is a Yetzer Hara for a wealthy individual to want to give more than his neighbor. Part of the Yetzer Hara of being rich is the attitude “It is not appropriate for me to be like everyone else.”

This is what I call the “First Class Syndrome”. Recently, I received a free upgrade from an airline. It was only good until January 15. I had never before flown first class, so I decided to take advantage of the opportunity. I had a scheduled flight from Newark to Baltimore — all of forty minutes but I wanted to find out once and for all what goes on behind that curtain.

I was the only person there. As soon as I came in the stewardess asked me “Would you like a drink?”

Why would someone pay 40% more for a ticket just so the stewardess can offer him a drink, before he has a chance to sit down? Does it make sense to pay \$150 dollars more to save \$3 on a cocktail?

The insight here is that some people sit in first class because “es'past nischt” (it's beneath my dignity) for me to sit back there with the masses in economy class.

This attitude, says Rav Yeruchem, is what the Torah is addressing here — everyone will give the same amount. The wealthy person is confronted with a constant test (nisayon) of haughtiness. “How can I let this person, who has a tenth of what I have, give the same thing as me? I'm different. I'm better. I can't just give a half shekel. I can't just be equal.”

This is what the Torah is addressing. Here there is only one class. Everyone is the same. There is a Yetzer Hara against this. Some of us have it with money; others have it with where we sit or how we are treated. We all have it on different levels.

“I should get Revii?” There is a famous story of a fellow who comes to shul and the gabbai wants to give him Chamishi. He tells the gabbai “where I come from, they give Chamishi to the ‘proste mentchen’ (coarse people)”. The gabbai responded “that is our custom too.”

“The wealthy shall not give more” — that is the test the Torah is addressing.

# THE GREATEST SUCCESS

## RABBI FISCHEL SCHACHTER

### ***As a young boy,***

Alex Clare had a unique knack for both composing and playing music. Even as a young sixteen-year-old, he performed as the drummer and backing vocalist of a band, where he remarkably excelled. But then something happened which got him thinking.

Sitting one day with his friends, Alex didn't look too good. "I know I have a whole career ahead of me which includes a lot of money-making," he remarked, "but suffice it to say, I am just not happy. I am looking for something more, and what I have now is not providing it."

Alex, although far from Torah observance, appreciated and valued his Jewish heritage. And so, he began to learn more about Shabbos and kashrus and explore the meaning of Torah and mitzvos. It was the beginning of a riveting and life-altering journey, but something which Alex fully accepted and embraced.

At the same time, his career moved along and met tremendous success. At age 22, he signed a contract with Island Records, a Major record label. "But," he told them, "I am an observant Jew and cannot play on Shabbos or other holidays." Notwithstanding this condition, the label agreed to work with him. And so, things began to take off. Alex released his debut album - The Lateness of the Hour - which the label expected to be a big hit.

But, as it turned out, despite the tremendous investment spent on the record, it didn't catch on as anticipated. The music was great, but Alex's name was not well-known enough to attract a large clientele. Looking to augment Alex's exposure to fans and the media, the label began making big plans for Alex.

### ***But there was one problem.***

In the music and concert world, Friday nights are important nights. But for Alex, they were important for a different reason: Shabbos. But, of course, his insistence on not performing then brought with it less opportunities to spread his name and fame, which his label wasn't the happiest about. Especially when Alex had to turn down the offer to tour with Adele, a renowned English singer-songwriter, because it would conflict with Pesach, his label was especially disappointed. But, despite this all, Alex was still valued and someone they wished to accommodate.

But then Alex received a message one Saturday, which was also Yom Kippur. The label sounded very excited. Of course, Alex waited to listen to the message until after Shabbos, but when he did hear what it was about, he was quite surprised.

"You're not going to believe this!" they said. "Live Lounge, a segment on the BBC radio station, told us that they had a cancellation and want you to play live! This will be in front of a national audience and be broadcasted over all of Europe. You will receive national coverage and have thousands of listeners. This is it! This is what we've been waiting for. The sales of your record will break through the roof!" Alex listened closely, although he knew that they were forgetting something very important which would nix the entire plan.

"And you won't believe it! They want you to perform Thursday night! We were so scared it was going to be Friday night, but it's not. This will be great... talk soon..." As Alex finished listening to the message, he took a seat. He couldn't believe it for two reasons. For one, this would be the opportunity of a lifetime. It was this concert which would put him on board with other big performers and boost his career farther than he ever imagined. But he also couldn't believe one other detail. Thursday night was the first night of Sukkos. He couldn't perform.

Bravely picking up the phone a little while later, Alex called back and related the circumstances. "This is absurd!" the label stammered. "What do you mean you cannot do it? We already put up enough with you. If you cannot agree to perform this time, we will have no choice but to cut your contract!" Knowing that being released of his contract would result in being blacklisted all over and just about end his career, Alex felt as if the world was caving in.

But then he reminded himself of what he had learned the other day on Yom Kippur. He had read about the unwavering commitment of Rav Amnon of Mainz (author of U'Nesaneh Tokef, the liturgical poem recited on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), who had given up his life rather than renege on his Judaism. Inspiring Alex, he suggested that they look to reschedule to a different night. "I am terribly sorry," Alex said, "but either we reschedule or I do not perform." But the label wouldn't hear of it.

And so, the contract was cut, leaving Alex in a trying and difficult predicament. On top of everything, he still had to repay the musicians he had hired to perform with him. Yet, he had no idea how he would ever do so. Aside from this, he had no means of paying his monthly rent.

Approaching his rabbi (Rabbi Dovid Tugendhaft of Nishmas Yisroel in London) for some guidance, Alex broke down. "Everything was going great until just recently. I was becoming more Torah observant and my career was going well. I was even able to work around performing on Shabbos. But, all of a sudden, this opportunity to perform in England came up and left me now penniless." Looking empathetically at Alex, the rabbi reassured him. "You remind me of Avraham Avinu. He was waiting and waiting for ninety-nine years to have a child, and then he was asked to sacrifice him. He was asked to give up his most precious and beloved son. You too, at your moment of greatness, gave up everything. But, somewhere hidden in this story, there is blessing to be found."

Alex went on to move to Jerusalem and study in a yeshiva where he could grow in his knowledge and breadth of Torah. By now, Alex had come to terms with his situation. He in no way regretted making the decision to refrain from playing on Shabbos and holidays and bearing the subsequent consequences. Now, life was different, yet meaningful. He had finally found that purpose he had been searching after for many years.

### ***But then the unexpected happened.***

One day, Alex received a call from Microsoft. Although Alex had been blacklisted and out of contact with anyone for months, Microsoft had finally tracked him down. They wanted to use his first hit "Too Close" as the soundtrack for an ad launching the new version of Internet Explorer 9. "Could we do so?" they asked. Sure enough, Alex agreed.

The next thing Alex knew, the song was literally all over the world. It was being played on television worldwide and picking up enormous traction. It became the number one hit in Germany, number four on the UK Singles Chart, number seven in the US and received 45 million views on YouTube. And his debut album, which had previously flopped, now sold over six million copies.

### ***And that is the story of Alex Clare.***

It is much easier said than done, but here was someone who was not only ready to give up everything for Shabbos and Yiddishkeit, but actually did. And without question, Hashem handsomely paid him back. The renown he was ready to give up forever came back to him. But this time, it was even greater than before. He was not merely spreading his own name; he was spreading Hashem's name in the profoundest of ways and making a grand Kiddush Hashem.

# FROM TEFILLIN TO RELIGION

Rabbi Meyer Bodner

**וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָל אִשְׂרָאֵל דְּבַר ד' נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע**

*And they said, "Everything that Hashem has spoken we will do and we will hear" (Shemot 24:7)*

For Jack, life growing up in the Bronx brought with it the full range of exposure and experiences. After attending public school and joining a gang as a youngster, Jack continued on to college with his vision set on making a life for himself. Soon thereafter, he met his wife and moved to Ra'anana, Israel. While neither he nor his wife was observant, Jack's familial history included his religious grandparents. And so, when he one day found himself standing in a pork restaurant after being asked by his wife to grab some dinner, his mind began to wander.

Remembering how his grandfather had given up his life during the Holocaust rather than publicly eat pork, he stopped in his tracks. He couldn't bring himself to purchase the very food his grandfather sacrificed his life to avoid eating. And with that, he returned home empty-handed.

As days went by, Jack's mind periodically drifted back to the scene of standing in the restaurant and refraining from buying non-kosher food. It was around this time that Jack heard about an Arachim weekend seminar which was soon to take place, where inspirational and educational talks about basic Judaism would be given. Asking his wife if she would like to attend, to his delight, she complied. After spending a few days listening to the various speakers and presentations, Jack was significantly inspired.

As Jack drove home with his wife and two children, it wasn't too long before his wife noticed something unusual. Jack was wearing a head covering. "You know, Jack, there are no rabbis here now. You can take that thing off your head." "Yeah, I know," he muttered back. After a few minutes of silence, his wife asked again, "Is something wrong? Do you want to tell me something?" "I am becoming religious," he said. Jack's wife was understandably surprised. "What about me?" "You can become observant also," he insisted. "And what about us?" chimed in the kids. "You can also become religious. And come to think of it, now that I am becoming observant, I would like to stop off at my parents' house. My father has my tefillin which I haven't worn since my bar mitzvah." "That's a good idea," replied his wife. "I'll tell your father to talk you out of this idea."

As soon as Jack's father opened the door, there he saw his son standing along with his distressed wife. "You got to talk your son out of this," was all Jack's wife had to say. "Dad, do you still have the tefillin I wore for my bar mitzvah?" "Sure, I do," he said. A few minutes later, Jack's father returned with the tefillin in his hands and tears in his eyes. Clearly, there was something special to this pair of tefillin, about which Jack's father went on to explain for the first time:

"During the Holocaust, a friend of mine was selected for death. There was no escape for him. As he was being taken to meet his end, he threw something to me. I thought it was a loaf of bread in a bag, but it wasn't. It was a pair of tefillin. And so, from then on, I decided to put the tefillin on every morning.

"One morning, however, that all changed. As I was wearing my tefillin, a Gestapo officer caught me. 'You're going to get it!' he fumingly yelled. I was then taken and positioned to be hanged in front of throngs of men and women. With a noose around my neck, I was asked, 'What's your last wish?' Catching my voice, I said, 'I would like to put tefillin on for the last time.' 'That's a good idea,' the officer exclaimed. 'Now you will experience your last moments of life wearing your tefillin.'

"And so, the noose was wrapped around my neck as I wore my tefillin on my arm and head. As I looked upon the countless Jews whose teary eyes gazed at me, I exclaimed aloud, 'Am Yisroel Chai! I am fortunate to be a Jew!' 'Yeah, you really think so?' the officer angrily mocked. 'I'm not going to let you hang; I am going to give you an even more painful death.' He proceeded to demand that I remove the noose from around my neck and lift two boulders in my hands while he would whip me with twenty-five lashes. Then he would shoot me. After twenty-five lashes, though, I unconsciously fell to the floor.

"Thinking that I was dead, the officers threw me onto a pile of other bodies. And then they walked away. But, although I looked dead, I wasn't. And so, later that night, I crawled with as much strength as I could to the closest bunker where they hid me for a short while until we were all liberated."

"This, my son," said Jack's father with tears, "is that pair of tefillin. They have been waiting here for you." And with that, Jack's father took a look at his daughter-in-law and asked, "Should I not give these tefillin to my son? They are what gave me life. Without them, I would not be here today."

But that is not the end of the story. Jack's father did not stop there.

"You know what?" he said looking at Jack. "I also want to start putting tefillin on just like you and become religious." "Religious?" piped up Jack's mother to her husband. "What about me?" "You too will become religious," he said. "We're all going to become religious."

"And so, it was," concluded Rabbi Yosef Wallis, today's CEO and director of Arachim. "I am Jack. And indeed, my wife and I, my parents and even my brothers and sisters all went on to become religious."

We can never know what will spur an individual to return to Hashem. Sometimes it can be an awe-inspiring speech, other times a life changing experience and occasionally, even a pair of tefillin.

# THE SHPOLER ZEIDE'S PURIM PLAY

Once a Jew named Mendel came to the tzaddik Reb Aryeh Leib of Shpola, asking for help. At a glance, the rebbe could see that he was terribly upset.

"Rebbe, I don't know what to do!" the man said. "A year ago I left my home in Rumania to come to Russia, together with my wife and family. We hoped to get a new start in life, but we've had no luck. In addition to all the expenses of moving, which I don't know how I'll pay, I have now received official papers demanding that I appear in court on charges of stealing money from the government."

"Believe me, Rebbe, I never touched a penny that wasn't mine in my whole life. I don't know what it's all about. Rebbe! What am I to do?"

"Don't be worried," said Reb Aryeh Leib, trying to calm him down. "Tell me, where is the trial to take place?"

"Here in Russia," Mendel replied. "They wanted to take me back to Rumania, but the Russian government protected me."

"Good. It's best to be on your own ground. Is there a date for the trial?"

"Yes, it's scheduled for —"

"Have it changed," the rebbe said sharply. "Do everything in your power to make sure the trial takes place on Purim day! Do you have a lawyer?"

"No, Rebbe. Not yet!"

The rebbe paused for a moment and then said, "Mendel, I'll make you a deal. I know a certain girl who is soon to get married. The poor girl is an orphan, with no father or mother to help her. I am trying to do what I can. She still needs 300 rubles for the wedding. If you get me the money for her, I will get you a good lawyer."

Mendel was overjoyed. 300 rubles was a lot of money, but Mendel immediately handed the sum to the rebbe. Filled with good hope, he turned to go.

"Wait, Mendel. How will you know who your lawyer is?" said the rebbe. Mendel gazed at the rebbe without speaking. "Listen, don't worry. He will meet you in the courtroom on Purim day. You will be able to recognize him by his white hat and red gloves. Is that a good enough sign?"

Mendel smiled gratefully. "Thank you, Rebbe," he said.

Mendel returned home and immediately began carrying out the rebbe's instructions. He began going to the offices of the court, filing papers and speaking

to officials in order to have the date of the trial changed. At first he met with no success. Refusing to take no for an answer, he kept on trying, until at last he succeeded. The trial was set for Purim day.

Shortly before the trial, Mendel sent a letter to the rebbe enclosing more money to be distributed to the needy on Purim, and asking for the rebbe's blessing.

Finally, the day of the trial arrived. In the Shpoler Zeide's shul, everyone was in an excited Purim mood.

Following his yearly custom, Reb Aryeh Leib prepared to make his Purim play. He gave instructions to his students and to the people of the town who would be the actors, but no one really knew what the play was about.

One of the townsfolk was instructed to play the part of a Jew named Mendel. Another was to be Mendel's old friend who had turned against him, and was in fact the chief witness for the prosecution.

The judge was to be played by the rabbi of the town. The prosecutor, who was trying to prove Mendel's guilt, was told to cover his face with black paint. The Shpoler Zeide himself dressed up as Mendel's lawyer. He put a white scarf around his fur shtreimel, and wore red gloves. The trial began. First the "chief justice" read the charges. Then the "prosecutor" with the black face tried to tell the court what a terrible person "Mendel" was, a hardened criminal and a thief. However, all the townsfolk watching the play kept interrupting him and laughing at everything he said.

Next, "Mendel's former friend" took the stand. He told the court that the true reason "Mendel" had moved to Russia was in order to run away from the law. He had found a chest of golden coins belonging to the government of Rumania, and now he was trying to make off with the money.

Then two "witnesses on Mendel's side" were called to take the stand. They testified just the opposite. They told the court how they had seen the "friend" demanding a huge sum of money from Mendel. When Mendel refused to give him the money, the "friend" threatened to make big trouble.

Finally, the Shpoler Zeide, dressed up as Mendel's lawyer, made his speech. He showed how the whole case was based on a lie, made up by the wicked "friend." He proved that there never was a chest of gold; and even if there had been one, and Mendel had found it, the Rumanian government could not legally claim a penny. Everyone was spellbound, and hung on to his every word.

verdict.

The "judge," who was the rabbi of the town, declared Mendel innocent. Mendel's wicked "friend" was reproached and sent off in shame. The "prosecutor" with the black face was grabbed and pushed out of court, and told to go wash his face.

Then the Shpoler Zeide and all his followers sat down to their festive Purim meal. In the middle of their rejoicing, a message from the real Mendel arrived. The trial had gone splendidly! He was free! He would return to Shpola at once.

A few days later, Mendel showed up and told everyone about the trial and his wonderful lawyer. People opened their eyes in disbelief. It was exactly what had happened in the Shpoler Zeide's Purim play!

Mendel could not wait to see the tzaddik. "Thank you, Rebbe," he said. "You sent me an amazing lawyer. Everyone said they had never heard anyone like him before! Most important of all, here I am. Free! He saved my life!"

"I am so glad to hear it," said the rebbe. "Do you by any chance know who that lawyer was?"

"No, Rebbe," Mendel replied.

"So I will tell you. He was a holy angel from heaven, created by the charity you gave to help that orphan girl get married.

"If you are lucky, you may see him again. After 120 years, when you will be summoned to G d's court in heaven to account for what you did in this world, he may come again to be your lawyer and to speak in your defense!"

## Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis a"h Reaching Beyond

לתת את תרומת ד' To give the portion of Hashem (Shemot 30:15)

When I initially started the Hineni Movement over forty years ago and looked to return Jews back to their roots, I had no following. I was looking to make use of the Theater at Madison Square Garden, something for which I needed financial aid, but I didn't know if I could do it. My father and husband however told me, "Go for it and Hashem will help you."

I was then told that there is a gentleman by the name of Joe Wall who would pick up the tab and give me a blank check. "Do you know him?" I asked the person telling me this. "No, I don't." "Who will then introduce me to him?" I asked. "I don't know," came the reply. "Well, how will I ever get an appointment with him?" "I don't know," was the answer again.

Telling this to my parents and husband, they nevertheless

encouraged me. "Here is a door of opportunity; give it a try." Eventually obtaining Joe Wall's phone number, I figured that I would call him. I was certain, though, that I would only get as far as the secretary or housekeeper. I would then be told that they could not get me through to him and that would be the end of my hopes.

But Joe Wall answered the phone.

"Mr. Wall, I would like to see you; I have something urgent to discuss." "Come over!" he enthusiastically said. As I heard this reply, I couldn't believe my ears. Just getting in touch with him was beyond my expectation.

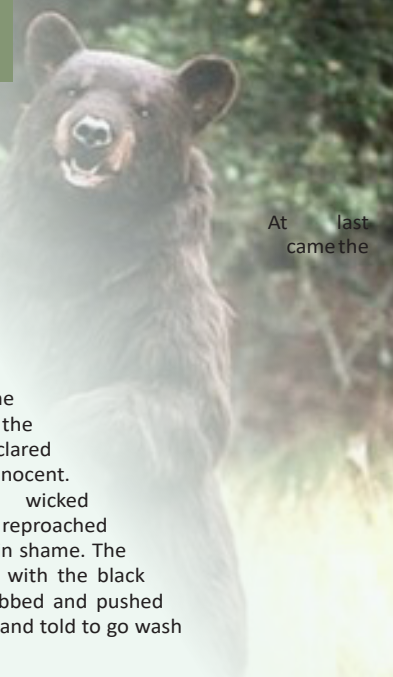
Telling him that we must spiritually awaken the Jewish people and prevent assimilation, I explained how he could help. "I would like to use Madison Square Garden as the forum for people to be given a Torah education. I

don't, however, want to charge for others to come and learn. It would therefore be very helpful if you could financially help this cause."

Looking back at me, Joe shouted for his wife, Robbie, to come over.

"Listen to this story," he said. After making me repeat my story, his wife had something to say. "Joe, if you don't go and give her a blank check, I will go to the safe, take out my jewelry and give it to her."

Nothing should ever hold us back from reaching out and striving to achieve that which appears to be unattainable. Who would have expected a simple phone call to carry such magnanimous repercussions? But then again, when Hashem sees our sincere efforts, nothing is impossible.



At last came the



### WHAT IS CHUPA II?

There are many opinions as to the exact halachic definition of nisui'in, which is also called chupa. We previously mentioned that some Rishonim hold that chupa is not what we call chupa; it requires that the choson and kalah be secluded in a private room. In this article we will discuss another opinion.

Hachnasa lirshuso – bringing her into his home

The Ran takes strong issue with this opinion, quoting many sources in the Gemara to prove that yichud is not a prerequisite in chupa. Rather chupa is when the choson takes her into his own quarters for the sake of marriage.

One of his proofs that chupa is not yichud is from the Gemara in Kesuvos 12a. The Gemara there discusses an unfortunate case of a woman who was widowed, immediately after the chupa, before they were even together in the yichud room. The Gemara rules that she still has the halachic status of an almanah, a widow after nisui'in, who receives a smaller kesuva. We see from here, says the Ran, that it is possible to have a chupa, although there was no yichud.

As far as the aforementioned proof from the Gemara that a nida's chupa is delayed, he adds that it is no proof. Since the purpose of the chupa is for them to live together as husband and wife, which is forbidden when she is a nida, the chachamim did not expect them to get married until they can live together. Hence, although they could get married if they want to, they are not expected to do so, and consequently there is no requirement for him to take care of her food necessities.

The Ran ends off by stating that we follow the latter opinion, that chupa is without yichud and we, therefore, have no problem with a chupa of a nida. However, he adds, it is still proper to make the chupa when she is not a nida.

### WHAT IS THE HALACHAH?

Halachically speaking, this would seem to be a dispute between the Mechaber and the Rama (E"H 55:1). As he often does, the Mechaber seems to follow the Rambam, and includes yichud as a part of the chupa. The Beis Shmuel (s"k 2) adds that he is following the Rambam, who requires chupa harau libiah. There is, however, an apparent contradiction in the Shulchan Aruch, because later on (61:2), he writes that it is just preferable not to have a chupa take place if she is a nida. This would seem to imply that the chupa would be valid if done when she is a nida, which does not fit with the opinion of the Rambam.

However, the Rama writes that others argue and do not include yichud as part of the chupa. The Rama continues to follow this opinion and, later on (61:2), he writes

that we allow a chupa to take place even if she is a nida. This is, indeed, the minhag among the Ashkenazim, as is reported by the Maharsham (III:92), as well as the Aruch Hashulchan, Igros Moshe (E"H I:92), and Emes L'Yaakov (61:2). Both the Igros Moshe and Emes L'Yaakov add that it is definitely better to plan the chupa to take place at a time of the month that she will not be a nida, but, if it turns out that she is a nida, the wedding should not be delayed because of it.

It is interesting to note that some are concerned with the opinion of the other Rishonim and will make another "chupa" when they are allowed to do yichud for the first time. In fact, my grandfather told me that he was one of the eidim at a chupas nida, and subsequently called back a few days later to testify on the yichud, as well.

### COMMUNITY KOLLEL NEWS:

Yeshivas Kiyumu v'Kiblu: Once again, we are pleased to announce an exciting learning program for the auspicious days of Purim, with Matan Schara B'tzida. All learning will take place in 18 Forshay Upstairs.

The schedule is as follows: Purim Night: at least 1 hour between 9-11:00pm. Purim Day: at least 1 1/2 hours between 9am-1:30pm. Refreshments will be served.

Shushan Purim: at least 2 hours between 10am-1pm. Breakfast 9:15-10am and Lunch 1-1:30pm 20 in the Tent.

For more information, please contact: 845 293 0670 // BMOCKN@gmail.com.

The Night Kollel Daf Hashavua Program is wrapping up Meseches Rosh Hashana before Purim and will be starting Meseches Tannis after Purim. Come join this new and exciting mesechta. The shiur takes place on Monday – Thursday evenings from 8:15 – 8:45.

The Night Kollel will be starting a new shiur in the acclaimed Sefer: "Zerah Shimshon," known to be mesugel for yeshuos and brochos. The shiur will be starting after Purim, every Thursday night: 8:15 – 9:00, in 18 Forshay Main Bais Medrash, followed by Maariv at 9:00.

I gave a shiur at the Kollel Boker, on the topic of "Differences in Halacha between the Megillah by night and day, and Hilchos Megillah for the Tzibur." As always, the shiur will be available on the shul's website 18Forshay.com and on MP3 in the shul, as well as on Torahanytime.

Wishing you a Freilechin Purim and a Wonderful Shabbos,

*Rabbi Nachum Scheiner*



Daf Yomi Chabura



# PURIM 5778 MORNING - NIGHT BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM

**COME LEARN & WIN** **PURIM** 9:30-10:30 AM

**YESHIVAS MORDECHAI HATZADIK**  
FATHERS & SONS! ALL ARE WELCOME!  
"לך בנוס את כל היהודים"  
GRAND FINALE OF  
**AVOS UBANIM**

LEARNING, BREAKFAST, PRIZES

**20 Forshay Road - Tent**  
FOR QUESTIONS OR MORE INFO, PLEASE CONTACT RABBI FRIED AT 917-902-0744



**קימו וקבלו**  
Under the direction of Rabbi Nachum Scheiner  
פורים תשע"ח

We are pleased to announce  
**Yeshivas Kiyemu v'Kiblu**  
With Matan Schara B'tzida

### SCHEDULE

#### Purim Night

1 hour between 9-11:00pm

#### Purim Day

1 ½ hours between 9am-12:30

Refreshments will be served

#### Shushan Purim

2 hours between 10am-1pm

Breakfast 9:15-10am - 20 Tent

Lunch 1-1:30pm - 20 Tent

All learning will take place 18 Upstairs

This program caters to all over Bar Mitzva.

For more information, please contact:  
845 293 0670 // BMOCNK@gmail.com

## פורים ע"ח

| Maariv            | Megilla | Location    |
|-------------------|---------|-------------|
| 6:20              | 6:30    | 18 Tent     |
| Childrens program | 6:00    | 18 Upstairs |
| With megillah     |         |             |
| 6:14 Chabad       | 6:25pm  | 20 Upstairs |
|                   | 9:00    | 18 Upstairs |
|                   | 11:00   | 18 Upstairs |

**Simchas Purim / Live Music & Dancing**  
20 Forshay, Tent 8:30 - 10:00 pm

| Shacharis    | Megilla | Location      |
|--------------|---------|---------------|
| 6:00 Vasikin | 6:45    | 18 Tent       |
| 6:15am       | 6:45    | 18 Main Floor |
| 7:00         | 7:35    | 20 Upstairs   |
| 7:30         | 8:05    | 20 Tent       |
| 8:00         | 8:35    | 18 Main floor |
| 8:30         | 9:05    | 18 Tent       |
| 9:00 Chabad  | 9:35    | 20 Upstairs   |
| 9:30         | 10:05   | 20 Downstairs |
| 10:00        | 10:35   | 18 Main floor |
| 10:30        | 11:00   | 18 Tent       |
|              | 1:00pm  | 18 Upstairs   |
|              | 3:45    | 18 Upstairs   |

| Mincha  | Maariv        |
|---------|---------------|
| 12:40pm | 18 Main Floor |
| 1:00    | 9:00          |
| 1:30    | 9:30          |
| 2:00    | 10:00         |
| 2:30    | 10:30         |
| 3:00    | 11:00         |
| 3:30    |               |
| 4:00    |               |
| 4:30    |               |
| 5:00    |               |

ALL ARE INVITED TO

## פורים פארברענגען

**WITH RABBI YV JACOBSON**

### THURSDAY, PURIM

March 1, 2018, 8:30 PM

**VILCHOVITZ HALL**

230 Maple Ave, Monsey



**HOT food**

Special section for women with mechitza

Just so you should know...



**191 DAYS UNTIL UMAN**

To receive weekly issues of the BET email  
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Anyone wishing to contribute to the BET or has a suggestion for a topic or speaker,  
please email us at betsuggestions@gmail.com