THE HARDEST TRUTH
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ON TESHUVAH

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THE Rosh Hashana

AUGUST 2026 ISSUE



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SHABBOS,
SEPTEMBER
12
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ROSH HASHANA FIRST DAY

SHABBOS, SEPTEMBER 12, 2026
שבת, א' תשרי תשפ"ז

ROSH HASHANA — FIRST DAY
ראש השנה — יום א'

LATEST SHEMA — MAGEN AVRAHAM
סוף זמן קריאת שמע — מגן אברהם **9:15 AM**

LATEST SHEMA — GRA & BAAL HATANYA
סוף זמן קריאת שמע — גר"א ובעל התניא **9:55 AM**

SUNSET: **7:21 PM**



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ROSH HASHANA SECOND DAY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026
יום ראשון, ב' תשרי תשפ"ז

ROSH HASHANA — SECOND DAY
ראש השנה — יום ב'

LATEST SHEMA — MAGEN AVRAHAM
סוף זמן קריאת שמע — מגן אברהם: **9:15 AM**

LATEST SHEMA — GRA & BAAL HATANYA
סוף זמן קריאת שמע — גר"א ובעל התניא **9:56 AM**

SUNSET: **7:19 PM**



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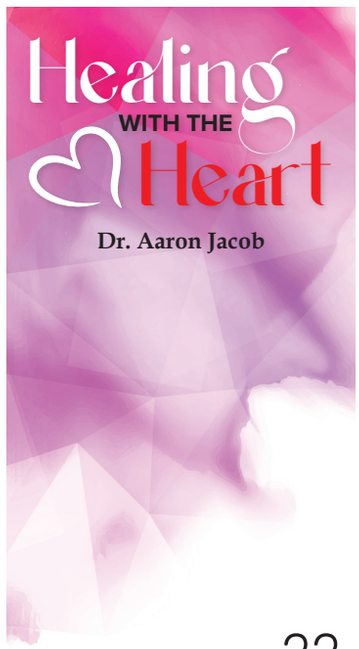
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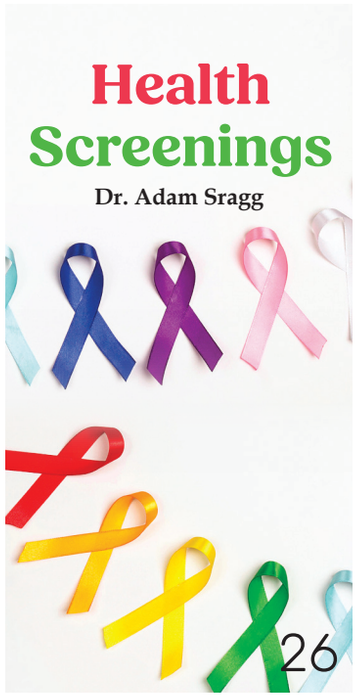
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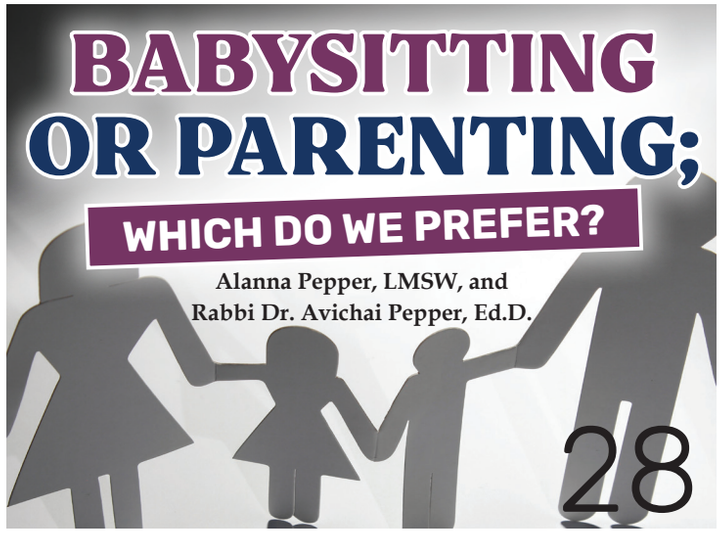
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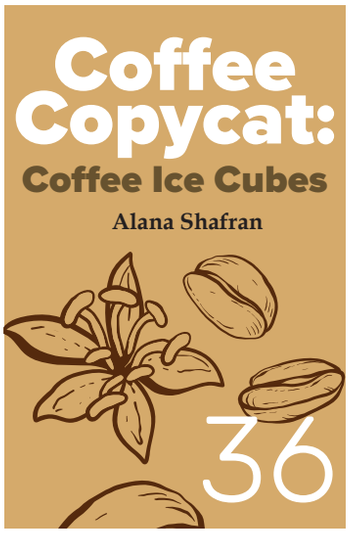
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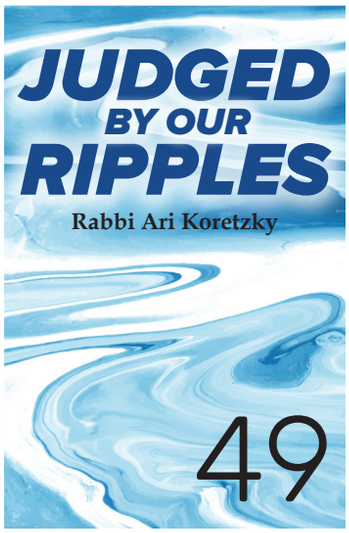
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THE KOSHER PASTRY OVEN

A YEAR UNWRITTEN









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Elul & The Yomim Noraim



Rabbi Shmuel Leigh
Director
The Golden Network

Before we know it, the Yomim Noraim — Days of Awe — will be upon us. As we approach these days, a range of emotions can arise. The name "Yomim Noraim" evokes a sense of trepidation and even fear. On the other hand, Elul, the month that introduces the High Holidays, is associated with the famous acronym "Ani Le'dodi Ve'dodi Li — I am to my beloved (who is G-d) and my beloved is to me," an expression of love and affection rather than fear. How do we reconcile these seemingly contradictory perspectives?

R' Shimshon Pinchos ZT"L sheds light on this with a mashal (parable). Imagine someone is traveling from Maryland to New York planning to stop at a rest area along the way. If you asked him at the start of his journey where he is going, the correct answer would be New York — even though his immediate destination is the rest stop. So too, Elul is the ultimate destination, while Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the stops along the way to get there.

The Sefas Emes explains this via a verse in Parshas Re'eh that has a deeper meaning than the commonly understood simple one which instructs us how to manage tithing (maaser) obligations which apply to Elul: "If the road is too long and you are unable to carry your tithing (maaser sheini) produce, which must be eaten in Israel, you may exchange it for money. Secure the money in your hand and you shall go with it to the place that Hashem your G-d will choose" (Devarim 14:24–25).

Although Hashem's glory fills the entire world, people sometimes feel distant from Him, as if the road to connection and spirituality is long and difficult. The way to bridge this distance is to desire for and maintain a yearning to connect — as hinted by the Hebrew word for money in the verse — "kesef", which also means to yearn or long for. If someone feels far, the Torah instructs us to transform that sense of distance into "kesef" — yearning and longing for closeness through our sincere efforts during the Yomim Noraim. Elul expresses this yearning for a closer relationship with Hashem.

The verse then adjures us that you will go and reach the holy place: "ve'halachta" — and you shall go. You will surely reach the holy place because of the connection achieved by the yearning developed during the Yomim Noraim.

We too can merit via yearning for Hashem to enter a place of dveikus, spiritual closeness, because of the connection with Hashem developed during these days.

Rabbi Shmuel Leigh, the director of The Golden Network (TGN), studied at Beth Medrash Govoah, and the Greater Washington Community Kollel before founding TGN in 2011. TGN offers retirees and seniors a variety of engaging programs, including classes, learning, and entertainment at private homes and senior facilities.

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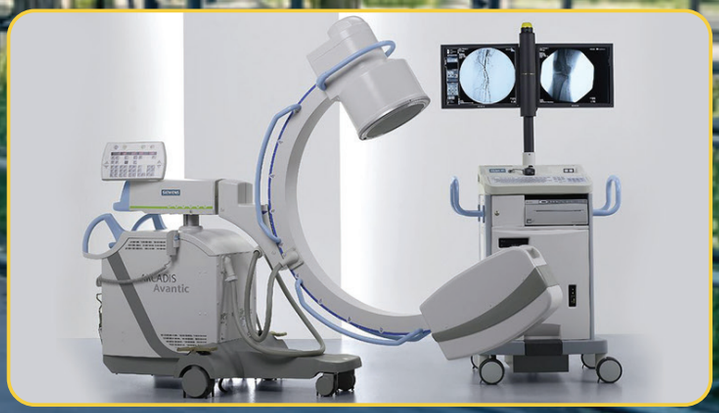
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Why Confess?

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RABBI AHRON LOPIANSKY,
ROSH YESHIVA, YESHIVA OF GREATER WASHINGTON-TIFERES GEDALIAH

TWO of the basic elements of *teshuvah* are well known: remorse for past misconduct, and a commitment not to repeat the offensive behavior in the future. But not everyone is aware of the importance of the third element: *vidui* — confession of the sin. Yet the Rambam in both *Sefer HaMitzvos* and *Yad HaChazakah* puts major emphasis on *vidui*. In mitzvah 76 he says: "We are told to confess our sins to the Almighty, and to enumerate them as part of our repentance."

In *Yad HaChazakah (Hilchos Teshuvah 1:7)* he writes: "Should a person intentionally or unwittingly transgress any command in the Torah, be it a positive or negative command, when he repents from his actions, he is required to confess, as is written [in the Torah]..." Again one's impression is that *vidui* is not ancillary to the *teshuvah* experience but one of its major aspects. What, then, is the deeper significance of *vidui*?

Kayin's Punishment

When Kayin killed his brother, Hevel, he was punished twice. He was made into a nomad ("You shall be a wanderer on earth"), never finding rest for his tortured soul; and he, too, met a violent end (Bereishis 4:15, *Rashi*). Why did he suffer two punishments for one sin?

It is axiomatic that God's retributions are meted out *middah keneged middah*, that is, measure for measure. Any suffering a person endures is meant to somehow correspond to the sin. While people accept this concept in regard to punishments of supernatural scope, such as the Flood of Noach's time and the drowning of the Egyptians and splitting of the Sea at the Exodus, it is equally true in regard to even the smallest measure of suffering one experiences, no matter how much it may seem to be part of a natural chain of events. This is obvious in the countless explanations of Chazal as to how specific transgressions cause different diseases and demises. (The reader is also referred to Rabbi Dessler's essay on Purim in *Michtav Me'Eliyahu* wherein he explains the obligation of recognizing the Divine process in "natural" occurrences.)

> ***"Man's soul can have no respite from its inner turmoil until it comes to grips with its condition"***

Rabbi Yechezkel Levenstein, the late *mashgiach* of the Ponovezher Yeshiva in Bnei Brak, pointed out that until the most recent generations, people died mainly from plagues or bacterial diseases. The people themselves had been perfectly healthy, except for the effects of attacks from outside forces, such as microbes and disease-bearing bacteria; only then did they succumb. Today we find that it is not the "outside forces" that claim human lives; rather, man falls victim to the products of his own body. His system becomes filled with excesses — be it cholesterol clogging the arteries or malignant cells crowding out the vital organs, interfering with their life-sustaining processes — which finally kill him.

"How closely this reflects the shift in spiritual patterns," reflected Reb Yechezkel. "For many generations people were apparently [healthy] in the spiritual sense, yet a sudden assault by Shabsai Tzvi or the Haskalah [in its early stages] came and claimed hundreds of thousands of souls, paralleling the physical situation. Today the problems arise from within us. While we are able to cope with destructive forces from the outside, spiritual debilitation takes place as a result of the little extras that accumulate over the years, quietly starving the heart of its necessary oxygen, slowly disabling the vital organs. Until one day, the seemingly healthy organism crumbles away."

Galus as Atonement

When a person commits an *aveirah*, he inflicts a spiritual wound on himself. The injury can be healed by a process called *kapparah* (forgiveness). However, people are generally unwilling to accept the thought that they suffer defects, so instead of embarking on the time-consuming and laborious path of *teshuvah* and *kapparah*, they apply a touch of cosmetics to disguise the wound and continue on with life as usual. But covering up a wound permits the infection to fester further, requiring even more cosmetics, plus a generous dousing of perfume to mask the foul odor emanating from the wound. Thus

they continue to fool themselves and others, not realizing that if they continue this way, they will succumb from the progressive rotting away of their flesh.

The prophet Yeshayah describes the phenomenon: "They pull the sin with cords of naught, like wagon ropes the transgressions" (Yeshayah 5:18). Malbim explains this to mean that every time a person commits an *aveirah*, he becomes saddled with two "wagon loads." One load is the transgression itself, pulled by "heavy ropes," for the individual most likely had a strong desire to commit the illicit act. The second wagon is loaded with rationalizations and excuses; these are held by flimsy strings — "cords of naught." He does not really believe its explanation at all but just pulls it along because it covers for his shortcomings.

Thus, the otherwise religious Jew may indulge in various practices that are a waste of time or that violate Torah standards of conduct. He shrugs off the ill effects, claiming, "After all, I do have to make a living," or, "Isn't it important to be worldly?" Once a person has saddled himself with the "mitzvah" of pursuit of comforts at all costs, he discovers many *hiddurim* (enhancements) in the mitzvah that affect countless aspects of his life — from minor matters to major goals and values — doing further violence to the Torah quality of his life. The cords of rationalization introduce many new aspects to his initial foray into violation of Torah.

With this insight into the effects of a transgression and its ramifications, one can better understand the punishments that were imposed on Kayin for having murdered his brother. His atonement for the act itself was that he, too, was killed. But Kayin had gone one step further. He rationalized his crime, saying, "Am I my brother's keeper?" He attempted to remove the horrid crimson stain of fratricide by painting it over instead of eradicating it. For this he suffered the punishment of "being a wanderer," demonstrating that man's soul can have no respite from its inner turmoil until it comes to grips with its condition. "You will have no rest," says God, "until you face your transgression squarely." Thus, the wanderings of his body were reflective of his soul's inner tortures.

This may well be the intention of the statement by Rabbi Yehudah brei d'Rabbi Chiya: "Exile atones for half a sin" (*Sanhedrin 34a*), the "half" referring to those rationalizations and self-deceptions that require *galus* for forgiveness.

Vidui performs this function :it forces a person into the realization that he has indeed sinned .It is the necessary first step in *teshuvah* ,for as long as a person deludes himself ,thinking he has not sinned ,he will never come to do *teshuvah*.

Another midrash relates that as soon as Kayin confessed,"My sin is too great to bear," the curse of wandering was removed, demonstrating the interface between *galus* and *vidui*. Either Kayin was to come to grips with his *aveirah* through *vidui*, or he was forever doomed to wander the length and breadth of the earth, a fugitive from the haunting truth (*VaYikra Rabbah* 10:5).

Rationalization of Sin

Recognizing the pivotal role of awareness of the sin in *teshuvah*, we gain a new understanding into two of the punishments the Torah has meted out. The first is the imposition of exile for some cases of unintentional murder. In a sense, this punishment is the same as Kayin's. For just as Kayin attempted to exonerate himself with his excuse of "Am I my brother's keeper," so does a person guilty of manslaughter tend to deceive himself that the lack of premeditation frees him of guilt. Yet the awesome truth remains: man is responsible for the results of every action he can control, and it is his duty to insure that no harm emanate from what he does. Not having been faithful to his duty, he remains a shedder of blood, premeditated or otherwise. It is the haunting inner cry of "the voice of your brother's blood calls out to me" that forces him into exile where he must come to grips with his sins (*Midrash Tanchuma HaYashar*).

The *korban asham* is another punishment with a similar purpose. Every category of *korban* has a specific thrust to it, designed to bring about a specific atonement for a specific type of falling. For instance, the various types of *korban chatas* atone for transgressions of the harshest type — acts that earn the perpetrator *kareis* when committed intentionally; the *korban olah* atones for having missed an opportunity to perform a positive command; the *korban shlamim* brings the owner closer to God. In contrast, the *korban asham* seems to be required for a random collection of sins, with no commonality of weakness to them. They are: perjury under oath in monetary matters; use of Temple funds for personal benefit; doubt regarding an *aveirah* committed unintentionally that when definitely done would require a *chatas*; and having had relations with a half-freed slave woman who was betrothed to someone else. (There are two more *ashamos* — *nazir* and *metzora* — but they are of a different category.)

> ***As long as a person deludes himself, thinking he has not sinned, he will never come to do teshuvah***

Perhaps one can find one common factor among them: the relative ease with which people absolve themselves of guilt in all these *aveiros*. Be it perjury, embezzlement, doubt whether one has sinned altogether, or even "semi-adultery," a person manages to avoid thinking too much about it. And that is why he is required to bring a guilt offering — to realize the full extent of his guilt! The entire procedure, from setting aside the lamb for the purpose of the *korban* through the completed ritual, dramatically reminds the *asham*-bringer that he is indeed guilty.



The Talmud relates that Rabba bar bar-Chana once came upon the spot where Korach had been swallowed up by the earth. Great quantities of smoke were billowing forth. Upon listening closely, he heard voices in the abyss proclaiming: "Moshe is true, his Torah is true, and we are liars!" A strange punishment but very fitting indeed. For which other sinner had ever constructed such a grand edifice of spurious arguments, rationalizing his actions, as did Korach?

> ***Either Kayin was to come to grips with his aveirah through vidui, or he was forever doomed to wander.***

• He argued with seemingly infallible logic that just as a completely blue tallis should not, to his reasoning, require the requisite blue tzitzis thread, so too "a nation that has been proclaimed holy by God has no need for a special holy caste."

• He marshalled proofs from the Torah itself that under the laws of inheritance he was entitled to the positions of power he coveted.

• His designs were reinforced by the knowledge imparted to him through *ruach hakodesh* (Divine inspiration) that his progeny would be leaders of *Klal Yisrael*. All these "proofs" were, of course, projections of his inner desire for power.

His punishment reflects the duality of his crime .The fires of Gehinnom can purge him of the sins of strife and contention ;but to rid his soul of those layers and layers of rationalization ,he must proclaim" ,Moshe is true ,his Torah is true "„...until the day Mashiach comes, when knowledge will cover the earth and there will be no more possibility for falsehood.

Cleanse Yourselves

This, then, is our preparation for the Day of Judgment. In those precious few moments when we stand silently in the presence of our Maker, we bend our stiff necks and we utter: "*Ashamnu* — We are guilty!" (Guilty? Of what? I daven three times a day, never miss! My *kavanah* — well, lacking, more often than not... My record for honesty is unimpeachable, but off the record... *Ashamnu*, indeed!) "*Bagadnu* — we rebelled." (Rebelled against God! What an extreme, unforgivable breach of fidelity! That surely does not apply to a Sabbath observer like me. I adhere to the very letter of the law, come Shabbos. My hands are absolutely tied, except for picking up a recent newspaper or bestseller lying around the house, and an occasional lapse into stock-market banter, but *rebel* against God's sovereignty? On the other hand, *bagadnu*...)

Slowly and painfully, a few strips of the self-righteous veneer peel away, and each layer removed brings the confessor one measure closer to God.

Every year during the Avodah in the Yom Kippur service, we close our eyes for the moment and travel back centuries to that awesome place called the Beis HaMikdash. We see the *kohen gadol* at the pinnacle of his glorious sanctity, standing before us, donned in his eight vestments.

In a voice that echoed through the Land of Israel ("His voice was heard in Jericho"), he would proclaim:

> ***Each layer removed brings the confessor one measure closer to God.***

כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם לטהר אתכם מכל חטאתיכם לפני ה'

— Today you will be forgiven all your sins..." But he would add one point and demand: "*Tit'haru* — You shall be pure!"



Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky is the distinguished Rosh HaYeshiva of the Yeshiva of Greater Washington–Tiferes Gedaliah, where for more than three decades he has shaped generations of talmidim through the depth of his Torah, clarity of thought, and devotion to the mesorah of his rebbeim.

A musmach of the Mir Yeshiva in Yerushalayim, Rav Lopiansky was privileged to learn under the towering guidance of Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz zt"l and Rav Nachum Partzovitz zt"l. He later taught at Aish HaTorah and at the Mir before assuming the leadership of the Yeshiva Gedolah in Washington in 1994.

Widely regarded as one of the leading contemporary voices in Torah thought and hashkafah, Rav Lopiansky is the author of more than thirty works spanning machshavah, tefillah, and Jewish philosophy. His scholarship has also contributed to *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, *Klal Perspectives*, and *Dialogue*, while his shiurim and addresses have inspired audiences across the United States and around the world.

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Healing WITH THE Heart

Dr. Aaron Jacob

How important is it that your healthcare provider be empathetic? All other things being equal, does empathy actually add anything other than make you feel better for having waited so long in the waiting room?

Empathy has actually been shown to be a vital clinical tool. This means that of two healthcare providers with the same level of knowledge base the more empathetic one may arrive at the correct diagnosis easier. Without empathy, physicians have been shown to exhibit a trait known as "premature closure," or coming to a conclusion about a diagnosis before all of the data has been gathered. This is because those providers who are genuinely curious about the experience of the other adopt a "tell me more" attitude. This leads to more flexible decision making, as well as a verbal openness that encourages the patient to be more open about their symptoms. (Pelaccia et al., 2020).

The goal of this information is not to create a feeling of malcontent with your provider, or to provide weapons to vent your frustration when your provider does not arrive at the right diagnosis the first time. Medicine is an art, and the complexity of the body that Hashem made means that the provider is, ultimately, only a messenger of the true Healer.

This finding does raise an important point, however, about an innocuous habit that we may have. How often have we asked our loved ones, or those who we greet, the simple question "How are you?" "How was your day?" How often are we actually curious about what that answer may be?

We say every morning "hameichin mitzadei gaver," that Hashem plans out our pathways. R' Wolbe in Alei Shur Vol. 2 says that this means that He leads us to greet the people that He needs us to meet. That means Hashem is asking us to provide for the people who need us. Taking the time to genuinely listen to how people are doing may end up doing a lot more then the tzedaka that we habitually give during davening. When our children (and teens) are frustrated, do we genuinely listen to their experience? Or have we already decided that they are tired, or like to kvetch, or there is nothing we can do?

There is good news for those providers who show empathy. The same study mentioned above also points out that empathy is able to prevent burnout, meaning it even has the ability to rejuvenate the caregiver.

So, next time we ask someone "How are you doing," let's take a moment to actually be willing to hear what the answer is. During this time of teshuva and closeness with Hashem, what better way to build relationship?

Pelaccia, T., Messman, A. M., & Kline, J. A. (2020). Misdiagnosis and failure to diagnose in emergency care: Causes and empathy as a solution. Patient Education and Counseling, 103(8), 1650–1656

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Day 6 Give someone a sincere compliment.	**Day 7** Trust your perceptions and your intuition.	**Day 8** Forgive someone who has hurt you.	**Day 9** Have an open-minded conversation with someone.	**Day 10** Reflect on a past mistake and learn from it.
Day 11 Show compassion towards someone.	**Day 12** Practice self-care.	**Day 13** Take responsibility for your actions.	**Day 14** Practice patience with someone.	**Day 15** Validate someone's feelings.
Day 16 Connect with someone new.	**Day 17** Practice self-reflection.	**Day 18** Avoid judgement and criticism.	**Day 19** Be present in the moment.	**Day 20** Make time for a loved one.
Day 21 Practice gratitude towards yourself.	**Day 22** Share a vulnerable moment with someone.	**Day 23** Practice forgiveness towards yourself.	**Day 24** Recognize and manage your emotions.	**Day 25** Communicate your needs clearly.
Day 26 Practice active listening with someone.	**Day 27** Show appreciation towards someone.	**Day 28** Practice self-compassion.	**Day 29** Connect with someone on a deeper level.	**Day 30** Reflect on your progress and growth.

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Hillel Frozen on the Roof



Rabbi Bennett Schwartz



Yoma 35b

אמר להם הממונה, פרק שלישי, יומא לה:

אָמְרוּ עָלָיו עַל הִלֵּל הַזָּקֵן שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם וָיוֹם הָיָה עוֹשֶׂה וּמַשְׁתַּכֵּר בְּטַרְפְּעִיק וָחֵצִי הָיָה נוֹתֵן לְשׁוֹמֵר בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ וְחֶצְיוֹ לְפַרְנָסָתוֹ וּלְפַרְנָסַת אַנְשֵׁי בֵּיתוֹ פַּעַם אַחַת לֹא מָצָא לְהִשְׁתַּכֵּר וְלֹא הִנִּיחוֹ שׁוֹמֵר בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ לִכָּנֵס עָלָה וְנִתְלָה וְיָשַׁב עַל פִּי אֶרוּבָּה כְּדֵי שֶׁיִּשְׁמַע דִּבְרֵי אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים מִפִּי שְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבְטַלְיוֹן.

אָמְרוּ אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם עֶרֶב שַׁבָּת הָיָה וּתְקוּפַת טֵבֵת הָיְתָה וְיָרַד עָלָיו שֶׁלֶג מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם כְּשֶׁעָלָה עַמּוּד הַשַּׁחַר אָמַר לוֹ שְׁמַעְיָה לְאַבְטַלְיוֹן אַבְטַלְיוֹן אָחִי בְּכָל יוֹם הַבַּיִת מֵאִיר וְהַיּוֹם אָפֵל שֶׁמָּא יוֹם הַמְעוּנָּן הוּא הֵצִיצוּ עֵינֵיהֶן וְרָאוּ דְּמוּת אָדָם בָּאֲרוּבָּה עָלוּ וּמָצְאוּ עָלָיו רוּם שָׁלֹשׁ אַמּוֹת שֶׁלֶג פִּרְקוּהוּ וְהִרְחִיצוּהוּ וְסָכוּהוּ וְהוֹשִׁיבוּהוּ כְּנֶגֶד הַמְּדוּרָה אָמְרוּ רָאוּי זֶה לְחַלֵּל עָלָיו אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת.

They said about Hillel the Elder that each and every day he would work and earn a half-dinar, half of which he would give to the guard of the study hall and half of which he spent for his sustenance and the sustenance of the members of his family. One time he did not find employment to earn a wage, and the guard of the study hall did not allow him to enter. He ascended to the roof, suspended himself, and sat at the edge of the skylight in order to hear the words of the Torah of the living Hashem from the mouths of Shemayah and Avtalyon, the spiritual leaders of that generation.

The Sages continued and said: That day was Shabbos eve and it was the winter season of Teves, and snow fell upon him from the sky. When it was dawn, Shemayah said to Avtalyon: Avtalyon, my brother, every day at this hour the study hall is already bright from the sunlight streaming through the skylight, and today it is dark; is it perhaps a cloudy day? They focused their eyes and saw the image of a man in the skylight. They ascended and found him covered with snow three cubits high. They extricated him from the snow, and they washed him and smeared oil on him, and they sat him opposite the bonfire to warm him. They said: This man is worthy for us to desecrate Shabbos for him. Saving a life overrides Shabbos in any case; however, this great man is especially deserving. Clearly, poverty is no excuse for the failure to attempt to study Torah.



Ideas

1 Halachah states that one cannot spend more than twenty percent of his income on *mitzvos* (such as *tzedakah*). If so, how was Hillel allowed to spend fifty percent of his income on *talmud Torah*?

The Chafetz Chaim in *Likutei Halachos* says that the twenty percent rule does not apply to *talmud Torah*.[1] The Chafetz Chaim also mentions a number of other cases where someone is allowed to spend more than twenty percent.[2] Someone who does not earn a consistent living shouldn't give more than twenty percent since he doesn't know where his money is going to come from. However, if someone is making a consistent living, he can give more than this amount. It seems that Hillel had a consistent job at the time. Even though he wasn't making a lot, it was still consistent, and that's why he was able to spend so much.

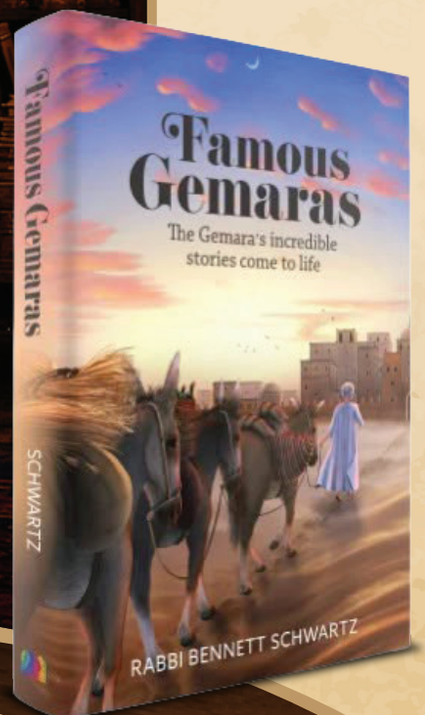
[1] יומא יא; ובאהבת חסד פרק כ:ה; בשם השטמ"ק בכתובות נ. על פי דיוק ברש"י.

[2] של"ה.

2 If Hillel exposed himself to danger in the first place, why were Shemayah and Avtalyon allowed to desecrate Shabbos for him? [3] Why does the Gemara specify that "the snow fell upon him **from the sky**"? And wouldn't *anyone* be worthy of being saved in such a situation? Why should only Hillel be saved?

The *Ben Yehoyada* says that when Hillel first went up to the roof, the weather wasn't so bad and there was therefore no danger at that point. Thus, he did not put himself in a harmful position. Hashem made the snow stronger as a test for Hillel, implied by the Gemara highlighting that the snow fell "from the sky." Hillel was distracted from the snow by his Torah learning, so it wasn't his fault that he ended up in danger.[4] However, it may not have been justified to break Shabbos to save someone who was not learning and ended up in the same situation.

3 This story about Hillel is part of a discussion in the Gemara showing that the rich, the poor, or those with a strong *yetzer hara* all have the ability to learn. Hillel is brought as the example of a poor man. How can the Gemara compare any ordinary poor person to Hillel the Nasi? This Gemara shows that every man has the ability to learn, no matter his position.



Gemara Fact

Eizehu Mekoman, the Mishnayos recited as part of *Korbanos* in davening, are some of the few Mishnayos that don't contain any *machlokos*.

[3] יש כמה שיטות בענין, וראה שו"ת בצל החכמה חלק א סימן מז:

במנחת חינוך (קומץ למנחה מצוה רל"ז) במאבד עצמו לדעת, אי אחרים מוזהרין עליו להצילו, דלא שייך גבי לא תעשה דהשבתו לו דין דאין אבידה מדעת ולא הל"ת של לא תעמוד על דם רעך דהוכח לא מפקיר עצמו (א) וכן שהיה נראה לו ברור עיי"ש. והוסיף בעל השדי אש, דאין איסור אלא בדבר הנעשה ברצון עצמו והוא סכנה לעבור הצלה.

בחידושי חתם סופר (חידושים למס' יומא דף לה ע"ב) שמסתפק במי שע"י פשיעתו הביא עצמו לידי סכנה אם דוחין איסור בשביל הצלתו. ומביא את הסם בס' דברי יוסף (האריך סי' שיא אות ו) בעובדא דנערה ישראלית שתרמה הסם והמב"ם שאין עוברין על המצוות אלא בפקוח נפש.

בס' דברי יוסף (האריך סי' שיא אות ו) בעובדא דנערה ישראלית שתרמה הסם והמב"ם שאין עוברין על המצוות אלא בפקוח נפש.

[4] הדאורייתא שרי להכניס עצמו לסכנה באופן שאח"כ לדחות את האיסורין מפני פיקו"נ, כמ"ש במאור השבת ח"א פי"ב הערה קפ"ק ושם בשם הגרש"ז אויערבאך זצ"ל, ועיין שם ובהערה ריש פרק ר"י.

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Health Screenings



ADAM SRAGG
ADULT PRIMARY CARE NURSE PRACTITIONER

There are multiple health screenings for both males and females that are essential for detecting cancer.

- Colon cancer screening typically starts at age 45 for males and females. The two main colon screenings are a colonoscopy or a DNA stool test called Cologuard. When there is a parent or sibling that had colon cancer, then screening starts at age 40 or 10 years earlier than that relative's age at diagnosis. The colonoscopy is the gold standard screening since it can evaluate for multiple abnormalities. If the colonoscopy is normal, then repeat testing does not need to take place for another 10 years. One of the common abnormalities on a colonoscopy is called a colon polyp, which is an abnormal growth inside the lining of the colon. If a colon polyp is detected, then colonoscopy screenings will be every 5 years. Also, if a parent or sibling had a colon polyp at age 60 or less, then one should investigate what kind of colon polyp it was. For advanced colon polyps, meaning 3 or more polyps or a polyp greater than 1 cm in size, screening would start at age 40 or 10 years before the earliest diagnosis. Regarding the DNA stool test called Cologuard, I generally recommend this test when there is no family history of colon cancer or in a younger age group. If the Cologuard test is normal, then repeat testing is every 3 years. However, an abnormal Cologuard test would require a colonoscopy.
- All males should consider screening for prostate and testicular cancer. The way to check for prostate cancer is through a blood test called PSA levels, which starts at age 45. This test checks for a protein elevation in the prostate gland. If there is a parent or sibling that was diagnosed with prostate cancer, then we start screening at age 40. For testicular cancer, the most common age of diagnosis is between 20 to 40 years old. The screening consists of monthly home testicular exams and the warning sign would be a painless lump that feels heavy.
- Females should screen for breast and cervical cancer as well as osteoporosis. Breast cancer screening is evaluated through 3D mammogram imaging, which starts at 40 years old and needs to be completed annually. When there is a parent, sibling, or multiple maternal family members that were diagnosed with breast cancer, the screening may start earlier than 40 years old. In order to determine if the patient should begin mammograms earlier, patients complete the health questionnaire called the Tyrer-Cuzick Risk Calculator. If the Tyrer-Cuzick score is 20% or more, then screening needs to start prior to 40 years old. It is strongly recommended for women to conduct monthly home breast exams and annual clinician breast exams. Cervical cancer screening is evaluated through a PAP smear, which starts at 21 years old. A pap smear involves collecting a small sample of cells from the cervix. If the pap smear is normal, then the screening would be every 3 years. Another important evaluation for females that are 65 years or older, would be a DEXA/bone scan screening for osteoporosis completed every two years. Osteoporosis is a condition when the bones become weak and often leads to joint fractures. The best ways to prevent osteoporosis is to consume a daily vitamin D and calcium supplement, perform weight bearing exercises, and avoid smoking or heavy alcohol use.

Adam Sragg is a nurse practitioner. After working in surgical nursing for multiple years, he earned a master's degree from Simmons University's family nurse practitioner program, allowing him to focus more on preventative medicine. Adam has worked as an adult primary care nurse practitioner for over fours years with a diverse patient population.

Adam has done clinical work at a variety of local hospitals including Holy Cross Hospital, Adventist Healthcare White Oak Medical Center, Medstar Montgomery Medical Center, Children's National Hospital, and other local primary care facilities.

His nurse practitioner position gives him the opportunity to maintain his nursing passion and act as the patient's advocate in a provider role. His main goal is to provide focused and individual patient care with an emphasis on education, compassion, concern, and encouragement. Adam has experience with helping children and adults of physical and mental disabilities in reaching their health goals.

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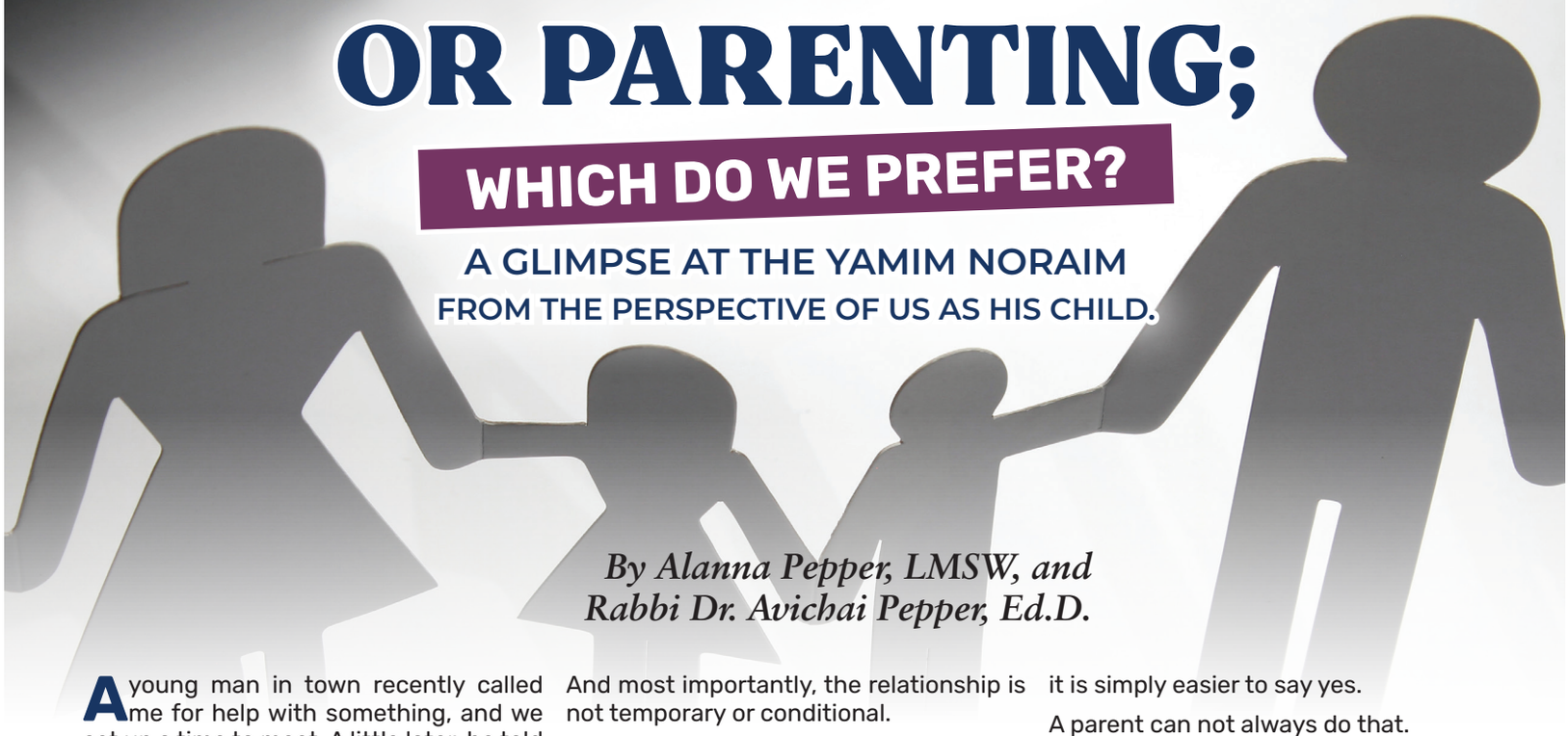
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BABYSITTING OR PARENTING;

WHICH DO WE PREFER?

A GLIMPSE AT THE YAMIM NORAIM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF US AS HIS CHILD.



By Alanna Pepper, LMSW, and Rabbi Dr. Avichai Pepper, Ed.D.

A young man in town recently called me for help with something, and we set up a time to meet. A little later, he told me that time wouldn't work because he was "babysitting."

"Whose kids are you babysitting?" I asked.

"My kids. My wife is away."

I laughed. "If they're your kids, you're not babysitting. You're parenting."

It was a simple exchange, but it got me thinking. What really is the difference between babysitting and parenting? And perhaps more importantly, if you were the child, which would you rather have?

A babysitter is a temporary caregiver. Sure, they want the child to be happy. But ultimately, the goal is to get through the day. Keep the child safe, fed, occupied and reasonably happy until the parents come home. There is little investment in who this child will become five, ten or twenty years from now.

A parent looks at the same child completely differently.

A parent is invested in the totality of the child. Of course, he wants his child to be happy. But he also cares about his growth, his emotional health, his values, his decisions and ultimately his success. A parent is thinking not only about what the child wants right now, but about what is best for him in the long run.

And most importantly, the relationship is not temporary or conditional.

He is my father, and I am his child. Regardless of his presence, a parent, even when away, is still a parent and still cares and loves his child.

Perhaps this gives us a lens through which to understand *Avinu* Malkeinu.

Throughout the Yamim Noraim, we ask Hashem for so much. We ask for life, health, parnassah, nachas and success. But what kind of relationship are we really asking for? And from what relationship are we approaching Him to ask?

Do we want Hashem simply to watch over us, keep us comfortable, give us what we want and help us get through another year? Or do we want to be treated as His children?

If I truly view Hashem as *Avinu*, then I am asking for much more than someone keeping an eye on me. I am asking Hashem to be completely invested in me; my growth, my emotional and spiritual well-being, my success, and ultimately the person I can become.

But that relationship also comes with expectations.

A babysitter can afford to overlook things. If the child wants another snack, another hour before bedtime or another day without doing his homework, sometimes it is simply easier to say yes.

A parent can not always do that.

Precisely because this is his child, he expects more. He sets limits. He pushes the child to grow. He sometimes says no. Not because he cares less, but because he is invested in something much bigger than getting through the day.

That is where *Malkeinu* becomes so important.

We want both.

We want the unconditional relationship of *Avinu*, and we need the expectations and responsibilities of *Malkeinu*. In fact, perhaps the two are inseparable. The expectations exist because the relationship matters and we want Him to care for us as such.

And perhaps this is why Rosh Hashanah precedes Yom Kippur.

It would seem more logical that we first ask for forgiveness before declaring Hashem King. Yet on Rosh Hashanah before asking for forgiveness we first establish the relationship. We crown Hashem as King and acknowledge that our lives have purpose. Not just a goal, but that there are expectations of us, and that being part of this relationship comes with responsibilities.

Only then can we truly appreciate

the beauty of Yom Kippur. Because in order to truly grasp the value of *teshuvah*, of repentance, forgiveness and returning to a relationship, we first need to acknowledge the value of the expectations and responsibilities that come with that relationship.

Yom Kippur is not about asking Hashem to overlook those expectations. It is about recognizing that even when we have fallen short of them, the relationship remains. We can take responsibility, ask forgiveness and return.

A babysitter has few expectations because there is little long-term investment.

A parent expects more precisely because he is invested.

That is the beauty of *Avinu* Malkeinu.

Hashem's love for us and His expectations of us are not competing ideas. They are two parts of the same relationship.

Rosh Hashanah reminds us how much that relationship asks of us.

Yom Kippur reminds us how fortunate we are to have it.

May Hashem continue to see our relationship as that of parents and children, in totality, investments, love, and care, and above all constant. May this year brings happiness, and health to our families, friends, community, and all of Klal Yisrael.



Alanna Pepper, LMSW is a dedicated therapist at Shalom Tikvah, a nonprofit clinic committed to supporting the Jewish communities of Maryland. With a deep passion for guiding individuals and families toward healing, she brings a wealth of expertise to her practice. Alanna holds a Master's degree in Counseling from Liberty University and a Master's in Social Work from Yeshiva University's Wurzweiler School of Social Work. Her extensive background spans over two decades in education, equipping her with a unique and insightful perspective in social work, parent coaching, and community engagement. Her compassionate approach, combined with her breadth of knowledge, makes her a trusted advocate for those seeking support and transformation. She is also a volunteer at Chail Lifeline Crisis Services Mid-Atlantic.



Rabbi Avichai Pepper, Ed.D is a seasoned educator with a rich academic and professional background. A graduate of the New England Rabbinical College in Providence, RI, he has devoted his life to teaching Torah and to Jewish communal growth. Rabbi Pepper holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Liberty University, alongside a master's degree in educational leadership from Bellevue University and a master's degree in counseling from Liberty University. Currently serving as the Director of Educational Advancement and Community Relations at the Yeshiva of Greater Washington as well as an educational coach and presenter at Lomdei, Rabbi Dr. Pepper leverages almost 30 years of dedicated service in Jewish education and community development. In addition, he also serves on the Chai Lifeline Crisis Services team supporting school and community in trying times.

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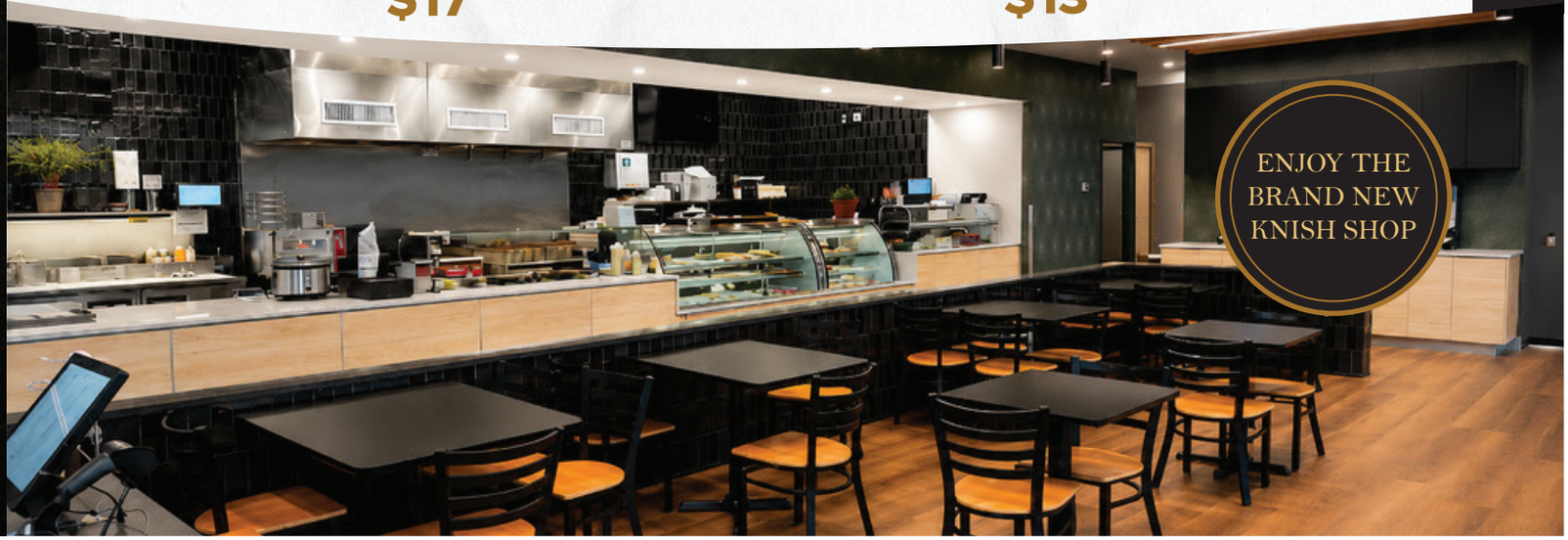
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Ads@washingtonjewishjournal.com

12 Things That Are Making Our Day

By Alana Shafran

1

Something Borrowed Blooms: Bethany Floral Runner

Rent: $165.00

Length: 56" Width: 17" Height: 10"

The Bethany Floral Runner is meticulously crafted for quick and easy floral installation with a lush, garden-inspired look. This silk flower arrangement features an abundant mix of hydrangea blooms in soft shades of blue, ivory, and fresh lime, layered with trailing ivy for natural movement and fullness. Its versatile design makes it ideal for decorating reception tables, ceremony arches, or creating memorable photo-worthy moments.



2



Minnidip: Balloon Garland: 5-Cluster in Blush (Satin Pearl)

$16.00

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3

Amazon: WhiteRhino Pickle Jar with Strainer Flip,34oz

$18.99

Upgraded pickle jar features a double leak-proof design. A Threaded design on the inside of the lid, coupled with a silicone sealing ring, ensures an airtight seal, keeping pickles fresh and flavorful for longer.



4

The Quality Edit: Hulken Bag

$99.00 - $125.00

The Hulken® bag is an extremely durable lightweight trolley with a foldable design for easy storage and industrial-grade wheels and handles. It's designed to make carrying heavy loads – like groceries, laundry, or work supplies – effortless, especially if you're commuting in a big city.



5

Amazon: Colorescience Sunforgettable Total Protection Brush

$69.00

About this item:

- 100% mineral SPF 50 PA++++
- Zinc Oxide 22.5% & Titanium Dioxide 22.5%
- Water/sweat Resistant (80 minutes)
- Hyaluronic Acid (HA) Powder reinforces moisture in the skin
- Antioxidant blend defends against free radical formation and pollution.
- Iron Oxides provide HEV (blue) Light defense.
- Reapply every 2 hours, indoors and outdoors, for ongoing UVA/UVB & HEV (Blue) Light shield.
- All Colorescience products are 100% free from parabens, phthalates, synthetic fragrance, animal testing, talc, dyes, mineral oils, drying alcohols & chemical sunscreen.





6

Anthropologie: Resin Salad Servers, Set of 2

$55.00

These salad servers are handmade from lightweight and durable resin with a unique swirl pattern.

7



World Market: Color Pop Resin Salad Servers 2 Piece Set

$24.99

Made in India with a fun and funky design, our exclusive, large serving utensils punch up your next meal with a splash of retro style. This dynamic, two-tone pink and orange spork and blue and green spoon add a groovy pop of color to any dining table. These sizable salad servers are complete with wavy handles that make tossing and serving a fabulous affair.

8

Boog Bag: Baby Quilted Boog Bag

$80.00

15" L x 5" W x 12.5" H

Meet the mid-sized tote that does it all. The Baby Bogg Bag is a durable, washable, and tip-proof carryall—perfectly sized for everyday adventures.

Smaller than the Original but still spacious, this versatile tote fits your personal essentials without the bulk. Use it as a gym bag, pool bag, or day bag—it's lightweight, easy to clean, and built to last.

Includes a small insert pouch for must-haves like your phone, keys, or lip balm—because the little things matter, too.





9

ELROEL Blanc Cover Cream Stick V White (200 Fair)

$27.90

COLOR-CHANGING STICK FOUNDATION. Meet your new beauty essential — the ELROEL Blanc Cover Stick V! This innovative color-changing makeup stick starts as a soft white balm and transforms into a silky, tinted cream that blends seamlessly into your skin. With each stroke of the built-in brush, collagen capsules break open to trigger the color change.

11

Multicolor Shot Glass Set

$98

Raise a toast with this vibrant six-piece shot glass collection, each featuring its own candy-inspired color combo. Perfect for any celebration, or simply adding a pop of color to your table. L'chaim!



10

Anthropologie: Oh My Mahjong Travel Set

$450.00

Take your Mahjong game wherever you go with the Mahjong Travel Set. This compact and lightweight set effortlessly slips into your carry-on, ensuring that the joy of Mahjong is always within reach on your adventures. Crafted with Preppy Soiree tile designs, this set exudes elegance and style





12

Flaura Lavender Drift Floral Hanging Chandelier

$300

Think sukkos- gorgeous faux floral chandelier for the sukka

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Coffee Copycat: Coffee Ice Cubes

Are you tired of sipping on iced coffee that starts off strong but quickly turns watery as the ice cubes melt? If so, it's time to indulge in the ultimate coffee lover's secret: Coffee Ice Cubes. These frozen gems are not just the perfect solution to keeping your favorite iced java drinks refreshingly cold, but they're also incredibly easy to make with just one magical ingredient — coffee!



How To Make Coffee Ice Cubes

If you've been searching for the perfect ice cubes for your iced coffee, your quest ends today. Here's how it's done:

STEP 1 **Make Coffee.** Choose whichever method suits you, but make sure to let the batch cool to room temperature or cooler before freezing.

STEP 2 **Pour** your coffee evenly into an ice cube tray. Place in the freezer for at least 4 hours or until solid and frozen through.

STEP 3 **Store** in an airtight container for up to 3 months. When ready to use, place a few cubes in a glass and top with milk and your favorite coffee syrup, or add to your favorite coffee drinks!

Recipe Success Tips

Here are some of my favorite tricks to ensure your java-flavored ice turns out perfectly every time:

- **Use Quality Coffee:** This should be a no-brainer, but start with a high-quality coffee that you genuinely enjoy!
- **Proportions Matter:** Consider how strong you want your coffee-flavored ice. If you prefer a milder coffee flavor, you can dilute it with some water, add a splash of milk or creamer, or sweeten it to your liking.
- **Use Your Creativity:** Add sweeteners like sugar, syrups, or even spices like cinnamon or nutmeg to your coffee before freezing for extra flavor.
- **Label:** If you make different flavored cubes or use different coffee varieties, label your trays and storage containers so you know what you're grabbing when you reach for them.
- **Proper Storage:** Once frozen, transfer the coffee cubes to an airtight container or a resealable freezer bag to prevent them from absorbing freezer odors.
- **Quantity:** Make plenty of coffee ice cubes at once. You don't want to run out mid-summer when the craving strikes!

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Friends House

A New Chapter, ROOTED IN WHAT MATTERS

By WJJ Staff

Planning for the future does not have to mean starting over. For many older adults, it is about deciding what they want to carry forward: the people and interests they value, connection to the world around them, time in nature and the freedom to shape their own days.

At Friends House Retirement Community in Sandy Spring, Maryland, those ideas have helped shape community life since 1967.

Founded by Quakers and open to all, Friends House welcomes people of all faiths and backgrounds. Simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality and stewardship guide a culture centered on genuine respect, thoughtful engagement and connection.

Here, community life is shaped not only for residents, but by them. Residents organize cultural outings, contribute to environmental and garden initiatives, pursue creative interests, lead learning opportunities and create programs around the interests they share. The result is a community where participation, contribution and connection are part of daily life, while residents retain the freedom to choose how each day unfolds.

That sense of connection extends outdoors. Across the 62-acre, tree-lined campus, gardens, wooded walking trails and outdoor spaces make nature part of everyday life and reflect a longstanding commitment to stewardship.

Planning ahead also offers the confidence of knowing that familiar relationships, surroundings and community life may remain part of the picture as needs change over time. Friends House offers different levels of support on the same campus, helping residents stay connected to the people and places they know.

Now, Friends House is looking toward its own next chapter with the proposed North Forest Addition.

The proposed addition will bring new residences and opportunities to experience life within an established community shaped by shared values, strong connections and a longstanding commitment to thoughtful, engaged living.

For those beginning to explore whether North Forest could be part of their own future, a refundable Priority Deposit



is currently available. It provides an opportunity for earlier consideration of residence location and floor plan once plans are approved and the selection process begins, while giving prospective residents time to think carefully about what comes next.

Because planning ahead can be exactly that: giving yourself time to understand your options, preserve your choices and imagine a future that still feels distinctly your own.

A new chapter does not have to mean leaving behind the life you have built. It can mean carrying forward the values, interests and connections that have always made it meaningful.

To learn more about Friends House and the proposed North Forest Addition, visit **FriendsHouseExpansion.org** or call **(301) 905-7772**.

The North Forest Addition is pending approval by the Maryland Department of Aging.

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Rice Krispies *Treat Logs*

By Ilana Cohen

Whether you're young or young at heart,

Rice Krispies treats are a timeless favorite!

Add flavors, fun mix-ins, and toppings to make this classic treat even treatier!

Mint

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1/2 batch Rice Krispies treats recipe
- a drop of green food coloring
- 1/4 tsp mint extract, or to taste
- 1/4 cup mini chocolate chips, plus more for garnish
- marshmallow fluff, for garnish

1. Prepare Rice Krispies treats, adding green food coloring and mint extract to the melted marshmallow mixture before stirring in the cereal.
2. Fold in the chocolate chips after the mixture has cooled slightly.
3. Press into a loaf pan lined with parchment paper and allow to set.
4. Remove from pan and trim into a neat log.
5. Spread marshmallow fluff on top and decorate with chocolate chips.

Cocoa Pebbles

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1/2 batch Rice Krispies treats recipe
- Cocoa Pebbles cereal
- marshmallow fluff, for garnish

1. Prepare Rice Krispies treats, using Cocoa Pebbles instead of Rice Krispies.
2. Press into a loaf pan lined with parchment paper and allow to set.
3. Remove from pan and trim into a neat log.
4. Spread marshmallow fluff on top.
5. Sprinkle with additional Cocoa Pebbles.



Fruity Pebbles

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1/2 batch Rice Krispies treats recipe
- Fruity Pebbles cereal
- marshmallow fluff, for garnish

1. Prepare the Rice Krispies treats, replacing half the Rice Krispies with Fruity Pebbles.
2. Press into a loaf pan lined with parchment paper and allow to set.
3. Remove from pan and trim into a neat log.
4. Spread marshmallow fluff on top.
5. Sprinkle generously with additional Fruity Pebbles.

Coffee

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1/2 batch Rice Krispies treats recipe
- 1 tsp brewed coffee
- marshmallow fluff, for garnish
- chocolate coffee beans, for garnish

1. Prepare Rice Krispies treats, stirring the coffee into the melted marshmallow mixture before adding the cereal.
2. Press into a loaf pan lined with parchment paper and allow to set.
3. Remove from pan and trim into a neat log.
4. Spread marshmallow fluff on top.
5. Garnish with chocolate coffee beans. Sprinkle generously with additional Fruity Pebbles.

PRESENTATION:

1. Arrange logs on a board.
2. Attach mini chalkboards to wooden skewers.
3. Write each log's flavor on the chalkboards.
4. Insert one into each log.



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WHAT IF THIS IS THE YEAR YOU BUILD IT?

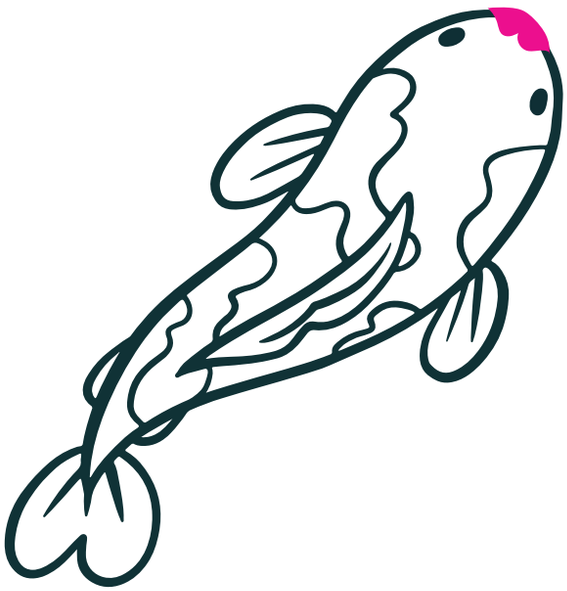
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That business you keep thinking about

That thing you know could be better

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Here's to new ideas, new beginnings and a very sweet 5787!

SO, YOU WANT TO CREATE SOMETHING?

10 steps for bringing a new idea into the world.

Ideas are funny. They can show up in a second - and take years to get out of your head.
The spark is only the beginning. The real work is uncovering what's inside it, shaping it, testing it, and getting it into the hands of the people who need it.

Got one? Don't leave it in your head. Start here.

1. FIND THE VOID.

Great ideas fill something that's missing. Find the frustration, inefficiency, unmet need, or experience that could simply be better.

TRY THIS > People need a better way to _____ because _____.

2. SAY IT, SIMPLY.

If you can't explain it simply, keep working. Define what you're creating, who it's for, and what it makes possible.

TRY THIS > We're creating _____ for _____ so they can _____.

3. KNOW YOUR PERSON.

"Everyone" is not your audience. Know who needs this most, what they care about, what frustrates them, and what they're doing instead.

ASK > What are they trying to accomplish?

4. FIND YOUR DIFFERENCE.

Useful gets considered. Different gets remembered.
Know why someone should choose your idea over what already exists - or keep doing what they do today.

ASK > Why this instead?

5. TEST BEFORE YOU INVEST.

Assumptions get expensive when they become code.
Talk to people. Sketch it. Prototype it. Test the message. Learn what works before you invest in building the whole thing.

START > Find out what's true before you build around it.

6. DESIGN THE EXPERIENCE.

Don't just design what it looks like. Design what happens. Shape how someone discovers, understands, uses, and returns to what you're creating. Remove friction along the way.

ASK > What should feel effortless?

7. MAKE TECHNOLOGY EARN ITS PLACE.

Don't just design what it looks like. Design what happens. Shape how someone discovers, understands, uses, and returns to what you're creating. Remove friction along the way.

ASK > What should feel effortless?

8. GIVE IT A VOICE.

Your creation needs to sound and feel like itself. Build the messaging, visual identity, and brand voice that reveal its essence to the people it was created for.

ASK -> What should people remember about it?

9. GET IT DISCOVERED.

A great idea still needs a way to find its people. Choose the channels where your audience already pays attention - search, social, email, partnerships, community, events, etc.

ASK > How will they find you you - and why will they care?

10 LAUNCH IT.

Let the world meet it. Put it in people's hands. See what clicks, learn what doesn't, and make what comes next even better.

REMEMBER → Launch isn't the finish line. It's where the good stuff starts.

WE HAD AN IDEA, TOO.

After decades building technology, products, brands, and experiences, we had one of our own: Help more people think big - and make it real.
Bring the right people together. Get to what matters.
Stay curious. Build smart.

So we decided to shoot for the moon.

Zev & Mila
Co-creators
lunara

THE SMILE FILES
HIGH HOLIDAYS EDITION

ASK THE DENTIST

Dr. Despina Markogiannakis

With so many dental products and so much conflicting advice, it can be hard to know what actually works. So we asked Dr. Despina Markogiannakis the questions people really want answered.

What toothbrush does a dentist use at home? Are whitening strips worth it? Does mouthwash make a meaningful difference?

In this edition of The Smile Files, Dr. Markogiannakis shares straightforward, practical advice to help you make smarter choices for a healthier smile.

Have a question for Dr. Markogiannakis? Send it our way.
Email info@smilesofchevychase.com.
It may be featured in the next edition.

Let's start with a question everyone wants answered:

What toothbrush do you personally use and why?

I love this question because the right toothbrush can make a real difference. I use a high-quality electric toothbrush—specifically one with a pressure sensor and timer. It delivers a consistently thorough clean without being too aggressive on enamel or gums, which is key for long-term oral health. My favorite is the Oral-B iO.



Whitening strips seem like the easiest shortcut to a brighter smile. Are you a fan—or should people be more careful with them than they realize?

Whitening strips can be helpful, but they have their limits. They may improve mild surface stains, but they are not the right solution for everyone. Overuse can cause sensitivity, and they cannot treat deeper discoloration. For more consistent results, professional whitening offers a safer, more controlled approach, with results that are often more predictable.



And while we're building the full lineup: favorite toothpaste?

I keep this one simple, but it's an important one: choose a fluoride toothpaste with enamel-strengthening properties. I usually recommend formulas that are effective without being overly abrasive, especially for everyday, long-term use. A good toothpaste should protect your teeth without doing more than necessary.

Okay, you've convinced us on the toothbrush. Floss is where people get oddly loyal—what do you use?

My choice? A soft, shred-resistant floss that glides easily, especially if you have tight spaces between your teeth. Personally, I love Cocofloss. The best floss is the one you'll use daily, so comfort matters more than brand.



Is that mostly a professional preference, or is an electric toothbrush genuinely worth the extra money for the rest of us?

Honestly, yes, it is worth it. Many patients notice an improvement in plaque removal and gum health after switching to an electric toothbrush. It takes much of the guesswork out of brushing and helps make every routine more effective.

Let's switch to the parents for a minute. What's your number-one tip for brushing a toddler's teeth without turning bedtime into a full negotiation?

With toddlers, make it simple and predictable. Sit them in your lap, gently tilt their head back, and keep brushing quick and calm. The goal is not to win a negotiation every night. It is to build a familiar routine that gradually becomes easier for both of you.



Now for the answer coffee drinkers may not want to hear: Does coffee really stain your teeth?

Coffee lovers may not love this answer, but yes, coffee is a major cause of staining. Its dark pigments build up on enamel over time, especially if you sip it throughout the day. A quick rinse with water afterward, along with regular cleanings, can help keep your smile brighter.



How often should we really be replacing a toothbrush? Is the three-month rule actually a real thing?

Here's the easy rule: replace your toothbrush every three months, or sooner if the bristles start to fray. Once the bristles are worn, they simply cannot clean your teeth as effectively.

We've covered the toothbrush, floss, and toothpaste. Complete the lineup for us: favorite mouthwash?

My pick is an alcohol-free mouthwash with fluoride. It helps strengthen enamel without drying out your mouth. ACT and select Listerine formulas are two of my favorites, but always check the label for both "alcohol-free" and "fluoride."



But is mouthwash actually necessary—or is it just a nice extra for people who are already doing the basics?

Think of mouthwash as the finishing touch, not the foundation. Good brushing and flossing do the heavy lifting; mouthwash simply adds an extra layer of protection. It can be helpful, but it is not a substitute or an absolute necessity.

Parents see so many "training toothpastes" made for young children. Are they a helpful first step, or do they fall short when it comes to cavity protection?

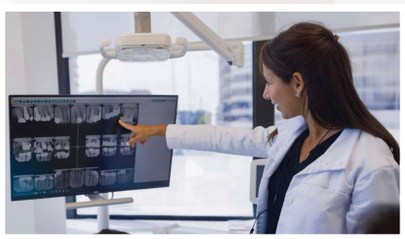
They can make brushing feel easier, but many toddler toothpastes are fluoride-free and do not provide the same cavity protection. Once the first tooth appears, use a tiny, rice-sized smear of fluoride toothpaste. Around age 3, increase to a pea-sized amount and supervise brushing.

If you could get every patient to adopt one habit—the one most likely to spare them thousands in dental work later—what would it be?

Without hesitation: floss every day. It may be one of the simplest habits, but it is also one of the most overlooked. Daily flossing reaches the areas your toothbrush cannot, helping prevent the decay and gum disease that can eventually lead to more extensive and costly treatment.

All right, last one. If you had to boil everything down to one daily rule for perfect teeth, what would you tell people?

If I had to boil it down: Brush thoroughly twice a day and clean between your teeth once daily. If you do those two things consistently, you're ahead of 90% of people.



Dr. Despina Markogiannakis is the owner of Smiles of Chevy Chase and a top-rated dentist in the D.C. region. Recognized by Washingtonian, Potomac, Bethesda, and Washington Jewish Journal magazines, she specializes in restorative, cosmetic, general, and implant dentistry, with a reputation for expertise, compassion, and trust. To schedule an appointment, call **(301) 652-0656** or email **info@smilesofchevychase.com.**

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WHAT THE AKEIDAH TEACHES US ABOUT FACING AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE



RABBI DOVID ROSENBAUM

The *Torah* event we reflect on most on *Rosh Hashanah* is *Akeidas Yitzchak*, when *Avraham* was prepared to bring his son *Yitzchak* as an offering to G-d. We are rightfully proud of the total devotion of our Patriarch, but exactly what are we trying to evoke? Because he was ready to do something great we should be blessed with a good year? Alternatively, are we suggesting there is something *Avraham* demonstrates in the story that is indicative of who we are or what we have experienced?

The *Chasam Sofer* explains that there is one aspect of the conduct of *Avraham* that we all can and should apply to our daily lives. As father and son are on their way to the mountain the *pasuk* states "and both of them went together." What is the significance of emphasizing they went together? *Rashi* explains that despite the fact that *Avraham* knew what the tragic result of this journey was intended to be he was able to go with the same joy as his son *Yitzchak*, who did not yet comprehend the intended result. *Avraham* was about to lose the greatest reward of his life, the ability to create a legacy for generations to come, and yet he was able to go with joy! From here we learn that the faith of *Avraham* was not only manifest in his actions, but even his outlook.

The task of living our lives with faith, always accepting our lot and mission, is daunting, but very meaningful to think about on *Rosh Hashanah*. Surely we have things for which we hope and pray. However, we turn to *Hashem* on this holy day and evoke memories of *Akeidas Yitzchak*. We are reminding G-d, and ourselves, that whatever plan He has for us in the year to come will be fully accepted by us. If He sends us blessings, we will endeavor to find ways to channel them towards His service. If he sends us challenges, we will accept them as yet another opportunity to grow and serve Him.

Ironically, the more we accept whatever judgements He renders for us, the more likely we are to merit the blessings for which we so fervently. Once we have achieved this outlook and perspective

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He can shower us with His blessings with confidence that we will apply them appropriately. This concept is uniquely meaningful as we enter the month of Elul, 5784. How many questions do we have regarding the events of the past months? How much confusion? Nevertheless, the coming weeks are an ideal period to build our inner faith, reminding ourselves that come what may, we are ready to serve Him.

May all of *klal Yisrael* merit a *kesivah vechasimah tovah* and may we have the strength and perspective to greet whatever the new year brings with joy in the opportunity to serve our Maker, as was the way of our father *Avraham*. In that merit, may *Hashem* bring a personal salvation to every individual and family impacted by these past months, and may all of the Jewish People celebrate the ultimate redemption speedily in our days.

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum became the Rabbi of YISE in 2010 after having served as the Assistant Rabbi under Rav Gedaliah Anemer, zt"l, for the previous five years. In addition to his responsibilities at YISE, Rabbi Rosenbaum has played an extensive role in the broader Greater Washington Orthodox Jewish community, serving, among other positions, as President of the Vaad Harabanim of Greater Washington from 2013 to 2015. Rabbi Rosenbaum is currently the Gittin Administrator for the Vaad, coordinating halachic divorce for couples in the community. He also acts as a halachic resource for a number of organizations in the community.



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JUDGED BY OUR RIPPLES



RABBI ARI KORETZKY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MEOR MARYLAND

I've been fond these past few weeks of recounting a story that recently happened to my wife, Malka, in Trader Joe's.

While waiting in line, she noticed that the person who had just checked out ahead of her had left an item behind on the counter. Glancing out the window, she saw the man still in the parking lot. Without hesitating, she grabbed the item, ran it out to him, and returned it just in time.

When she came back inside, the clerk called over the store manager (or "Captain," in Trader Joe's lingo) and excitedly exclaimed, "That's her! That's the woman who chased after the man who forgot his item!"

The manager handed Malka a complimentary bouquet of flowers, which later graced our Shabbos table. As she left the store, another customer — a woman not obviously Jewish — turned to her and said, "You did a real mitzvah."

As I approach Rosh Hashana, I keep thinking about the ripple effect of that one small act. A man received his item back, a clerk and manager felt uplifted, a stranger was moved to speak of mitzvos — and perhaps, to feel a flicker of Jewish pride.

The great mussar teachers, such as Rav Dov Yoffen, taught that one way to merit a favorable judgment is to become rabim tzrichim lo — someone upon whom others depend. To the degree that our presence sustains or uplifts others, our own life and blessing become more necessary in this world.

This may be especially true in our interactions with less affiliated Jews. Sometimes we may be that one remaining link tethering another Jew to their heritage.

And so, as the shofar blows and a new year dawns, I find myself asking: beyond my immediate family, to whom might I be an indispensable link in the year ahead?

Rabbi Ari Koretzky serves as Executive Director of MEOR Maryland, a distinguished campus-based Jewish educational organization and part of the expansive Olami international network, which has engaged tens of thousands of young Jewish students from across the Jewish spectrum. At the University of Maryland and far beyond, MEOR offers intellectually rich classes, substantive conversations, weekly Shabbat experiences, individualized mentorship, leadership development, immersive journeys to Israel and Europe, career networks, internships, and thoughtfully curated programming. Built around authentic relationships and lifelong community, MEOR creates an exceptional environment in which students can explore Jewish thought with depth, relevance, and authenticity—cultivating an enduring connection to Torah, Jewish identity, and purposeful Jewish living.



THE GIFT OF THE HIGH HOLIDAYS

Aviva Waxman

Just my Rosh Hashana thoughts: I was speaking with someone recently who shared a perspective that left me so excited and inspired. The women commented that Rosh Hashanah is her favorite holiday because it offers a wonderful opportunity every year for fresh resolutions and a new start. I was completely star stuck: what she said was so true, so simple, and so motivating.

I always looked at the High holidays as intense and heavy, and while they are- the intensity does not really motivate me to reflect on personal change. Hearing that the month of Tishrei is an exciting time for change and new opportunity resonated so deeply in me because in a flash a realized I may be looking at this unique time incorrectly.

I think that people are inspired to change more from a place of positivity than from obligation. When we feel satisfied and confident with ourselves it is easier to try something new. I have heard that we are supposed to serve G-d from a place of fear and love but we must first feel love before we fear Him.

This women's simple statement was such a perspective shift in the way that I realized I was looking at this time too heavy and focusing on the fear end of the Holidays rather than focus on Hashems love for me. This time is a personal gift for a pause and change.

May we all be inscribed in the book of life for a happy and healthy year!

Aviva Waxman is the owner of Sheva Interiors, an interior design firm covering Maryland and DC. Aviva loves to work with her clients to bring out their style in a contemporary and Younique way. She can be reached at shevainteriors@gmail.com or 443-272-5879.

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Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur Q&A



RABBI YITZY FOX



Rosh Hashana

01 Q: What was created on the first Rosh Hashanah (first of Tishrei) of all time?

A: Animals, Adam, and Chava. Even according to Rabbi Eliezer, who says that the world was created in Tishrei (*Rosh Hashanah* 10b-11a), the first day of creation was on the twenty-fifth of Elul and man was created on the sixth day of creation, which was a Friday and the first of Tishrei, i.e., Rosh Hashanah.

02 Q: Which days of the week can't the first day of Rosh Hashana fall out on nowadays?

A: Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday. After Hillel (II) Nesiah created a fixed nineteen-year calendar cycle which adjusts for differences between the solar and lunar years, the Rabbanan made it so that Rosh Hashanah cannot begin on a Sunday, Wednesday, or Friday.

03 Q: Which three women did Hashem remember on Rosh Hashanah?

A: **1.** Sarah, **2.** Chanah, and **3.** Rachel were remembered by Hashem on Rosh Hashanah, and their sons were conceived shortly thereafter (*Rosh Hashanah* 10b). We mention these events in the zichronos section of Mussaf.

04 Q: From which animal is a shofar generally taken? Which animals do not produce kosher shofars?

A: **a)** A ram **b)** Cows, most wild animals, and any non-kosher animals (*Shulchan Aruch* 586:1).

05 Q: Why don't we recite Hallel on Rosh Hashanah?

A: The Gemara in *Arachin* 10b says because it's not appropriate to be singing while the King (Hashem) sits on the throne of judgment and the books of life and death are open before him. Similarly, the *Rambam (Megillah/Chanukah* 3:6) says Rosh Hashanah is a day of seriousness and repentance and not a time of excessive happiness.

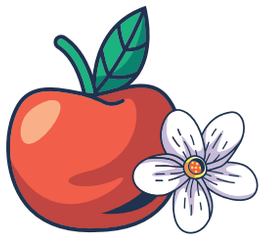
06 Q: How many of the shofar blasts are required mid'Oraiysa?

A: **Thirty blasts**. Although technically only one set of nine blasts (*tekiah-teruah-tekiah*) is required, since we are unsure what exactly a teruah is, we blow three sets (*tekiah, shevarim*, and *shevarim-teruah*), which equal thirty blasts that we consider the primary mitzva *mid'Oraiysa*. (*Rosh Hashanah* 33b; *Shulchan Aruch* OC 590:1-2).

07 Q: Where was the first recorded shofar blowing in history? From where was that shofar obtained?

A: At Har Sinai to signal to B'nei Yisrael that they can approach the mountain. The shofar was obtained from the ram at *akeidas Yitzchak* that Avraham brought as a sacrifice to Hashem (*Shemos* 19:13, *Rashi*; see *Ramban*).

Yom Kippur



01 Q: What are the four primary steps to teshuvah?

A: The *Rambam* (*Teshuvah* 2:2) enumerates four basic steps: **1.** Stop doing the sin (*azivas hacheit*). **2.** Remorse of the sin (*charatah*). **3.** Accepting to never return to that sinful behavior (*kabbalah ahl ha'asid*). **4.** Confession of the sin (*viduy*). Some commentators add the need to ask for forgiveness.

02 Q: On what day of the year is there a mitzvah mid'Oraiysa to eat heartily the entire day?

A: Erev Yom Kippur (*Shulchan Aruch* 604:1; see Mishnah Berurah and Magen Avraham).



03 Q: For which types of sins does Yom Kippur not atone?

A: *Bein Adam L'chaveiro*. One must receive forgiveness by appeasing the person whom he/she wronged. Only then will Hashem grant a person full atonement for those sins (OC 606:1).

04 Q: Why do we blow the shofar at the end of Yom Kippur?

A: **1.** As a remembrance for when they used to blow the shofar to free all slaves on the Yom Kippur of a *yovel* year (*Tosafos Shabbos* 114b. However, he rejects this explanation because the *yovel* shofar-blowing happened every fifty years. Perhaps it also symbolizes our own freedom as we are now no longer burdened by our sins.)
2. *Tosafos* gives another reason, from the Ri, that the shofar-blowing was to signal that it is time to prepare for the post-Yom Kippur festive meal.
3. *Be'er Heitev* (623:6) says that the shofar-blowing represents Hashem's Shechinah leaving us as Yom Kippur concludes. This is similar to the shofar-blowing that took place at Har Sinai when Hashem gave B'nei Yisrael the *Aseres Haibros*. (See *Beis Yosef* OC 624 from *Semag*.)

05 Q: How many times is one required to ask someone for forgiveness? Who is the exception?

A: Three times (in front of three people). b) A Rebbi is able to hold back forgiveness even after three requests from a student. Therefore, a student must continue to ask for forgiveness (OC 606:1).



Rabbi Yitzy Fox serves as a Rebbi at Berman Hebrew Academy and is a member of the Chofetz Chaim Kollel at the Silver Spring Jewish Center. His newly released sefer, The Ultimate Parashah Challenge, presents thought-provoking questions and discussions designed to enhance the Shabbos table experience. **The sefer is available for purchase** at RabbiYitzyFox.com or through Mosaica Press. For questions, feedback, or to subscribe to the weekly Parashah Q&A newsletter, please email rabbiyitzyfox@gmail.com.

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WHO
IN THE TORAH HAD "SUPER-SPEED"?

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WHERE
DID YAAKOV TAKE A "REST STOP" ON HIS WAY TO EGYPT?

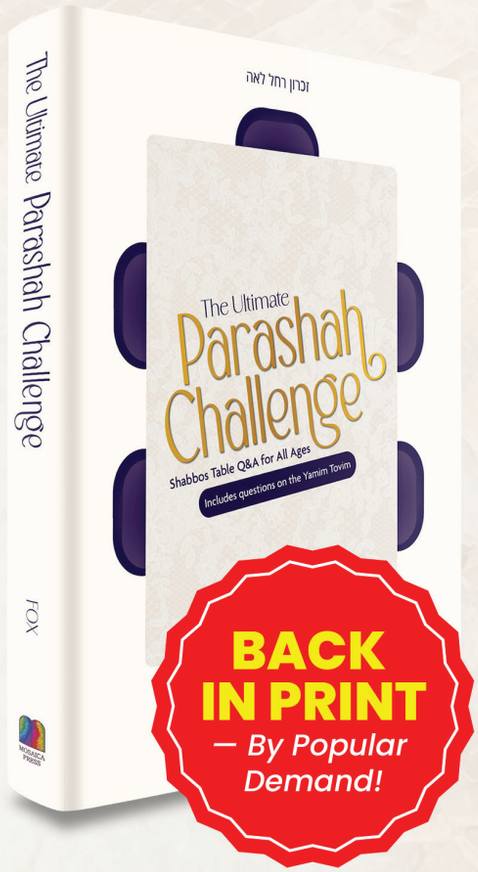
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WHAT
MIRACLE DID HASHEM PERFORM FOR BOTH AVRAHAM AND MOSHE?

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THE BRIEFING

The $1.8 Billion Coffee Tab

Starbucks is holding roughly $1.8 billion in unused gift cards and app balances—money customers have already paid but haven't yet spent. Some will eventually buy coffee. Some may never be redeemed at all.

It's a quiet reminder that one of the world's strongest businesses isn't just selling coffee—it's earning enough trust that millions of people are willing to pay before they order.

The most successful companies don't simply sell products. They reshape habits.



Ferrari's Electric Gamble Pays Off

Ferrari's first fully electric car is already a commercial hit. The Luce was created with Sir Jony Ive—the legendary former Apple design chief who helped shape the iPhone, iPod, MacBook, and Apple Watch—and fellow designer Marc Newson through their firm, LoveFrom. Its minimalist exterior feels distinctly Apple-inspired, while the cockpit surprisingly favors elegant physical switches, aluminum, and glass over another giant touchscreen.

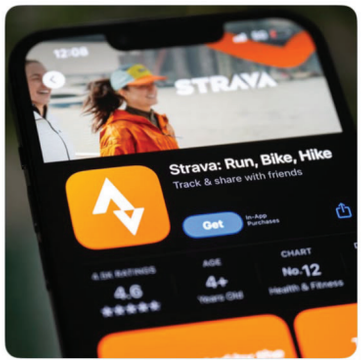
Ferrari reportedly filled the Luce's entire 2026 allocation of nearly 500 cars within weeks. At roughly $640,000 each—before customization—that represents more than $300 million in potential sales. Then "Chassis 0" fetched $40 million at a charity auction, becoming the most expensive new car ever auctioned. The engine may be silent, but the market's response has been remarkably loud.

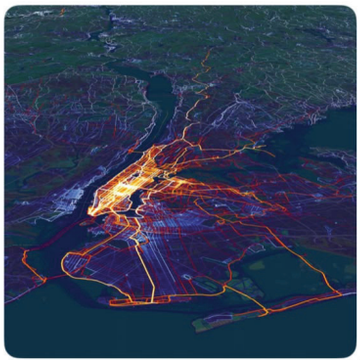


The New Neighborhood Test: Who's Running?

Homebuyers have long checked schools, crime rates and property values. Now some are checking Strava — the fitness tracking app founded in 2009 by Harvard crew teammates Michael Horvath and Mark Gainey — to see where locals actually run, walk and bike. The idea behind Strava itself grew from the founders wanting to recreate the camaraderie of their college rowing days.

Today, its heatmaps offer an unintended window into neighborhood life: where people regularly exercise outdoors, at what hours, and how heavily certain streets and trails are used. It's not a scientific measure of a neighborhood — but sometimes how people actually live tells you more than a listing does.





SNAP Cuts Soda. Soda Sales Drop.

Soda purchases dropped 13% after new SNAP restrictions kicked in. SNAP — America's federal food-assistance program — has traditionally covered soda alongside the rest of the grocery cart. Now states are reconsidering where food assistance ends and consumer preference begins, turning an ordinary supermarket purchase into a surprisingly serious policy question.

The debate sits at a distinctly American intersection of personal choice, public health and reasonable limits. The early numbers suggest policy can move habits without banning anything at all. Still, no anti-soda crusade here: Diet Coke remains one of modern civilization's more convincing achievements, and a properly refrigerated Diet Raspberry Snapple deserves full due process before Congress.







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A Star Beneath the Rubble

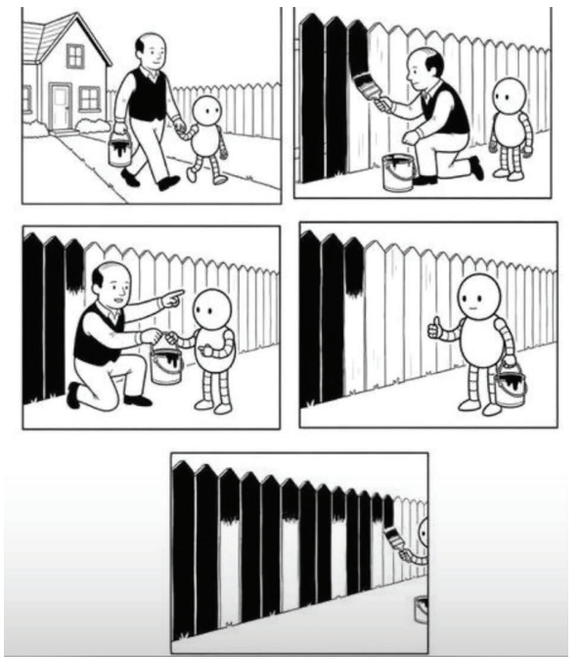
During excavations at a Jewish resistance bunker in Będzin, Poland, workers reportedly uncovered a yellow Star of David patch—the very badge Jews were forced to wear under Nazi rule.

Small enough to fit in the palm of a hand, it carries the weight of millions. Once meant to strip Jews of their dignity, today it stands as quiet testimony to their courage, resilience, and survival.

Some artifacts belong in museums. Others belong in our conscience.



Be Clear in Your Prompts



The age of AI may teach us an old lesson: clarity has always been a form of intelligence.

Simcha In The Sun Shines Again

Sunshine, laughter, and community filled BT Camps as Chai Lifeline Mid-Atlantic's Simcha in the Sun returned for its second year, bringing families from across Baltimore together for an afternoon of fun with a much deeper purpose.

Boating, water slides, sports, crafts, swimming, music, and entertainment filled the day. At its heart were children and families navigating serious illness — lives too often shaped by hospital rooms, treatments, and uncertainty no family expects to face. For a few precious hours, the focus was simply on children being children, families being together, and a community reminding them they never walk those difficult days alone.

It was community at its best — joyful, meaningful, and a beautiful reminder of the difference simply showing up can make.

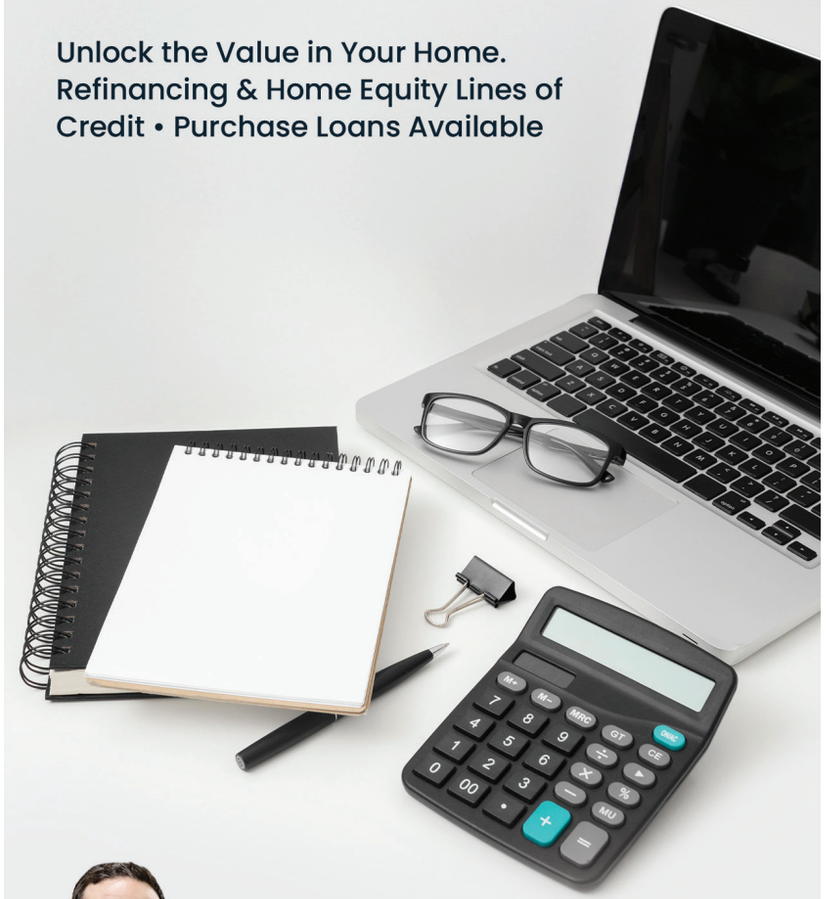




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Shana Tova

FROM THE CHAI LIFELINE MID-ATLANTIC FAMILY TO YOURS

Thank you for being part of a community that brings support, connection, and joy to children and families throughout the year.

From a child finding a friend who understands, to a family finding support in a moment of crisis, **you help make sure no one has to face a difficult journey alone.**

Wishing you and your loved ones a year filled with health, happiness, and countless moments of simcha.

Chai Lifeline
MID-ATLANTIC



A YEAR OF

Impact & Community

When a child is facing serious illness or a family is navigating crisis, Chai Lifeline is there. Through year-round support, meaningful experiences, practical assistance, and a community of caring volunteers, we help children and families find strength, connection, and moments of joy when they need them most.

Here's what our Mid-Atlantic community made possible this year:

NEARLY **1,000**

community members supported through Chai Lifeline Mid-Atlantic care

145

children matched with a Big Brother or Big Sister

100+

children with serious illness experienced the joy of Camp Simcha & Camp Simcha Without Borders

80

children facing illness or crisis at home thriving in i-Shine afterschool program

534

individuals supported through crisis services

275

dedicated volunteers powering Chai Lifeline across the Mid-Atlantic



Together, we're building a community where no family has to face a difficult journey alone.

The Power Behind the Call



A shofar's call can pierce the heart and rise all the way to Shomayim. But the shofar has no voice of its own.

Its power comes from the breath of the person behind it.

The strongest forces within Klal Yisroel are brought to life by the people who stand behind them.

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