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Washington Jewish Journal

THE SUKKOS ISSUE

SEPTEMBER 2026

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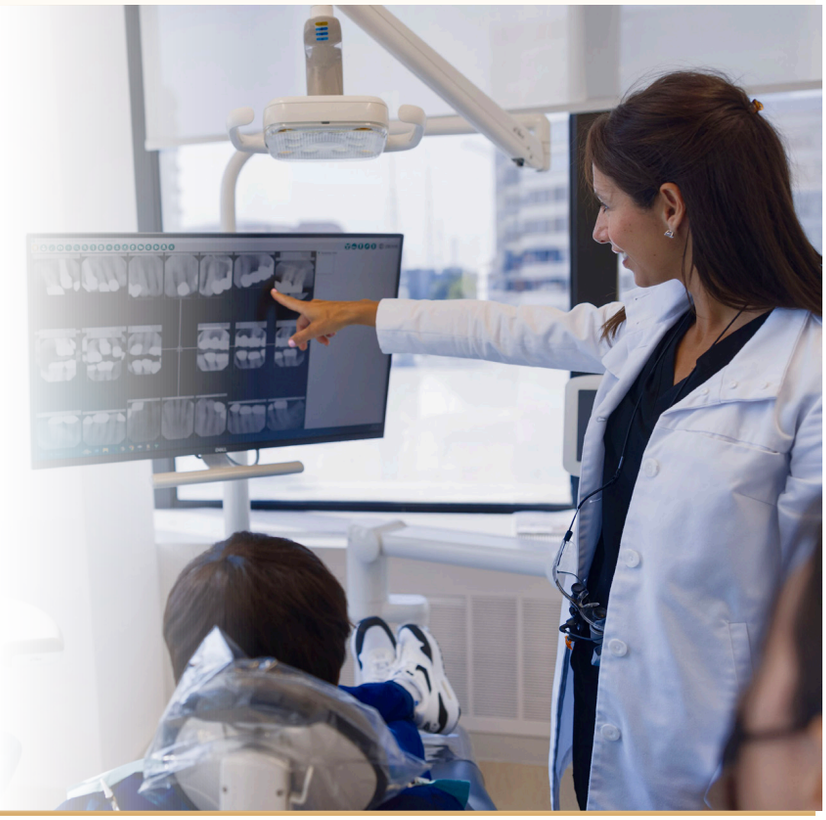

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LATEST SHEMA MAGEN AVRAHAM	9:27 AM
LATEST SHEMA GR"A	10:04 AM
SUNSET	6:49 PM
CANDLE LIGHTING 18 MINUTES BEFORE SUNSET	6:31 PM

SHABBOS
OCTOBER
03
2026

SHEMINI ATZERES
כ"ב תשרי תשפ"ז

LATEST SHEMA MAGEN AVRAHAM	9:28 AM
LATEST SHEMA GR"A	10:05 AM
SUNSET	6:47 PM
SECOND-NIGHT CANDLE LIGHTING FROM A PRE-EXISTING FLAME ONLY	7:27 PM

SUNDAY
OCTOBER
04
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SIMCHAS TORAH
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SUNSET	6:46 PM
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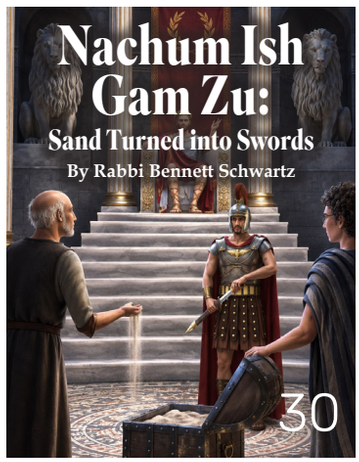

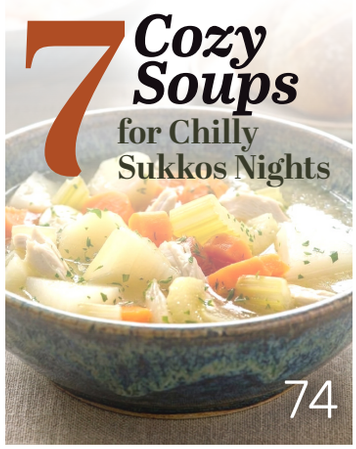

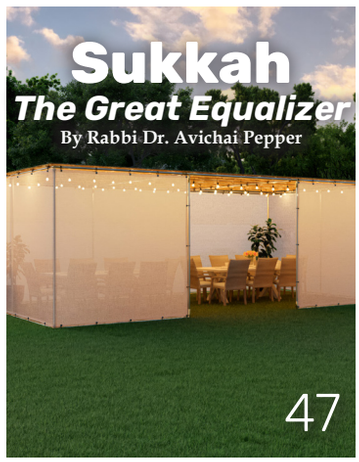

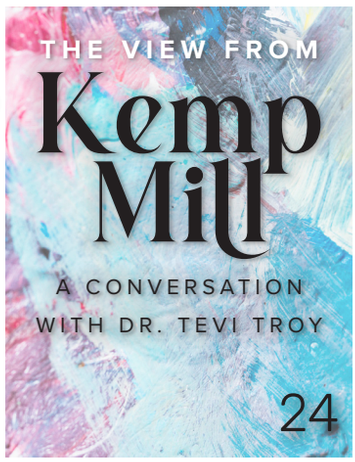

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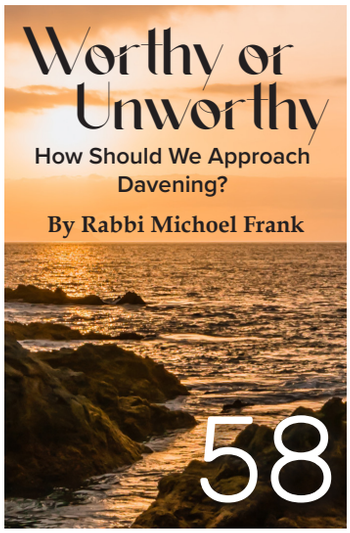

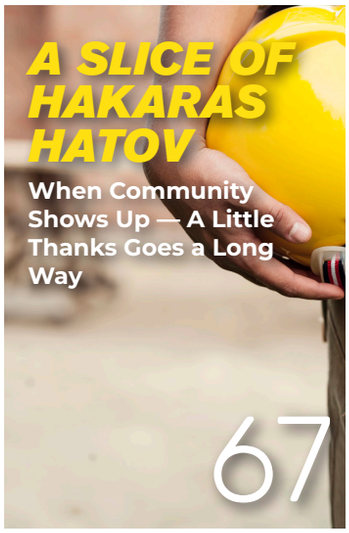

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BRING A *NEW FLAVOR* To *Sukkot* This Year

Balsamic-Glazed Lamb Stuffed Peppers

בס"ד

Prep Time: 30 mins | Cook Time: 50 mins | Total Time: 1 hr 20 mins | Servings: 6

Ingredients

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For the Peppers

1 cup quinoa
6 large red yellow, or orange bell peppers
2 tablespoons De La Rosa Avocado Oil
1 pound ground lamb
2 tablespoons De La Rosa Avocado Oil
1 small yellow onion finely diced
2 medium carrots finely diced
1 medium zucchini finely diced
1 red bell pepper finely diced
3 cloves garlic minced
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
1 teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground allspice

To Finish

3 tablespoons De La Rosa Balsamic Glaze
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
1 tablespoon pomegranate arils optional, for garnish
Fresh mint leaves for garnish

Instructions

- Cook the quinoa in 1 cup water according to package directions. Fluff with a fork and let cool.
- Preheat the oven to 375°F.
- Slice the tops off the peppers, reserving the tops for presentation, and remove the seeds and membranes. If necessary, trim a very thin slice from the bottoms so they stand upright without tipping.
- Brush the outside of the peppers with 2 tablespoons D**e La Rosa Avocado Oil** and place them upright in a 9 x 13-inch baking dish.
- Heat 2 tablespoons **De La Rosa Avocado Oil** in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion and carrots and cook for 4 minutes.
- Stir in the zucchini and diced red bell pepper. Cook for another 3 minutes, until the vegetables begin to soften.
- Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds.
- Add the ground lamb and cook, breaking it apart with a spoon, until browned and fully cooked, about 6 to 8 minutes.
- Stir in the cooked quinoa, ¼ cup parsley, 2 tablespoons mint, salt, pepper, cumin, cinnamon, and allspice. Cook for 1 minute to combine the flavors.
- Spoon the filling into the prepared peppers, mounding it slightly on top.
- Add ¼ cup water to the bottom of the baking dish and cover loosely with foil.
- Bake for 30 minutes.
- Remove the foil and continue baking for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the peppers are tender and lightly caramelized around the edges.
- Remove from the oven and immediately drizzle the tops of the peppers with the De La Rosa Balsamic Glaze.
- For an elegant presentation, place the reserved pepper tops back onto the stuffed peppers. Garnish with chopped parsley, fresh mint leaves, and pomegranate arils, if desired. Serve warm.

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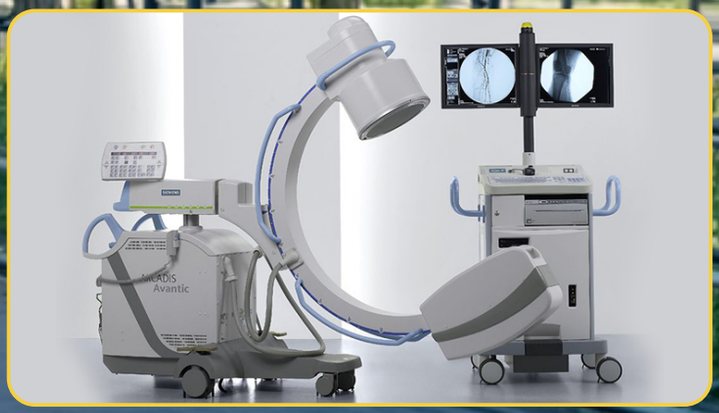

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Why a Joy-Filled Sukkos?

"*Vesamachta bechagecha*" (and you shall rejoice on your festivals) is a mitzvah that applies to all three pilgrimage festi- vals. Of the three, we can find cause for joyful celebration on Pesach and Shavuos, for both mark events that were central to Israel's emergence and continued existence as a people — the Exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Torah.

On Sukkos, however, no such monumental event occurred. Yet we are enjoined to rejoice for joy's sake; and beyond that the holiday is described as "*zeman simchaseinu*" (the time of our joy). How is one to achieve this happiness? What is to inspire it? Isn't there something forced and unnatural in picking a time and saying, "Now let us rejoice"?

The Key to Simchah

The Hebrew language is not rich in synonyms (see Ibn Tibbon in the introduction to his translation of *Chovos HaLeva- vos*), yet it has ten words to describe happiness. The Malbim explains that "*simchah*" is distinguished from the other terms that express happiness in that *simchah* is constant, as opposed to *gil*, for instance, which denotes a sudden spurt of joy. The Vilna Gaon, as well as the Malbim, explain further that *simchah* is the inner state of happiness rather than its outward expression.

The Kotzker Rebbe was known to say: "One of the three things that one should learn to emulate from a child's behavior is that a child is always happy." Why is this so? The Maharal explains that *simchah* describes the emotion one feels when one is complete and does not lack anything, while *sasson* is the joy one experiences for gaining something or achieving some sort of renewal (*Netzach Yisrael* chap. 23). *Simchah* is constant, but *sasson* is only momentary, for as soon as the novelty is gone one needs yet another event or experience to inspire another spurt of joy.

Before a child's life is clouded with doubts, before he is frustrated by unfulfilled drives and ambitions, he is always happy, for he does not lack anything. But this state does not offer us an ideal to strive for. To be without drives or ambitions is to remain a child all one's life. How then does one attain happiness while being involved in the vicissitudes of life? Life is full of needs and challenges, which, by their very nature, create vacuums to be filled.

Joy and Closeness to God

The source of the happiness described as "*simchah*" lies in enhancing one's awareness of Hashem and His Providence, for with this awareness, one feels more complete and achieves a greater degree of *simchah*. A person is beset with shortcomings and frustrations only because he considers himself a separate entity, unattached to God; then his shortcomings are indeed shortcomings, and feeling that he is missing something is a true indication that he is genuinely lacking in an essential aspect of his life (thus, *atzav* [despair] is a synonym for idolatry [Tehillim 115:4] — for its source is alienation from God). Not so the person whose life is infused with faith and a keen awareness of God and His Divine Providence, the person who recognizes that whatever travails and problems he encounters do not occur by chance but are part of a Divine plan designed for his benefit. Such a person is *samei'ach bechelko* (content with his lot); not the *samei'ach bechelko* commonly misunderstood as the passive resignation of the simple-minded, but that which is the joy-filled end product of one's recognition of God and His profound ways!

Of Certainty and Joy

There is no joy, Chazal say, like the resolution of doubt. And there is no certainty other than that which results from tying one's destiny to God. This, in turn, is the key to one of the principles of Chassidus expressed by Rabbi Nachman of Breslav: "It is a great mitzvah to always be in a state of simchah." This does not refer to Valium, prescribed by modern-day therapists as a means of divesting oneself of one's anxieties to better cope with life, but to an ultimate spiritual goal in one's constant ascent in *emunah* and *avodah* (faith and Divine service). This constant *simchah* is an outgrowth of the constancy of always being aware of God's presence: "*Shivisi Hashem lenegdi tamid.*" The joy of life as prescribed by Chassidus was achieved by perceiving one's place in the world by the light at the end of the tunnel — the light emanating from awareness of God.

Birth of Despair

When is despondency born? Two events produce an obfus- cation of God's presence and thereby bring about confusion and unhappiness. One of these is the sins that the individual com- mits. "עונתיכם היו מבדלים בינכם לבין אלקיכם — Your sins created a barrier between Me and you" (Yeshayah 59:2). In addition to the sin, one's actions also draw a veil

between oneself and one's Creator. This alienation from God produces despair.

In addition, a specific event produced a general *hester panim*: Adam's eating from the tree of knowledge. The word "*atzav*" is used for the first time in Torah in regard to this occurrence. Moreover, death, the father of all sorrow, was introduced to the world on that day. Until he sinned, Adam had been enjoying the state of "כשמחך יצירך בגן עדן מקדם – as you brought joy to your handiwork in Gan Eden."

The radical change from joyful awareness of God to *hester panim* and sorrow had ramifications in nature as well. Until Adam's sin, trees produced fruit swiftly and flawlessly, and mankind could bear children without pain. God's command to be fruitful was clearly manifest in the entirety of creation: the growth of a fruit on a tree was the result of the same command as, "Let there be a tree." Just as God's word produced a tree effortlessly and flawlessly, so did the tree produce fruit. Nature as a whole functioned in this manner.

After Adam sinned, the word of God in Creation became obfuscated, and nature was perceived as a self-contained, independent system, removed from its source – the word of God that animated it. From that time onward, man has been required to labor to bring forth the fruits of nature. Often nature responds negatively and produces thorns and thistles instead of fruit. When success does come, it seems attributable to man and his control of the elements rather than Divine Providence. Man's task now is to labor to tame nature, while uncovering the word of God within stubborn, contrary nature.

Close Encounter on Yom Tov

The *shalosh regalim* (three pilgrimage festivals) mark periods of time set aside to restore *simchah* and *gilui panim* (Divine awareness) to the world. One is commanded "to come and see and be seen before God" (*lifnei Hashem*). This involves coming to Jerusalem, the source of joy for the entire world – "*mesos kal ha'aretz*" (Tehillim 48:3) – the geographic spot where, more than anywhere else, one has an intense awareness of the Pres- ence of the Shechinah and experiences His *gilui Panim*.

By the same token, these *yamim tovim*, following the agrar- ian cycle, offer opportunities to compensate for Adam HaRis- hon's sin and bring man back in touch with his Creator through nature. Pesach, *chag ha'aviv* (the spring festival), is when the *omer* is brought, releasing the new grain crop from the prohibi- tion of *chadash*. Shavuos is *chag habikkurim*, the time when the first fruits' offerings can be brought; the *shtei halechem* are also offered, ushering in a new season of meal offerings by permitting the new grain crop on the *mizbei'ach*. And Sukkos, *chag ha'asif* (the harvest festival), marks the time that, at the peak of bounty, man declares himself a mere tenant in God's world, taking shelter in the sukkah that is roofed with *pesoles* (harvest wastes). Rather than an obscuring veil, the natural flow of the seasons becomes a vehicle for contact with God.

Twofold Celebration

Thus, Sukkos has within it a twofold element of *simchah* and "*lifnei Hashem.*" On the one hand, it concludes the process of rectifying the damage done by Adam HaRishon, removing the general *hester panim* by means of appearing before God on *yom tov*. Secondly, Sukkos marks the end of the *teshuvah* season, when the individual is cleansed of his own *aveiros* and tran- scends his personal *hester panim* through the "*lifnei Hashem tit'haru*" (purify yourself before God) of Yom Kippur.

The special celebration of *simchas beis hasho'eivah* – when water is poured into the wine trough of the altar, amidst singing and rejoicing, reaching a peak that is unrivaled throughout the year – expresses this twofold joy. Generally, all *korbanos* reflect a degree of *hester panim*: we take an object that is seemingly ours and offer it as a "gift" to God. The burning of the *korban* demonstrates that the material shell of matter is disintegrated, and the spiritual essence rises upward. Were we to realize "*laHashem ha'aretz umelo'ah* – the earth and all that fills it is the Lord's" in its fullness, that everything material exists wholly by virtue of God's words, it would simply not be necessary to demonstrate the spirituality inherent in all creation through *korbanos*.

On Sukkos, we consummate the rectification of the *hester panim* that pervades our existence, and we draw water, which is the basic element of life without which no living being can survive, from a spring. We then pour it onto the *mizbei'ach*, where it flows directly back to the same spring from which it was drawn. We bypass the laborious process of using the water to grow crops or nurture animals, which in turn are consumed by fire on the *mizbei'ach*, to return them to their essence.

Rav Yitzchak Hutner, *zt"l*, once summed it up at a Chol HaMoed Sukkos celebration with one succinct sentence: "At *simchas beis hasho'eivah* we draw from the source and pour back to the source; one continuous flow, without interruption in the middle."

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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THE VIEW FROM Kemp Mill

A CONVERSATION WITH DR. TEVI TROY

From the White House to the neighborhood shul, presidential historian Dr. Tevi Troy reflects on Jewish continuity, the community he calls home, and the difference between political disagreement and intimidation.

There are plenty of ways to describe a Jewish community: its schools, its shuls, its housing prices, its kosher restaurants. In the middle of our conversation, Dr. Tevi Troy offered another.

"People read books here."

It was a small observation, but it opened a much larger discussion about what Kemp Mill values—and what makes people choose to build their lives here.

A presidential historian, former senior White House aide, and former deputy secretary of Health and Human Services, Troy has spent years studying Washington and working inside it. He is now a senior fellow at the Ronald Reagan Institute and a senior scholar at Yeshiva University's Straus Center.

For our third annual conversation ahead of the High Holidays, we began not in the Oval Office, but in the Gemara—with a question that would carry us through much of the discussion: What keeps a Jewish community together?

From there, we moved closer to home: Kemp Mill's changing character, its rabbis, its political differences, and, yes, its restaurant hours. We also discussed a book taking shape from his Talmud podcast contributions and his concerns about threats directed at Jews and public officials.

Troy was speaking from Tacoma, Washington. At one point, he paused to admire the water: "I wish I could show you the view I have."

The view back home proved worth discussing, too.

This conversation has been edited and reorganized for clarity and flow.

Ancient questions, familiar concerns

What does the Gemara tell us about keeping a Jewish community together?

The Jews were trying to navigate a world in which they no longer had their own country, and foreign rulers made a real difference to their lives.

That is part of how I see the Gemara. It is not just about Jewish law. It is also about how we are going to live in this new environment. Some Jews were in Babylonia; others were elsewhere. They had to deal with the Romans and the legacy of the Greeks. They were trying to cope with the chaos of the pre-modern world.

These were practical questions. You are living under somebody else's rule, and what that ruler decides can affect your community. So you have to understand the world around you. But you are also trying to maintain a Jewish life within it. How do you do both? That is part of what these discussions are working through.

There is also the question that runs through the experience of exile: How do you hold things together? How do you maintain a Jewish community through all of that? The fact that we are still here is part of what makes the question so interesting.

What makes a community work?

What has stood out to you about Kemp Mill's growth?

The shifting demographics of the Montgomery County Jewish community. When I moved to Kemp Mill in 2002, it was not clear to me that it would become the area's central Orthodox community. There were White Oak, Woodside, and Potomac, among other options.

At the time, Kemp Mill struck me as a more Modern Orthodox community. Now it has become a place for a much broader

range of Orthodox Jews, from modern to yeshivish. That emergence is interesting to me.

I remember when a number of the Torah School rebbeim lived in White Oak. Over time, people moved to Baltimore or Kemp Mill. White Oak became a smaller community than it had been, while Kemp Mill grew substantially.

So it is not just a question of the community getting bigger. It is also a question of who can see themselves living here. That has broadened quite a bit.

What made that growth possible?

A number of new shuls opened during the time I have been here, and they met different needs. That is an important part of the story, because an established Orthodox community does not necessarily have everything every Orthodox family is looking for.

Chabad of Silver Spring is a good example. Some people initially wondered why Chabad was coming into an already-established Orthodox community. But they have done an amazing job and clearly filled a need. There were people looking for something different, and Chabad gave them that option.

Ohr HaTorah met another need. You had yeshivish families who wanted a fuller family davening experience than they could necessarily have at the Yeshiva, where the focus is naturally more on the bachurim. A family looking for a shul has somewhat different needs, and having a place that recognizes those needs matters.

You could look at Kemp Mill and say, "It is Orthodox. It has plenty of Orthodox shuls." But having several shuls is one thing. Having a shul where a particular family feels comfortable is another. Even within an Orthodox community, people are looking for different things.

Those additional institutions helped more families see Kemp Mill as a place they could make their home. So the growth of communal resources mattered. It helped broaden the community without requiring everyone to fit into the same mold.

What draws families to Kemp Mill?

We have friends who moved here from Boca Raton about five years ago. They had done research into which Modern Orthodox community would be the right fit for them. It was a combination of things, rather than any one thing that settled it.

Where could their children get a strong secular education alongside a Jewish education? Where would the culture not be completely materialistic? Where would there be enough kosher options?

Nobody is going to say that we lead in the number of kosher restaurants. We do not. But there is a difference between having every possible option and having enough of what you need. We did not always have kosher sushi. Now we have sushi!

Then there are the other things: relatively more affordable houses, and a feeling that not everyone is competing to own the newest car.

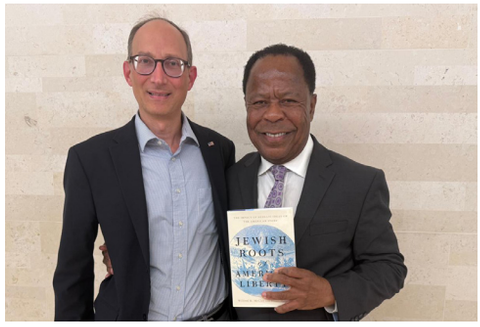
People read books here.

That tells you something about the atmosphere. When you are choosing a community, you are thinking about schools and shuls, of course. But you are also thinking about what your children will see around them and what people value. What will seem important to them as they grow up here?

Those things mattered to this family. The community had to meet a certain threshold: a choice of shuls, school options, enough kosher resources. You cannot simply substitute a nice atmosphere for the things a family needs.

But once those needs were met, the other qualities became important, too. The question was no longer just whether the community had enough. It was whether this was the kind of place where they wanted to raise their children.

So it's not all about the restaurant count?



Dr. Troy with the Justice Department's antisemitism fighter Leo Terrell. Terrell is holding The Jewish Roots of American Liberty," to which Dr. Troy contributed an essay.

Dr. Troy with White House colleague — and CNN contributor — Scott Jennings.

Dr. Troy with Tikvah's Rabbi Hershel Lutch and top election lawyer Charlie Spies.

Three former Deputy Secretaries of HHS: Eric Hargan, Jim O'Neill and Dr. Troy

Dr. Troy with author Joe Loconte at the Newport Synagogue in Rhode Island

Dr. Troy with former senior government official Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat

Dr. Troy with authors Jonah Goldberg and Vincent Cannato

Dr. Troy with Tikvah CEO Eric Cohen

Exactly. There is a lot to offer beyond the number of kosher restaurants. It is a nice community, and I have heard people at yeshivos and seminaries talk about how nice the Maryland kids are. That says something about the place, too.

What gives the community that character?

A couple of things. There are a lot of government employees here, so it is not necessarily a money culture. There is more of a government and public-service culture. I think that helps shape the atmosphere—what people value, what they are interested in, and what they talk about.

The Washington area also has a substantial intellectual life, with think tanks and universities. And there is intellectual diversity within the community. You have liberals and conservatives—some of them professionally liberal or conservative. Politics is not just something they follow; it is what they do for a living.

But there is a recognition that somebody else can have a different political perspective. You are not necessarily going to agree, and nobody is asking you to. You can disagree with someone and still be part of the same community.

Growing up in my circles in New York, a Republican Jew was unusual enough that people would remark on it. My son's experience in Miami is almost the reverse: he found a much more conservative environment.

Here, you have a mix. The person sitting next to you in shul may see politics very differently from you. But you are still neighbors, and there is more to that relationship than where each of you stands politically.

So, is this a less competitive community?

Competitive on other fronts.

I am not sure "less competitive" is the right description. But the competition does not seem to be primarily about who has the newest car.

What role do the rabbis play?

We have some really special rabbeim.

Look at Rabbi Wolvovsky and the program at Chabad that brings in rabbis from across the community to speak. He told me he had discussed the idea with people in other communities, and they could not put the same thing together. Some thought it would not work where they lived. Others looked into it but could not make it happen.

It is interesting that Kemp Mill is a place where it does work.

Rabbi Weinberg at KMS is another very special person. And my impression of the Vaad is that it recognizes different stripes of Orthodoxy and accepts that they can be part of the same community.

Do people feel comfortable disagreeing politically?

In my experience, yes. I do not feel the kind of ideological shunning over American partisan politics that I have heard about elsewhere.

I had a non-Jewish friend in Kensington who was conservative. He told me that he and his wife felt socially excluded because of their politics, including among other parents. They eventually moved to North Carolina. That was his account of his experience. It is not what I feel here.

Part of the explanation, I think, is that we are used to overlapping communities. In the broader Jewish world, Democratic affiliation is familiar. In Orthodox circles, conservative and Republican perspectives are familiar.

Here, you encounter both. A different political affiliation does not automatically make someone an outsider.

And when it comes to politics in shul?

One good feature of the community is that there tends not to be partisan politics from the bimah. At KMS, that is a very strict rule, as I understand it.

A lot of people here are professionally political. They do not necessarily want to hear politics in shul, whether it comes from the right or the left.

You have debated this with Rabbi David Saperstein. Where did you differ?

David is a friend, and we did a series of debates at shuls around the country. We have different perspectives.

I argued for keeping politics out of shul. His position, as he explained it to me, was that political engagement could be part of what brings people into the pews. He was not shy about that. We disagreed about the role it should play.

I grew up in a Conservative shul, and the joke was that rabbis took their sermon cues from The New York Times editorial page. I am not sure that approach would work in this community, and I think that

Dr. Troy with close friends Chief Judge Matthew Solomson and Mars' Jay Eizenstat

is a good thing.

The people can be political without the shul itself being partisan.

Could the community expand a little farther out?

I think we should look a little farther north, toward Randolph Road. There is housing stock there that may be less expensive than houses within a very short walk of the existing shuls.

Perhaps there could be a neighborhood Friday-night minyan, with people making the longer walk to the established shuls on Shabbos morning. It is worth thinking about how that might work.

Should we do more to introduce families to Kemp Mill?

We have a lot to offer. There is a lot to tell people about. So yes, I think a more deliberate effort to market the community could be worthwhile.

From the daf to the next book

Let's return to Take One. How did you go from listening to the podcast to becoming a recurring contributor?

I started listening to Liel Leibovitz's podcast, which brings in different writers and thinkers to discuss the Gemara. I thought it would be nice to participate.

I was learning at a slightly different pace, so I could look ahead for something that might work. I pitched him an idea, and he liked it. I came on, and then it developed into a recurring thing.

We made a bit of a shtick out of it. Liel is very good with nicknames, and that became part of the fun.

When did you realize there might be a book in it?

I have been doing these for about five years, and I am very glad, in retrospect, that I saved the scripts. I did not just speak off the top of my head.

At one point, I put all the material together and realized I had something like 15,000 or 20,000 words. That was enough to make me think seriously about a book.

I spent the summer working on the draft, and I am planning to submit it to the publisher soon.

Do you have a title yet?

Not yet. I considered using the podcast nickname, but I am not

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Dr Troy with then Senator Marco Rubio

Dr. Troy with former Vice President Dick Cheney

Dr. Troy being sworn in as Deputy Secretary of HHS by Justice Brett Kavanaugh along with his wife Kami

Dr. Troy with former Senator and Attorney General John Ashcroft

Dr. Troy at a cabinet meeting in the George W. Bush administration, with Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne, Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte and President Bush

sure it is widely recognized enough to carry a book title on its own. I will find one.

You mentioned "underpromise and overdeliver." Is that your approach, too?

Definitely. Some people have a brasher approach. That has never been my way.

Disagreement, pressure, and the public square

What concerns you about the discussion around Israel—and what are your hopes for 5787?

I am concerned about efforts by opponents of Israel to make it unpopular. In my view, those efforts have had an effect on the left, and I see hostility toward Israel on parts of the right as well.

My hope for 5787 is that the Jewish community can begin to turn that around. I do not think we should assume that public attitudes are fixed.

Why are you optimistic about changing that?

Joshua Muravchik wrote a book called Making David into Goliath: How the World Turned Against Israel. You should talk to him.

What struck me in reading it was his account of how much sustained effort, over many years, went into changing the way people viewed Israel. I came away thinking that this shift did not simply happen on its own.

You could read that and say, "Woe is me." But I am an optimist. My reaction was: If people were able to put thought, energy, and resources into changing perceptions in one direction, then we have people who can put thought, energy, and resources into changing them in another.

That takes ideas and effort, and it takes money. But it is not just about money. It is about being thoughtful and deliberate about the case you are making.

How much of the criticism is really about Netanyahu?

Jared Moskowitz raised that question in an interview with Jewish Insider. He talked about colleagues who had explained their opposition to aid in terms of Benjamin Netanyahu, and his question was: What happens when Netanyahu is no longer there? Do those positions change?

That is a distinction worth examining. Is the disagreement really with a particular Israeli leader, or does it go beyond that leader?

There was another part of the interview that concerned me even more. Moskowitz talked about threats and harassment directed at members of Congress, and about how frightened some of their spouses are. He argued that concern about their families is becoming part of the political calculation.

That seems like a very different kind of political pressure.

It is. That was the part of his account that I found chilling.

It is not only the member of Congress who has to deal with it. Their spouse is dealing with it. Their children may be dealing with it. Once that happens, you are talking about something very different from an argument over policy.

The concern is that someone might begin thinking, "If I change my position, maybe the pressure moves on to somebody else." That is very different from somebody persuading you that your position is wrong.

So the question becomes whether people are free to act on what they actually believe.

Exactly. The protection matters.

There are outspoken supporters of Israel, including Ritchie Torres and John Fetterman, who are not Jewish. But my concern also extends to people who are less publicly identified with the issue and may still be facing threats against themselves or their families.

I think that deserves more attention. A person should be able to make a decision based on what he or she actually believes, not based on fear about what might happen at home.

You also connected this to what the Jewish community itself spends on security.

The community is spending an enormous amount just to protect itself. A recent Jewish Federations of North America

study estimated that American Jewish institutions spent more than $1 billion on security in 2025.

Obviously, we have to protect our own synagogues, schools, and institutions. But alongside that, I think we should also be paying attention to the safety of legislators who are facing threats and to the safety of their families.

If intimidation is affecting people's ability to participate freely in public life, that is something the broader society has an interest in addressing.

You mentioned Tal Fortgang's phrase "civil terrorism." What does he mean by that?

Tal has written about a kind of intimidation that is different from what people traditionally think of when they hear the word terrorism. He uses the phrase "civil terrorism" to describe unlawful conduct intended to coerce or intimidate people for political purposes.

The distinction I would make is between expressing a view and physically targeting another person.

You are allowed to say that you hate Israel. You are allowed to protest. But following somebody wearing a yarmulke and ringing a loud bell right next to his ear so that it causes injury is not simply making a political argument.

That is the sort of conduct I am talking about. There need to be consequences for unlawful intimidation. People should not have to accept physical harm or targeted harassment as the price of being visibly Jewish or expressing their views.

And for elected officials, the principle is pretty simple.

Yes. They should be able to vote according to what they actually believe, not because they think changing a position might protect their family from threats.

That is really the issue. Political disagreement is part of democracy. Intimidating somebody—or frightening his family—so that he changes his position is something else entirely.

We'll have to do this again when the book comes out. This is already our third High Holiday conversation.

I would love to do a fuller interview when the book comes out.

I love our conversations. I love the publication, and I look forward to these conversations going on for many years to come.

Dr. Tevi Troy has built a distinguished career at the intersection of American history, presidential politics, public policy, and Jewish communal life. A presidential historian, author, former senior White House aide, and former Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, he is today a senior fellow at the Ronald Reagan Institute and a senior scholar at Yeshiva University's Straus Center.

Yet here in Greater Washington, Troy is also something much closer to home: a longtime Kemp Mill neighbor, shul member, and thoughtful observer of the community he has helped call home for more than two decades. His perspective is shaped not only by years inside Washington's halls of power, but by the shuls, schools, families, conversations—and books—that give Kemp Mill its distinctive character.

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Nachum Ish Gam Zu:
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Rabbi Bennett Schwartz

Taanis 21a

סדר תעניות אלו, פרק שלישי, תענית כא.

וְאַמַּאי קָרוּ לֵיהּ נַחוּם אִישׁ גַּם זוֹ דְּכָל מִילְּתָא דַּהֲוָה סָלְקָא
לֵיהּ אָמַר גַּם זוֹ לְטוֹבָה זִימְנָא חֲדָא בְּעוּ לְשַׁדּוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דּוֹרוֹן לְבֵי קֵיסָר אָמְרוּ מַאן נֵיזִיל נֵיזִיל
נַחוּם אִישׁ גַּם זוֹ דְּמִלּוּפֵּד בְּנִיסִין הוּא שַׁדַּרוּ בִּידֵיהּ מְלָא סִיפְטָא דַּאֲבָנִים טוֹבוֹת וּמַרְגָּלִיּוֹת אֲזַל
בָּת בְּהָהוּא דִּיוָרָא בְּלֵילְיָא קָמוּ הָנָךְ דִּיוֹרָאֵי
וְשַׁקְלִינְהוּ לְסִיפְטֵיהּ וּמְלוֹנְהוּ עַפְרָא.

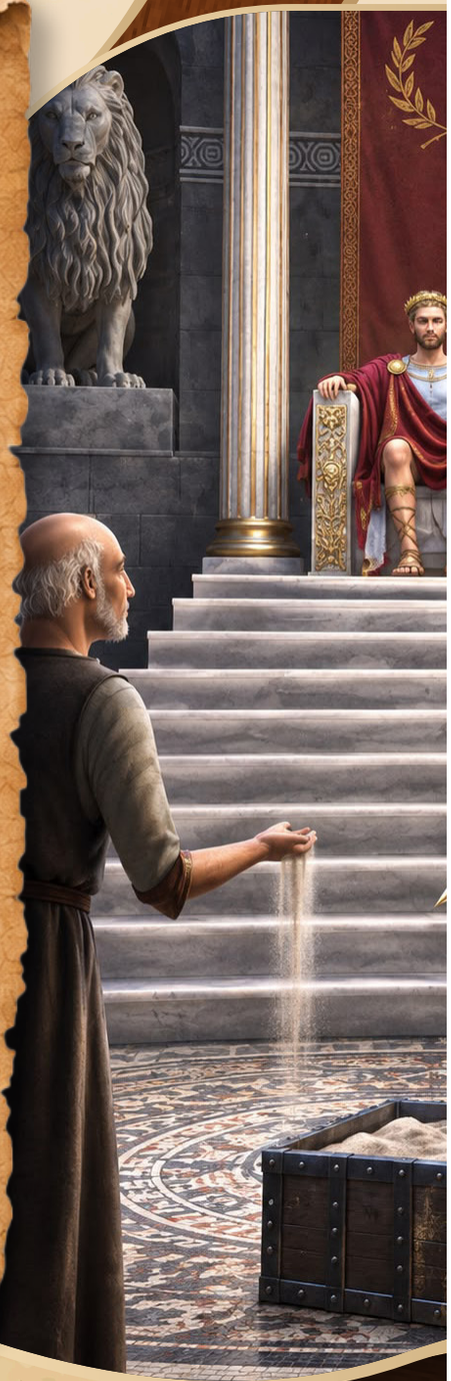
כִּי מְטָא הָתָם שָׁרִינְהוּ לְסִיפְטֵי וַחֲזִנְהוּ דְּמָלוּ עַפְרָא בְּעָא
מַלְכָּא לְמִקְטְלִינְהוּ לְכוּלְּהוּ אָמַר קָא מְחַיְּיכוּ בִּי יְהוּדָאֵי אָמַר גַּם זוֹ לְטוֹבָה אֲתָא אֵלְיָהוּ אִדַּמֵּי
לֵיהּ כְּחַד מִינַּייהוּ אָמַר לֵיהּ דִּלְמָא הָא עַפְרָא מֵעַפְרָא דְּאַבְרָהָם אֲבָהּון הוּא דְּכִי הֲוָה שָׁדֵי עַפְרָא
הָוו סַיְּיפֵי גִּילֵי הָוו גִּירֵי דְּכִתִּיב יִתֵּן כֶּעָפָר חַרְבּוֹ
כְּקַשׁ נִדָּף קַשְׁתּוֹ.

הָוְיָא חֲדָא מְדִינְתָּא דְּלָא מָצוּ לְמִיכְבְּשָׁהּ בְּדַקוּ מִינֵּיהּ וְכַבְשׁוּהָ עַיְּילוּ לְבֵי גְּנָזָה וּמְלוֹהוּ לְסִיפְטֵיהּ
אֲבָנִים טוֹבוֹת וּמַרְגָּלִיּוֹת וְשַׁדְּרוּהוּ בִּיקָרָא רַבָּה.

כִּי אֲתוּ בִּיתוּ בְּהָהוּא דִּיוֹרָא אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ מַאי אַיְּיתִית בַּהֲדָךְ דְּעָבְדִי לָךְ יְקָרָא כּוּלֵּי הַאי אָמַר לְהוּ
מַאי דְּשַׁקְלִי מֵהָכָא אַמְטֵי לְהָתָם סָתְרוּ לְדִירַיְיהוּ וְאַמְטִינְהוּ לְבֵי מַלְכָּא אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ הַאי עַפְרָא
דְּאַיְּיתֵי הָכָא מִדִּידַן הוּא בַּדְּקוּהּ וְלָא אַשְׁכְּחוּהּ
וְקַטְלִינְהוּ לְהָנָךְ דִּיוֹרָאֵי.

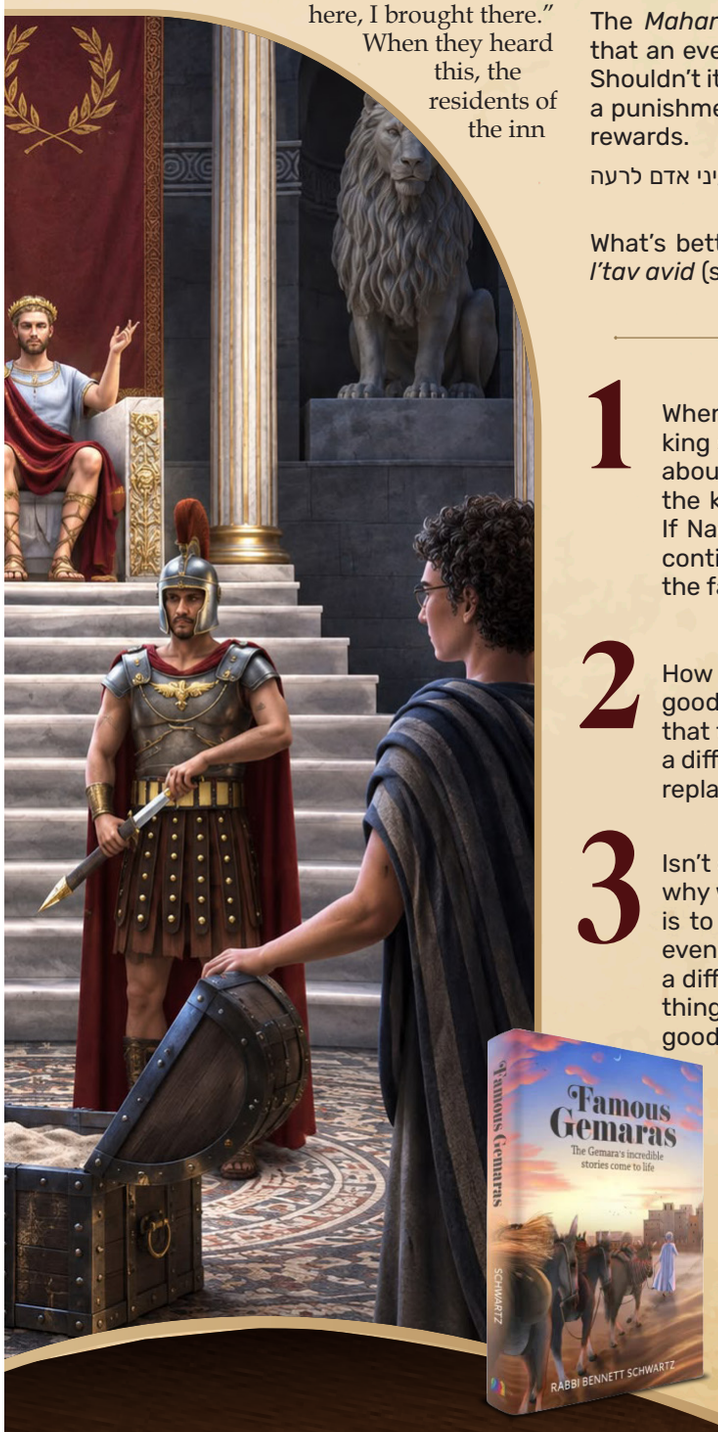
The Gemara inquires: And why did they call him Nachum Ish Gam Zu? The reason is that with regard to any matter that occurred to him, he would say: This too is for the good [*gam zu l'tovah*]. Once, the Jews wished to send a gift [doron] to the house of the emperor. They said, "Who should go and present this gift? Let Nachum Ish Gam Zu go, as he is accustomed to miracles." They sent with him a chest [*sifta*] full of jewels and pearls, and he went and spent the night in a certain inn. During the night, these residents of the inn arose and took all of the precious jewels and pearls from the chest and filled it with earth. The next day, when he saw what had happened, Nachum Ish Gam Zu said, "This too is for the good."

When he arrived there, at the ruler's palace, they opened the chest and saw that it was filled with earth. The king wished to put all the Jewish emissaries to death. He said, "The Jews are mocking me." Nachum Ish Gam Zu said, "This too is for the good." Eliyahu HaNavi came and appeared before the ruler as one of his ministers. He said to the ruler, "Perhaps this earth is from the earth of their father Avraham. When he threw earth, it turned into swords, and when he threw straw, it turned into arrows, as it is written in a prophecy that the Sages interpreted as a reference to Avraham: 'His sword makes them as the dust, his bow as the driven straw (*Yeshayahu* 41:2)."



There was one province that the Romans were unable to conquer. They took some of this earth, tested it by throwing it at their enemies, and conquered that province. When the ruler saw that this earth indeed had miraculous powers, his servants entered his treasury and filled Nachum Ish Gam Zu's chest with precious jewels and pearls and sent him off with great honor.

When Nachum Ish Gam Zu came to spend the night at that same inn, the residents said to him, "What did you bring with you to the emperor that he bestowed upon you such great honor?" He said to them, "That which I took from here, I brought there." When they heard this, the residents of the inn thought that the soil upon which their house stood had miraculous powers. They tore down their inn and brought the soil underneath to the king's palace. They said to him, "That earth that was brought here was from our property." The miracle had been performed only in the merit of Nachum Ish Gam Zu. The emperor tested the inn's soil in battle, and it was not found to have miraculous powers, and he had these residents of the inn put to death.



Points to Ponder

The *Anaf Yosef* notes that the reason Nachum is called "Ish Gam Zu" is because he was from a place called Gimzo (spelled with the same letters as *gam zu*). It's a play on words.

Rashi comments that Nachum said *gam zu l'tovah* "even for the bad [things]." This implies that he would say it for good things as well.

It's amazing that Nachum would return to the same inn he had originally stayed at where he had been robbed.

The *Maharsha* explains the phrase "*gam zu l'tovah*" to mean that it's "possible" that an event came from Hashem and that it's for the good.[1] What does this mean? Shouldn't it *certainly* be good if it came from Hashem? The answer is that this may be a punishment for the person, which is considered a bad thing as compared to good rewards.

[1] מהרש"א חידושי אגדות מסכת תענית דף כא עמוד א: גם זו לטובה—ור"ל גם זה שנראה בעיני אדם לרעה הוא בא אפשר דמן שמים עבדין ליה לטב.

What's better, Nachum's *gam zu l'tovah* or Rabbi Akiva's *kol ma d'avid Rachmana l'tav avid* (see "Rabbi Akiva—Whatever Hashem Does, He Does for the Best")?

Ideas

1 When did Nachum say *gam zu l'tovah*? Was it when he left the inn, or when the king saw what was in the chest? The *Eitz Yosef* says that there is a discussion about when Nachum said this. He thinks that Nachum said this only after the king saw the chest; this must have been when Nachum noticed as well. If Nachum had noticed the sand beforehand, he wouldn't have been able to continue to the king and rely on a miracle. Therefore, it must have been after the fact.

2 How can Nachum rationalize that such a situation was good? What was the good that he saw in the sand? The Iyun Yaakov suggests that Nachum realized that the king had so much money in the first place that it wouldn't have made a difference if he got jewels or sand. Therefore, it must be that the jewels being replaced with sand was also good.

3 Isn't everyone obligated to say, "Whatever Hashem does is for the good"? If so, why was Nachum praised for this? The *Anaf Yosef* explains that the obligation is to say "whatever Hashem does is for the good" with the recognition that even though what is happening is bad, good will come out of it. Nachum was on a different level: he saw bad things happening, and was able to say that those things *themselves* were good. That's why he's known as the one who saw the good in everything.

Gemara Fact

There is a moment every day that Hashem gets angry. Bilaam knew how to identify this moment, and that was how he was going to curse the Jewish people (Berachos 7a).

12 Amazon Finds
TO UPGRADE YOUR SUKKAH

Little upgrades. Big family fun.

The paper chains are staying. The flying tablecloth? Not so much.
These clever finds bring a little more comfort—and a lot more personality—to your sukkah.

1. Let There Be Cozy

Outdoor String Lights

Warm-white lights give your sukkah that "stay for another song" glow. Suddenly, the folding table has restaurant ambitions.

2. All Glow, No Drips

Flameless Decorative Candles

A little candlelit charm, minus the wax puddles. These battery-powered candles bring the glow without an open flame—or a dramatic centerpiece rescue.

3. Official Sukkah Snuggle Gear

Soft Fleece Throws

For chilly evenings and children who insist they're not cold while borrowing your coat. Claim your soft, cozy blanket before someone else does.

4. The Sukkah Gets a Living Room

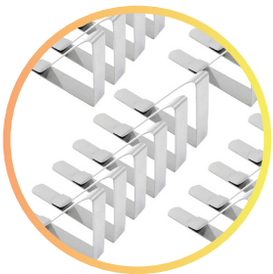
A Reversible Outdoor Rug

Roll out a patterned outdoor rug for an instant homey touch. Your sukkah now has décor from the ground up. Very fancy. Still outdoors.

5. The Tablecloth's Seat Belt

Tablecloth Clips

One gust should not rearrange dinner. These little clips help keep the tablecloth where it belongs: under the kugel, not waving goodbye to it.



6. Sorry, Bugs. Private Party.

Pop-Up Mesh Food Covers

These little food tents help keep uninvited insects off the menu. The challah has a cover. Now the brownies can have security.

7. The Best Seat in the Sukkah

Outdoor Chair Cushions

Give those hard-working chairs a softer side. Especially useful when "one more story" turns into three more stories and an encore from Zaidy.

8. Napkins, You're Grounded

A Weighted Napkin Holder

The breeze is welcome. A napkin parade across the yard is not. A holder with a weighted arm helps keep the stack on the table.

9. The Mini-Masterpiece Gallery

Clothespins and Twine

Give the kids' artwork its own wall. Twine and little clips turn every wonderfully lopsided esrog drawing into a gallery-worthy original. Admission: one compliment.

10. Your Table, Their Handwriting

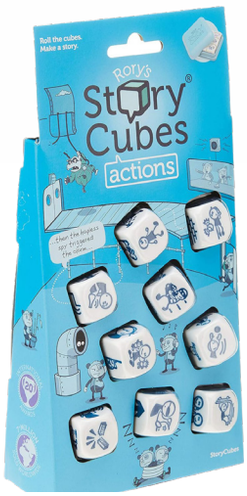
Mini Chalkboard Place Cards

Before Yom Tov, let the kids make everyone's place cards on these little chalkboards. Bubby gets hearts. Whoever sits beside the dessert gets lucky.

11. Once Upon a Sukkah…

Picture Dice for Family Storytelling

Roll the picture dice and invent a silly story together. Your family's challenge: somehow work a flying esrog into the plot. Extra credit for making Zaidy laugh.



12. Little Hands, Big Sukkos Energy

A Plush Lulav-and-Esrog Set

Their very own soft set for pretend play. Because the smallest people in the sukkah sometimes have the biggest holiday enthusiasm.

THE ELATION OF ERASURE

BY YONI PRAFF

Ahh, Sukkos. Personally, it's my favorite time of year. This is *zman simchaseinu*, "the time of our joy" (by the way, in my circles, the translation of *zman simchaseinu* is "the zman of our simchah").

Anyway, let's unpack these words a bit. Simcha is spelled *sin-mem-ches-hei.* If we change the sin to a shin and tinker with the vowels, we can adjust the word simchah into "*shemachah*". She is a prefix that means "that", and since the first letter is now a prefix, let's shift our focus away from the original *sin-mem-ches* root and have some fun with our new root, *mem-ches-hei.*

Have I confused you? I humbly apologize and ask for your forgiveness. I promise you that I am going somewhere with this. There will be a payoff!

Back to our new root, *mem-ches-hei.* This is where things get fun. This word has different meanings depending on whether we are looking at Biblical Hebrew, Rabbinical literature, or Modern Hebrew.

It carries two primary, seemingly unrelated meanings: **to wipe out/erase** and **to protest.**

In the Torah and the Tanach, the primary meaning of mem-ches-hei is physical or conceptual erasure. It can be used both negatively (to destroy) or positively (to clean or comfort). The most famous usage is the mitzvah regarding Amalek: ***Timchech*** *es zecher Amalek*, "you will erase the memory of Amalek" (Devarim 25:19).

It is used in a comforting sense by the prophet Yishaya: ***Umacha*** *Hashem Elokim dim'ah me'al kol panim*, "And the Lord Hashem will wipe away tears from all faces" (Yeshaya 25:8).

In Talmudic literature and continuing into modern spoken Hebrew, the root evolved to mean expressing strong opposition or protesting. In halacha you will often see the phrase ***limchos*** beyado, which means to verbally object to someone doing something that the Torah forbids. A ***mecha'ah*** is a formal halachic responsibility to stand up against wrongdoing.

If you turn on the news in Eretz Yisrael today, you will constantly hear this root. A political protest or demonstration is called a mecha'ah.

There is a third, slightly more poetic use in the Tanach where it means to strike or clap. In Tehillim 98:8, it says, *Neharos yimchau chaf,* "the rivers will clap their hands". This is the source of the phrase in modern Hebrew, *limchot kapayim,* meaning to clap hands (to my fellow Hebrew grammar nerds out there, I'm aware that modern Hebrew usually uses the root mem-ches-aleph for clapping, so no angry emails please).

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Let's plug all of these options back into our original phrase. Returning *zman* to its rightful place at the beginning, we have *zman shemachah.* This leaves us with several possible translations:

1. The time [of year] that erased
2. The time [of year] that wiped clean
3. The time [of year] that protested
4. The time [of year] that clapped [its hands]

There is so much to work with here, so much to explore, and all of it positive.

First of all, Sukkos destroys the yetzer hara. I don't know about you, but I've experienced a certain ecstatic feeling while shaking the *arba minim*. In that moment, all my worries and fears are erased, destroyed. The lulav is one of those mitzvos that is a *chok*; it transcends human logic. Logic can lead to an awful lot of what-ifs. After all, there is logic in planning for the worst. But a *chok* like the lulav rises above logic and therefore erases our worries and fears.

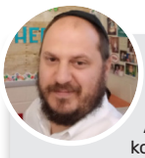
Second, Sukkos wipes clean. We're still basking in the afterglow of Yom Kippur. We've been cleansed and Hashem has forgiven us. We've received a fresh start, and boy, does it feel good.

Third, Sukkos protests. That's right, it protests (just a second while I get on my soapbox): It protests against the material clutter that fills our homes and the mental clutter that fills our minds. Sukkos stand up and says, "It doesn't have to be this way! Come into the sukkah and experience life in a simpler, more satisfying way."

Finally, Sukkos claps. After all, there's the joy of the simchas beis hashoevah replete with music and clapping. Group clapping creates a shared rhythm that helps us bond socially and creates a sense of belonging.

Sukkos is the elation of erasure, the "wahoo" of wiping clean, the pleasure of protest (for that which is right) and the conviviality of clapping.

So this Sukkos, as you step out into your temporary abode, embrace the whole joyous package: clap your hands until they tingle, protest the madness of material and mental clutter, bask in the clean slate of forgiveness, and let every last lingering worry be happily erased. Gut yontif!



Yoni Praff is an educator, stand-up comedian and host of the hit children's podcast "The Adventures of Shlomo". Catch his kosher comedy act live this Monday, September 28, at the Silver Spring Jewish Center sukkah at 8:30pm. To book him for your next event, email him at jmpraff@gmail.com.

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Protection Against Fire

Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev and a Remarkable Sukkos Tradition

On a chilly Succos morning in the city of Zhelichov, the people walked toward the *shul*, their hands empty of *lulavim* and *esrogim*. It was also Shabbos, and the lulavim and esrogim would have to wait until the next day. After Mussaf, the Kohanim came forward to bestow the priestly blessings on the congregation, but the *rav* held up his hand and stopped them.

"Not today," said Rav Levi Yitzchak. "From now on, we will no longer say the priestly blessings on a Yom Tov day that is also a Shabbos."

"But why?" asked the Kohanim.

"It is not something I can explain to you," said Rav Levi Yitzchak. "There are esoteric mystical reasons. But this I can tell you. Not saying the priestly blessing on Shabbos is a protection against fire for the city. If it should happen, Heaven forbid, that one house catches fire, the protection will ensure that the fire doesn't spread to others and possibly destroy the city."

The people accepted his ruling, and from that day forward, as long as Rav Levi Yitzchak was the *rav* of Zhelichov, there were no priestly blessings on Shabbos during Yom Tov. Several years later, however, Rav Levi Yitzchak left Zhelichov for Berditchev, where he remained for the rest of his days. Shortly thereafter, a new rav was selected for the position in Zhelichov, and the question of priestly blessings on Shabbos during Yom Tov was raised again. Many of the inhabitants wanted to return to the old custom, and they carried the day. The city reverted to its former custom.

That year, there was a major conflagration in Zhelichov, and almost the entire city was destroyed. The *shul* burned down to its foundation, with only a pile of smoldering ashes to mark the spot where it had stood.

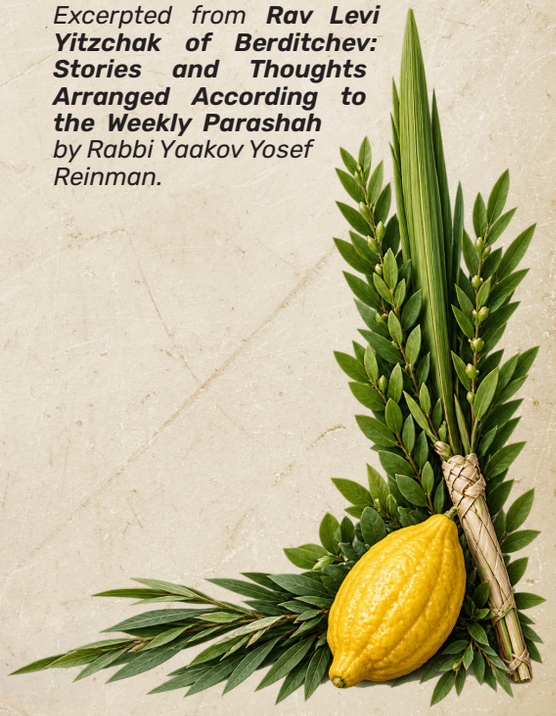
Somewhat belatedly, Rav Levi Yitzchak's custom was reinstated, and when the *shul* was rebuilt there were no longer any priestly blessings on Shabbos during Yom Tov.

According to the Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 1:4), the Almighty's original thought, so to speak, in creating the world was for the purpose of the Jewish souls who would inhabit it. Therefore, when the Jewish people obey His will, He is exceedingly pleased, and He sends down emanations of blessing to this world for the benefit of His people.

Nonetheless, once the emanations enter the world, others who are unworthy step forward and seek to share in the divine beneficence. At that point, the Almighty directs the attention of the flow of beneficence to pay heed to the original thought that inspired this flow. The act of calling attention to the original intent of creation is called yad, hand. When the Torah speaks of lifting up of the hands toward the heavens, this is what is actually happening. Attentiveness is being directed to the primary purpose of creation.

It is by the same token that the Kohanim lift up their hands and proclaim, "*Yevarechecha* — May He bless you . . ." By recalling that the original intent of creation was for the Jewish people, a flow of divine blessings is being drawn down upon them from above.

Excerpted from ***Rav Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev: Stories and Thoughts Arranged According to the Weekly Parashah*** *by Rabbi Yaakov Yosef Reinman.*



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UNDER THE STARS

10 Ways to Make the Most of Chol Hamoed in Washington

There's something about Washington in the fall. The humidity finally gives us a break, the trees begin changing, and suddenly spending an afternoon outside sounds like a very good idea.

And during Sukkos, when we're already spending a little more time under the open sky, it feels like the perfect excuse to rediscover what's practically in our own backyard.

You don't need a flight, a hotel, or even a particularly ambitious itinerary. Pack up the kids, grab a sweatshirt, bring something to snack on, and go.

1 THE NATIONAL MALL
Washington, DC

We live close enough that it's easy to forget how extraordinary this place actually is. Start at the Lincoln Memorial, walk the Reflecting Pool, head toward the Washington Monument, and let the kids run some of the energy out along the way.

The Mall is especially beautiful as the leaves begin changing, and there's no requirement that you turn the outing into a history lesson. Sometimes it's enough to walk, talk, take pictures and remember that millions of people travel across the world to see what's sitting in our backyard.

Best for: **An easy family afternoon • Visitors • Strollers • Photos**
Cost: **Free**

2 U.S. NATIONAL ARBORETUM
Northeast DC

This might be one of Washington's most underrated fall outings.

The grounds are enormous, there's plenty of room to wander, and the old Capitol Columns sitting in the middle of an open meadow make for one of those only-in-Washington views. In the fall, the trees and gardens give the entire place a completely different feel.

Don't try to see every corner. Pick a few areas, walk slowly, and enjoy it.

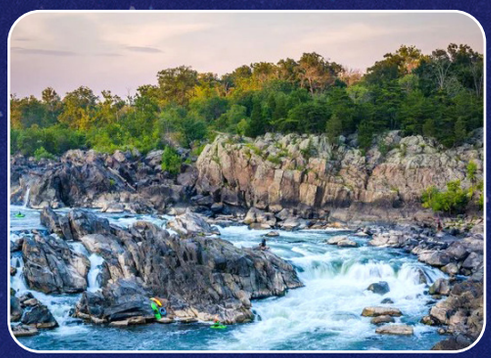
Best for: **Families • Nature • Photos • Picnics**
Cost: **Free**

3 BROOKSIDE GARDENS
Wheaton, MD

For Silver Spring families, this is almost unfairly convenient.

Brookside Gardens gives you landscaped gardens, walking paths and plenty of seasonal color without requiring a major expedition. It's the kind of place where you can spend an hour—or accidentally spend an entire afternoon. Fall is particularly pretty here.

Best for: **Younger kids • Grandparents • Easy walks • Local families**
Cost: **Free**



4 GREAT FALLS
McLean, VA

For the day when you want to feel like you actually went somewhere.

Great Falls Park delivers some of the most dramatic scenery anywhere near Washington, with the Potomac rushing through the rocky gorge. You don't need to be a serious hiker to enjoy it: the main overlooks are relatively close to the parking area.

With young children, stay well back from the rocks and water; swimming and wading are prohibited.

Best for: **Bigger outing • Scenery • Older kids • Family photos**
Cost: **National Park entrance fee applies**

5 GEORGETOWN WATERFRONT

Washington, DC

There's something particularly nice about Georgetown once the summer heat disappears.

Walk along the Potomac at Georgetown Waterfront Park, watch the boats, wander toward the C&O Canal, and then head up through Georgetown's historic streets. The combination of water, changing leaves, cobblestone and old rowhouses makes this one of the prettiest fall walks in the city.

Best for: **Couples • Families • Walking • Photos**
Cost: **Free**

6 ROCK CREEK PARK

Washington, DC

Yes, you can get properly lost in the woods without leaving Washington.

Rock Creek Park stretches through a huge section of Northwest DC, with trails, trees and enough space to briefly forget that Connecticut Avenue is somewhere nearby. It's one of the city's classic places for fall color.

Pick your route based on your family's enthusiasm level. "Nature walk" sounds considerably less fun after mile four with a child on your shoulders.

Best for: **Walking • Trails • Fall foliage • Burning off energy**
Cost: **Free**

7 THE WHARF

Southwest DC

Not every outdoor day needs hiking boots.

At The Wharf DC, you can walk the piers, watch the boats, sit by the water and give the kids some room to explore. There are oversized swings, public piers and plenty happening along the waterfront; seasonal activities vary.

Go later in the afternoon and stay as the lights begin coming on across the water.

Best for: **Families • Evening outings • Easy walking • Waterfront views**
Cost: **Free to explore; activities vary**

8 WHEATON REGIONAL PARK

Wheaton, MD

Sometimes the best Chol Hamoed plan is the one that requires almost no planning.

Wheaton Regional Park gives local families plenty of room for a relaxed afternoon outside, and it pairs naturally with neighboring Brookside Gardens if everyone still has energy.

This is the option for the day when loading everybody into the car for downtown DC sounds like an outing in itself.

Best for: **Kids • Local afternoon • Low-stress outing**
Cost: **Park access is free; individual attractions may charge**

9 THEODORE ROOSEVELT ISLAND

Washington, DC / Arlington, VA

Cross the footbridge and Washington suddenly feels much farther away than it actually is.

The 90-acre island has nearly two miles of trails, wooded scenery and views toward the Potomac and Georgetown. In autumn, it becomes one of the area's particularly scenic places for a quiet walk.

Best for: **Nature • Walking • Older kids • A quieter outing**
Cost: **Free**

10 THE NATIONAL MALL — AFTER DARK

Washington, DC

Yes, the Mall gets two spots. It deserves them.

Come back after sunset and it becomes an entirely different outing. The Lincoln Memorial glowing at night, the Washington Monument reflected in the water and the Capitol in the distance are quintessential Washington.

Bring a sweatshirt. Take the long way around. Let the kids stay up a little later.

Because during a Yom Tov built around leaving the permanence of our homes and looking upward, there's something especially fitting about ending a Washington day under the stars.

KOSHER ALONG THE WAY

FROM FIRST COFFEE TO LAST COOKIE

A great Chol Hamoed day needs a food plan. Whether you're heading into DC, staying around Silver Spring or finishing the day in Rockville, here are some favorite kosher stops to work into the itinerary.

Breakfast & Coffee

CAFÉ K
DOWNTOWN SILVER SPRING

A polished neighborhood café for a real breakfast: coffee and pastries, omelets and pancakes, with sandwiches, salads and pastas later in the day.

1300 Spring Street • Cholov Yisroel • Pas Yisroel • Vaad of Greater Washington

GOLDBERG'S NEW YORK BAGELS
SILVER SPRING + ROCKVILLE

A classic start to the day: fresh bagels, spreads and an easy breakfast before everyone piles back into the car.

9328 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring + 4824–6 Boiling Brook Parkway, Rockville • Cholov Yisroel • Bagels & rolls Pas Yisroel and Yoshon • Vaad of Greater Washington

Dinner Before Heading Home

CHAR BAR
WEST END, DC

Burgers, steaks, BBQ and deli without having to leave Washington for dinner—especially convenient after a day around the monuments and downtown.

2142 L Street NW • Glatt Kosher Meat • Vaad of Greater Washington

AL HA'ESH
ROCKVILLE

Israeli grill, meats, fresh salads and pita for a proper sit-down finish to the day.

4860 Boiling Brook Parkway • Glatt Kosher Meat • Vaad of Greater Washington

CAFÉ K
DOWNTOWN SILVER SPRING

Yes, Café K gets another mention. On select evenings, the daytime café turns into a relaxed dairy dinner spot—perfect when you want to end the day closer to home.

1300 Spring Street • Cholov Yisroel • Pas Yisroel • Vaad of Greater Washington

OH MAMA GRILL
DC + ROCKVILLE

Casual enough after a full day with the kids, substantial enough to call it dinner.

Glatt Kosher • Vaad of Greater Washington

Lunch Along the Way

OH MAMA GRILL
ADAMS MORGAN + ROCKVILLE

Shawarma, falafel and Israeli grill favorites. Choose the DC location while sightseeing or Rockville on the way home.

1829 Columbia Road NW, DC + 188 Rollins Avenue, Rockville • Glatt Kosher • Vaad of Greater Washington

BEN YEHUDA
KEMP MILL

Pizza, fries, salads and the dairy lunch the kids probably wanted all along.

1370B Lamberton Drive • Cholov Yisroel • Pas Yisroel & Yoshon • Vaad of Greater Washington

NUT HOUSE PIZZA
WHEATON

An easy Georgia Avenue stop for pizza and a casual family lunch.

11419 Georgia Avenue • Cholov Yisroel • Vaad of Greater Washington

SIENA'S PIZZERIA
ROCKVILLE

Pizza and Italian favorites in the Boiling Brook kosher hub.

4840 Boiling Brook Parkway • Cholov Yisroel • Pizza is Pas Yisroel & Yoshon • Vaad of Greater Washington

HOLY CHOW!
KEMP MILL

For the day when everyone agrees on one thing: Chinese.

1331 Lamberton Drive • Glatt Kosher Meat • Vaad of Greater Washington

One More Stop…

INSOMNIA COOKIES
DOWNTOWN SILVER SPRING

Warm cookies at 8455 Fenton Street. Sometimes Chol Hamoed needs one final stop.

Dairy, non-Cholov Yisroel • Vaad of Greater Washington

RITA'S ITALIAN ICE
ASPEN HILL

Italian ice and frozen treats on the way back through Aspen Hill.

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SHADY GROVE, ROCKVILLE

A fresh doughnut makes a pretty convincing finale to a long Chol Hamoed day.

14919 Shady Grove Road • Dairy • Vaad of Greater Washington

Packing The Car?

SHALOM KOSHER
KEMP MILL

Stock up on drinks, snacks, sandwiches and everything you forgot to pack before heading out.

1361 Lamberton Drive, Silver Spring

MOTI'S MARKET
ROCKVILLE

A convenient kosher-market stop for families starting—or finishing—their Chol Hamoed day on the Rockville side.

4860 Boiling Brook Parkway, Rockville

Hours and kashrus arrangements can change, especially around Yom Tov. Check with the establishment or supervising agency before heading out.

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Sukkah

The Great Equalizer

Rabbi Dr. Avichai Pepper
Director of Educational Advancement and Community Relations at the Yeshiva of Greater Washington

When I was a young child, my family often vacationed in New England, where our family roots stretch back five generations. I vividly remember one particular trip to Newport, Rhode Island. Newport is well known for its rich history—including one of the oldest Jewish communities in America—and, perhaps less famously, the International Tennis Hall of Fame. But anyone who has visited Newport knows about the Cliff Walk and, of course, the mansions.

It was while touring one of those magnificent mansions that we walked up a grand staircase into a room overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The tour guide looked down at me, a little boy, and asked, "Would you like to live in a house like this?"

I have no actual memory of my response. But years later, at my Bar Mitzvah, my father retold the story. Apparently, I immediately turned down the offer.

The house, I explained, was simply too big and too fancy.

There is something wonderfully uncomplicated about the perspective of a child.

As adults, we spend much of the year doing exactly the opposite. We disguise ourselves. We build, purchase, accomplish and accumulate. Sometimes, without even realizing it, we measure ourselves against the people around us. Whose house is bigger? Whose car is newer? Whose lawn looks better? Whose children seem more successful? Who has the better job, the better vacation, the better seat?

We create costumes for ourselves and then spend enormous amounts of energy wondering what everyone else thinks of the costume.

Then come the Yamim Noraim.

For a few precious days, we begin stripping some of that away. We stand before Hashem not primarily as professionals, homeowners, executives, rabbis, teachers, doctors or businesspeople. We stand simply as people. We ask for life, for health, for my family, for sustenance, for meaning. We acknowledge how little of what matters most is actually within our control.

And then, just days later, comes Sukkos.

Perhaps that is why the timing is so perfect.

After asking Hashem for another year of blessing, we celebrate by walking out of the very homes that represent so much of what we have built.

For one week, the mansion and the modest home lose some of their distinction. We leave the granite countertops, carefully decorated dining rooms and sturdy roofs behind and move into remarkably similar little structures.

A sukkah is intentionally imperfect. Its roof cannot fully protect us. Its walls may shake in the wind. Rain can come through the schach. The temperature is whatever the temperature happens to be. And no matter how beautifully we decorate it, everyone sitting inside knows that this is not a permanent home.

In that sense, the sukkah is one of Judaism's great equalizers.

The sukkah of the wealthy person and the sukkah of the person struggling financially ultimately make the same declaration: our security does not come entirely from the strength of our walls.

For thousands of years, Jews have entered these temporary dwellings and remembered the journey of our ancestors through the desert (Talmud Sukkah 11a). They had no mansions. They had no permanent homes at all. They traveled

through an unforgiving wilderness, dependent upon Hashem for food, water, protection and direction.

And once a year, we recreate something of that experience.

We leave behind the structures that can give us the illusion of permanence and sit beneath schach through which we can look upward. We remind ourselves that whatever home we live in during the other 51 weeks of the year, ultimately we are all dependent upon the same Source.

Maybe that is also part of the journey from Rosh Hashanah to Simchas Torah.

We cannot truly dance together while constantly calculating who stands where. Community becomes possible when we stop measuring one another by the size of our homes, the titles beneath our names or the successes visible from the outside.

First we stand equally before Hashem. Then we sit together beneath the schach. And finally, we dance together with the Torah.

On Simchas Torah, the Torah does not belong more to the Rabbi than to the beginner, more to the wealthy than to the struggling, or more to the prominent than to the person standing quietly in the back. We circle together. We dance together. We celebrate together.

Perhaps that little boy in Newport understood something that becomes harder to remember as we grow older.

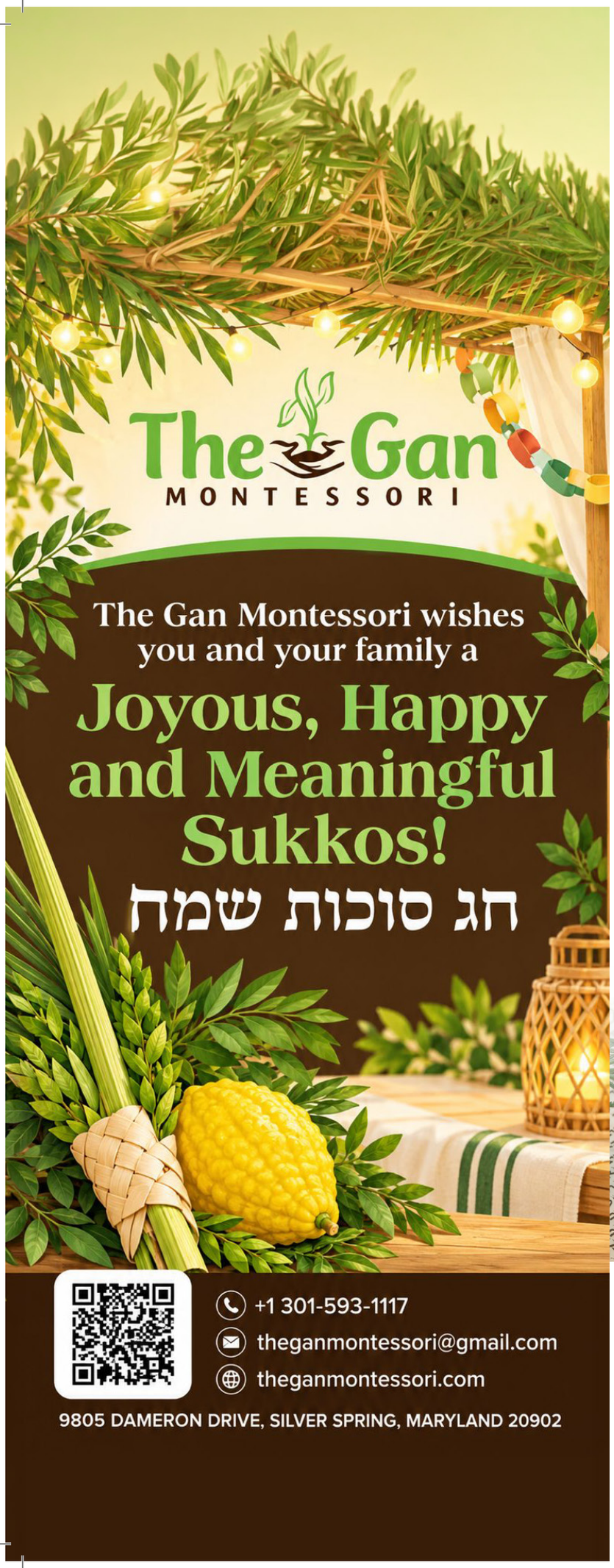
The Sukkah reminds us that the size of the house was never really the point.

Sukkos gives us seven days each year to remember that. It asks us to step outside the homes, labels and appearances we spend so much time constructing and to meet one another somewhere simpler.

Under the schach, there is room for all of us.

And perhaps it is only after remembering how equal we really are that we are ready to take one another by the hand in celebration and dance.

Rabbi Avichai Pepper, Ed.D is a seasoned educator with nearly 30 years of experience in Jewish education, leadership, and community development. A graduate of the New England Rabbinical College in Providence, Rhode Island, he has devoted his career to teaching Torah, developing educators, and strengthening Jewish communities. Rabbi Pepper holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Liberty University, a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Bellevue University, and a master's degree in Counseling from Liberty University. He currently serves as Director of Operations and a member of the Hanhalah at the Yeshiva of Greater Washington. In addition, he serves as a Lomdei Educational Coach and presenter, supporting educators in their professional growth, and is a member of Chai Lifeline's Crisis Services team.



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College Scholarships & Financial Aid Resources

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START HERE

1

FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid

The FAFSA connects students with federal financial aid, and many college and scholarship programs require students to complete it even if they don't expect to receive federal aid.

- 2027–28 FAFSA: The 2027–28 application cycle is expected to open October 1, 2026; check the official FAFSA site when the new form becomes available.
- 2027 deadline: Maryland's current guidance says FAFSA should be filed by March 1 for fullest consideration for Maryland state aid. College deadlines can be earlier.
- Apply: https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa
- Maryland deadline information: https://mhec.maryland.gov/preparing/Pages/FinancialAid/apply.aspx

2

Maryland College Aid Processing System (MD CAPS)

MD CAPS is the centralized online portal used by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to process and manage state financial aid. Through this portal, Maryland students can apply for, accept, and manage over 20 state-funded grants and scholarships

https://mhec.maryland.gov/preparing/pages/financialaid/osfamdcapslive.aspx

FREE LOCAL HELP

3

Montgomery College Educational Opportunity Center (MCEOC)

FREE FAFSA Application Assistance & Scholarship Help

This is a VERY HELPFUL service open to Montgomery County residents. **You don't have to be a Montgomery College student** to use the MCEOC.

MCEOC provides free, one-on-one or group assistance with:

- FAFSA
- CSS Profile
- Financial aid applications
- College admissions
- Career counseling
- Postsecondary academic advising
- Scholarship searches
- Financial literacy

The program is generally for eligible Montgomery County residents age 19+ who meet the program's income/education requirements.

TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT CONTACT:

240-567-5644 **mceoc@montgomerycollege.edu**

https://tinyurl.com/MontgometryCollegeEOC

SCHOLARSHIPS AND PROGRAMS

4

Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) College Scholarships

For Montgomery County, Fairfax County and Washington, DC students

JSSA currently offers several scholarships for undergraduate, graduate and Israel-study programs:

Scholarship	Amount	Who it's for
Morton A. Gibson Memorial Scholarship	$875–$2,500	Jewish high school seniors in Montgomery County, Fairfax County or DC; volunteer service in local Jewish community
Max & Emmy Dreyfuss Jewish Undergraduate Scholarship	$1,500–$4,000	Jewish first-generation college students; four-year college
JSSA Educational Scholarship – Undergraduate	$2,000–$6,000	Montgomery County public high school seniors; four-year college, vocational school or community college
Hyman P. Moldover Scholarship for Communal Service	Not provided	Jewish students pursuing graduate study in Jewish communal service
JSSA Educational Scholarship – Graduate	$1,000–$3,000	Montgomery County residents under 30 entering graduate school
Sahm/Goldman Scholarship	$250–$2,500	Jewish students with at least two years of undergraduate study pursuing study/research/career development in Israel

A 2027 deadline has not yet been posted.

www.jssa.org/training/college-scholarship/

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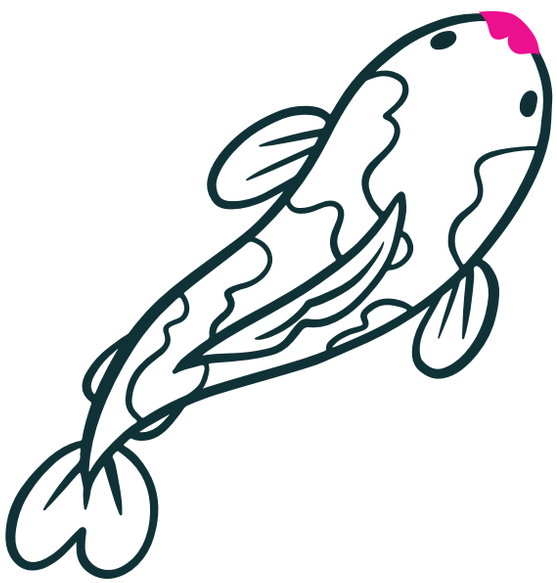

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Here's to new ideas, new beginnings and a very sweet 5787!

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

5

Long Nguyen & Kimmy Duong Foundation Scholarship

For undergraduate students attending participating DC/MD/VA colleges, including:

- University of Maryland
- George Mason University
- Montgomery College
- Northern Virginia Community College
- Virginia Tech
- University of Virginia
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- University of the District of Columbia
- Towson University
- James Madison University

Current program information says scholarships are generally **$2,000–$3,000 per year**, renewable for up to four years for bachelor's students. Recipients also receive professional development/job-training opportunities.

2027 deadline: Not yet posted

https://thekimmyduongfoundation.org/portfolio

6

Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship

A **last-dollar scholarship** for eligible Maryland community college students. It can substantially reduce or cover tuition at a Maryland community college.

2027 deadline: Not yet posted

https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/paying-for-college/financial-aid/

7

Montgomery College Foundation Scholarships

The Montgomery College Foundation scholarship program offers **400+ scholarship opportunities.** One application matches students with scholarships for which they qualify.

2027 deadlines currently posted:

- January 1, 2027 — Spring scholarships
- June 30, 2027 — Fall scholarships

https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/paying-for-college/financial-aid/

CAREER & WORKFORCE PATHS

8

Montgomery College Workforce Development Scholarships

The original list included scholarships for workforce/continuing-education programs, including healthcare training.

Montgomery College currently has several workforce scholarship programs. For example, the **WDCE / MC Foundation Career Path Scholarship** is open for the **2026–27 academic year through May 14, 2027**.
www.montgomerycollege.edu/workforce-development-continuing-education

There is also a **Workforce Development Sequence Scholarship**, which can provide up to $2,000 for an eligible workforce sequence.

https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/workforce-development-continuing-education/wdce-scholarships/

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9

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https://tinyurl.com/WDCEhealthscience

10

Maryland Legislative Scholarships

Our Maryland legislators to Annapolis each offer college scholarships. Look up your legislators at https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/members/district and navigate to each of their web pages for their scholarship applications. You will be required to have completed the FAFSA and MD CAPS application process to apply for these scholarships.

- Each Representative and Senator has their own scholarship funds, deadlines and application requirements - which their staff administers.

2027 deadline: Varies by delegate

https://tinyurl.com/MDlegislativescholarships

OTHER RESOURCES

Maryland 529 / Save4College — programs for saving for future education expenses.

https://tinyurl.com/MDlegislativescholarships

Maryland Student Loan Debt Relief Tax Credit — Maryland taxpayers who have incurred at least $20,000 in undergraduate and/or graduate student loan debt, and have at least $5,000 in outstanding student loan debt at the time of applying for the tax credit may be eligible.

https://tinyurl.com/MDstudentloan

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Worthy or Unworthy

How Should We Approach Davening?

RABBI MICHOEL FRANK
KEHILLAS OHR HATORAH

There are two thoughts we can have, going into Selichos, Rosh Hashanah, and Aseres Yemay Teshuvah. Are we worthy of Hashem's love or not? One way to approach the Tefillos and Selichos is to demonstrate our claim to Hashem's love. But perhaps we should consider ourselves unworthy, and fully reliant on the mercy of Hashem. It is fascinating how although these two things seem to be mutually exclusive – after all, you can't be worthy and unworthy at the same time – nonetheless, we take both approaches in Selichos and in davening!

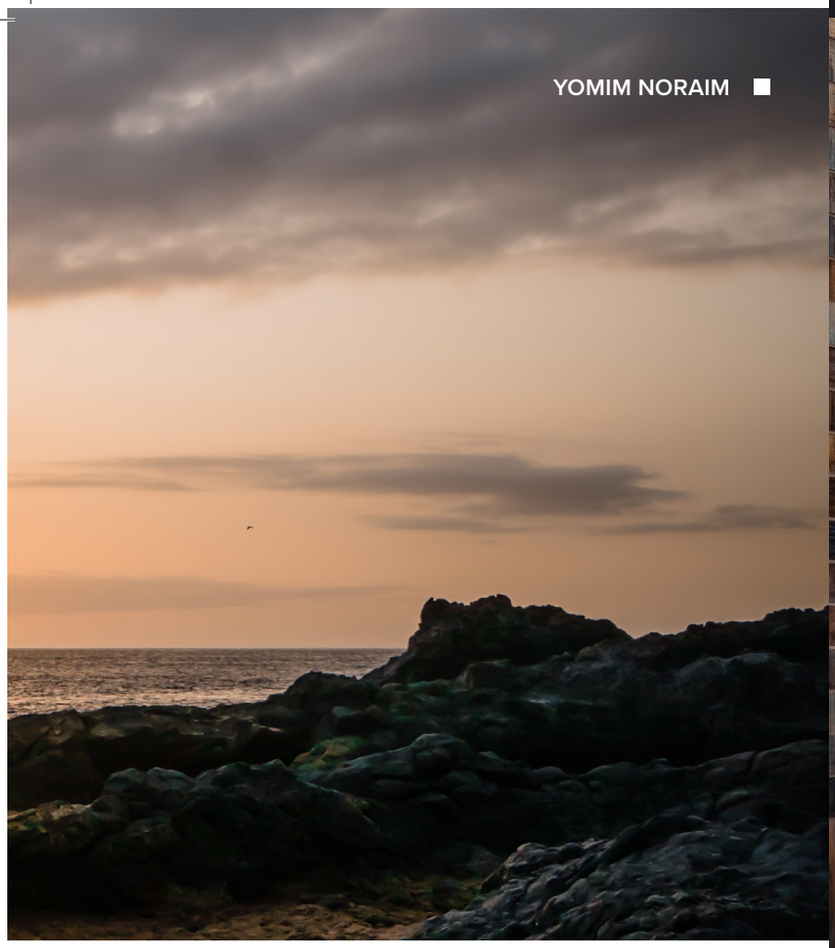
For example, the very first sentence of Selichos is: לך ה' הצדקה ולנו בשת הפנים – to You Hashem, is righteousness, and to us – is embarrassment. We finish this paragraph by saying, כדלים וכרשים דפקנו דל־תיך – we knock on Your doors like paupers and destitute people. This doesn't allow for much sugar-coating: We are proclaiming ourselves full of sin, unworthy of Hashem's presence, nothing to come with and show for ourselves, and we merely are beseeching for pure mercy. We finish this section of Selichos in a similar vein, with the famous expression: למענך אלקינו עשה ולא לנו ראה עמידתנו דלים ורקים – Do it for your sake Hashem, not for us, see our position as destitute and empty.

But in the introductory paragraph of the *Yud Gimel Middos*, that every Selichos begins with, we take a different approach: גדלת רחמיך וחסדיך תזכור היום לזרע ידידיך – Your great mercy and kindness, remember today to the children of Your beloved friend, (meaning Avraham Avinu, who is referred to as ידידי in Tanach.) We finish with a very clear demand: תאזין שאותנו ות־קשיב מנו מאמר – listen to our cry, and heed our expression!

Before we say *Shemah Kolainu* and then *Viduy* at the end of Selichos, we preface with a long paragraph, quoting all the reasons that Hashem should have mercy upon us and forgive us. It is a long succession of different variations of זכור – remember! זכור ברית אבות כאשר אמרת – remember the covenant with Avos, זכור ברית ראשונים – remember the covenant with Klal Yisrael when You took them out of Mitzrayim, אהבת הקדמונים, the love for our ancestors, and זכור חבת ירושלים, remember Your love for Yerushalayim. Then, עשה עמנו כמה שהבטחתנו – do with us as You promised. We seem to be quite confident that we are worthy of all those guarantees! Are we דלים ורשים who have nothing to show for ourselves, no leverage or merits, or are we Klal Yisrael who can point to the Avos, the covenants and guarantees He has given us, and demand that we are listened to, forgiven, and redeemed?

When I was in Eretz Yisrael, there was another bachur I knew, he was in my chavrusa's apartment, who wanted to see the Gerer Rebbe. His grandfather had been the current Gerer Rebbe's rebbi in elementary school in Europe, and he knew that the Rebbe would remember his grandfather, and give him some preferential treatment as a result. [I don't know exactly what he wanted, maybe a good place to sit in the huge Gerer Beis Medrash?] However, to get in to see the Gerrer Rebbe, who has a huge Chassidus with thousands of people waiting to speak to him, is no simple matter. He knew once the rebbe would identify him, getting in wouldn't be an issue, but how to get to that point? If he told the Gabbai all about his connection, the Gabbai would undoubtedly laugh at him, or not believe him, (he was a very *Litvishe* non-chassidic bachur, after all!) So, he waited on line like everyone else, and eventually got into the Rebbi. Of course, once he identified himself, the Rebbi remembered his grandfather warmly, and welcomed him with open arms, and instructed the Gabbai to let him in whenever he wanted to come.

This is how we have to approach Hashem. We are outside the building so to speak, and we need access into Hashem. Why are we outside? We created that wall – we wandered outside. The further we have drifted from Hashem, from being connected to Him, from relying on Him and living with Him, it creates a barrier between us of *Hester Panim*. Once we are outside, in order to get in, we have to wait on line with all the other supplicants who are asking for



something from Hashem. We approach the door like poor people, with nothing, no claim, no demand, no identity, because outside – none of that helps. But once we get in, and have reconnected to Hashem, reestablished our connection, we have a long and powerful history! We have the *Avos, Klal Yisrael* in the *Midbar*, all that *Klal Yisrael* has been promised and guaranteed throughout our relationship with Hashem.

That is the challenge of Selichos. Once we get in, once we bypass the barrier that we ourselves have constructed, we have a lot to work with. We have *Yud Gimel Middos*, we have all kinds of covenants, and we have Avos and more. But we have to get in! That requires the greatest level of humility. If we have drifted away and forgotten about Hashem all this time, we can't expect to come barging back in. We have to approach this with the utmost humility – כדלים וכרשים – with the most basic and intense request – חוסה על עמלך – we are Your creations – have mercy.

Rabbi Michoel Frank is the *Mora D'Asra* of Kehilas Ohr HaTorah in Kemp Mill, Maryland. Renowned for his depth in *Halacha* and clarity in teaching, Rabbi Frank plays an integral leadership role in the Greater Washington community. He serves on the Vaad Harabanim of Greater Washington and is the primary *posek* for the Chevra Kadisha of Greater Washington, where his halachic expertise guides sensitive end-of-life matters with care and precision. A prolific teacher, Rabbi Frank has over 1,000 recorded Torah shiurim—on almost every topic—new uploaded shiurim weekly are available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and TorahAnytime. Rabbi Frank and his wife, Rivkie, are known for their warm hospitality and deep dedication to community building, fostering a strong sense of belonging and spiritual growth among their growing *kehillah.*

The Passion of Succos

Aviva Waxman

I was driving home from a project in Nottingham, MD, embracing the quiet of an empty car. As design ideas swirled around my head during the 30-minute commute, I was once again filled with gratitude for working in a field I love. Soon after, I picked up my four-year-old from school. Watching him run toward me with his delicious, goofy smile, a surge of love washed over me— a moment of pure, deep connection.

This feeling of affection is a deep theme in the holiday of Succos.

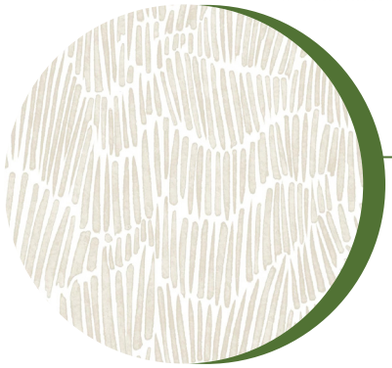
I have heard that the *succahs* we build commemorate the protective clouds that surrounded the Jewish people in the desert. During that time, Hashem granted three gifts through the merits of the Miriam, Aaron, and Moshe: water (*Mei Miriam*) in Miriam's merit, *Mahn* in Moshe's merit, and the protective clouds in Aharon's merit.

While water and food were essential for physical survival, the clouds were unique. They were enormously helpful and comforting, but not strictly necessary to keep us alive. When someone provides only what is needed to survive, it is an act of kindness; when someone gives extra comforts beyond basic necessity, it becomes an undeniable act of love. Sitting in the *succah* invites us to bask in that love—remembering that Hashem provides not just what we need but with so many extra gifts simply because He loves us.

Love is an essential force in our world. When we feel securely loved by our Creator, love the people around us, and find passion in our work, our capacity to accomplish grows exponentially. Love is a powerful energy that inspires us to give—and to give our best.

This Succos, after all the hard work and preparation, as I sit with my family in the *succah*, my hope is to tap deeply into God's love to imbue my family, friends, and my work with the very best of who I am.

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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SNACK SMARTER

15 Protein-Packed Kosher Picks for When Hunger Hits

There's a particular kind of optimism involved in leaving the house without a snack. You'll be home soon. Lunch won't be late. The errands will take twenty minutes.

Naturally, three hours later, you're considering whether the emergency crackers in the glove compartment count as a meal.

A little preparation helps—and it doesn't have to mean buying a lifetime supply of the same chocolate bar. From vanilla-coated crisps to roasted chickpeas, almond-butter packets, and a surprisingly practical tuna pouch, these **15 different brands** offer plenty of ways to stock the office drawer, outing bag, or pantry.

Some are protein-focused bars. Others are everyday snacks with more modest protein counts. The point isn't to make them interchangeable; it's to find a few that suit the way you actually eat.

THE BARS

1 NuGo Original — Vanilla Yogurt

For a break from chocolate

Not every snack needs to taste like a brownie, a cookie, or a brownie pretending to be a cookie. NuGo's Vanilla Yogurt bar takes a different direction, combining a crisp center with a yogurt-flavored coating. With **11 grams of protein and 170 calories**, it's a straightforward addition to the everyday snack rotation. This variety is dairy.

2 ALOHA — Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip

For the plant-based pantry

Peanut butter and chocolate are hardly a new idea. They also don't need replacing. ALOHA brings the familiar combination to an organic, plant-based bar with **14 grams of protein and 10 grams of fiber**. This particular flavor is OU pareve—a useful detail when you're choosing something for after a meat meal.

3 CLIF BAR — Chocolate Chip

For the outing bag

CLIF belongs in the conversation, but in the right category: it's an oat-based energy bar with protein, rather than a bar designed to squeeze the most protein into the fewest calories. Its **10 grams of protein and 250 calories** make it worth considering for the hiking bag or a busy afternoon out.

4 RXBAR — Chocolate Sea Salt

For the ingredient-list reader

Dates, egg whites, almonds, and cashews give RXBAR a different starting point from many conventional protein bars. Add chocolate and sea salt, and you have a chewy option with **12 grams of protein.** A sensible candidate for someone who likes recognizing the main ingredients before finishing the label.

5 Quest — Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough

For the protein-first shopper

When the protein number is the priority, Quest earns a closer look. This flavor supplies **21 grams per bar**, the highest count in this roundup, with 190 calories. It uses milk-based proteins, so keep it in the dairy section of your mental shopping list—not the pareve one.

6 IQBAR — Chocolate Sea Salt

For a lower-sugar option

You don't need to buy into the brain-themed branding to appreciate the practical details: almonds, pea protein, **12 grams of protein**, and **1 gram of sugar**. This OU-certified, dairy-free bar offers another option for shoppers looking for something chocolate-based without a large sugar count.

7 KIND Protein — Dark Chocolate Nut & Crunchy Peanut Butter Variety Pack

For people who want an actual nut bar

Sometimes you want visible nuts and a little crunch, not a smooth block of protein dough. This variety pack includes seven bars of each flavor, both with **12 grams of protein.** One important distinction: the Crunchy Peanut Butter variety contains milk, despite the prominent "plant protein" wording.

8 LÄRABAR — Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip

For a simpler snack, not a protein contest

LÄRABAR's appeal is its short ingredient list: dates, peanuts, chocolate chips, and sea salt. It belongs here as a fruit-and-nut snack rather than a substitute for a 20-gram protein bar. The manufacturer's displayed wrapper lists **6 grams of protein and 220 calories**; some online nutrition text differs, so check the box you receive.

BEYOND THE WRAPPER

9 The Only Bean — Sea Salt Crunchy Roasted Edamame

For the savory-snack person

Finally, something that isn't trying to resemble dessert. These individual packs contain roasted edamame, sea salt, and avocado oil, with **14 grams of protein and 120 calories per bag**. They're a strong contender for anyone whose ideal snack involves crunch rather than chocolate.

10 BIENA — Sea Salt Roasted Chickpeas

For the chip-and-pretzel crowd

Chickpeas deserve a little time outside the hummus container. BIENA roasts them into a crunchy, lightly salted snack with **6 grams of protein per one-ounce serving**. The larger bag listed below also works for portioning into small containers—or sprinkling a little crunch onto a salad.

11 Bada Bean Bada Boom — Sea Salt

For a different kind of crunch

The name does quite a lot of talking. The snack itself is simpler: roasted broad beans in individual one-ounce bags, each supplying **6 grams of protein and 110 calories.** It's another savory option for the desk drawer, especially when you've reached your personal limit on sweet snacks.

12 Wonderful Pistachios — No Shells, Roasted & Salted

For keeping things uncomplicated

Pistachios and sea salt. No elaborate flavor concept, and—perhaps most importantly—no little pile of shells to clean up afterward. These small individual bags provide **5 grams of protein each**. They're a modest snack rather than a high-protein powerhouse, which is perfectly fine when that's what you need.

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THE SHOPPING CHEAT SHEET

Protein and calories are per bar, individual packet, or specified serving—not per multipack. These are listed U.S. prices observed during research on **September 15, 2026**, before additional shipping or applicable tax. Prices and availability can change.

Product	Package being priced	Protein	Calories	Kosher certification/ status	Where to buy / package price	Cost per snack or serving
NuGo Original Vanilla Yogurt	15 bars	11g	170	OU-D	Amazon — $23.22	$1.55
ALOHA Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip	12 bars	14g	240	OU pareve	ALOHA direct — $34.99 (ALOHA)	$2.92
CLIF BAR Chocolate Chip	15 bars	10g	250	OU-D	Amazon — from $14.67[1]	From $0.98
RXBAR Chocolate Sea Salt	10 bars	12g	200	Certified kosher pareve	Walmart — $16.98 (Walmart.com)	$1.70
Quest Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough	4 bars	21g	190	OU-D	Quest direct — $10.99 (Quest Nutrition)	$2.75
IQBAR Chocolate Sea Salt	12 bars	12g	180	OU pareve	IQBAR direct — $24.99 (IQBAR)	$2.08
KIND Protein Variety Pack	14 bars; 7 of each flavor	12g	240–250	Kosher; pack includes dairy	Sam's Club — $18.48[2] (Sam's Club)	$1.32
LÄRABAR Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip	12 bars	6g[3]	220[3]	OU	Target — $13.39 (Target)	$1.12
The Only Bean Sea Salt Edamame	8 × 1.05-ounce bags	14g	120	Kosher-certified[4]	Target — $9.49 (Target)	$1.19
BIENA Sea Salt Chickpeas	One 8-ounce bag; about 8 servings	6g per 1 ounce	120	Kosher-certified[4]	Target — $6.99 (Target)	About $0.87
Bada Bean Bada Boom Sea Salt	24 × 1-ounce bags	6g	110	OU pareve	Bada Bean direct — $29.99 (Bada Bean Bada Boom)	$1.25
Wonderful Pistachios No Shells, Roasted & Salted	9 × 0.75-ounce bags	5g	120	Kosher-certified[4]	Target — $9.29 (Target)	$1.03
Justin's Classic Almond Butter	One 1.15-ounce squeeze pack	6g	220	OU-certified[4]	Target — $1.79 (Target)	$1.79
Go Raw Sprouted Pumpkin Seeds, Sea Salt	One 14-ounce bag; about 13 servings	8g per 30g	180	OU-certified[4]	iHerb — $14.47 (iHerb)	About $1.11
StarKist Light Tuna in Water	One 2.6-ounce pouch	17g	70	OU; fish	Target — $1.29 (Target)	$1.29

13 Justin's — Classic Almond Butter Squeeze Pack

For upgrading the apple you remembered to pack

An apple and a squeeze pack of almond butter make a nice change from another wrapped bar. Justin's Classic Almond Butter contains almonds and palm oil, with **6 grams of protein per packet**. Pair it with fruit or crackers, or keep a packet handy when breakfast needs a little help.

14 Go Raw — Organic Sprouted Pumpkin Seeds, Sea Salt

For the portion-it-yourself pantry

Pumpkin seeds offer another route when you're tired of peanuts, almonds, and bars. The 14-ounce bag listed here provides **8 grams of protein per 30-gram serving**. Portion some into a small container, or use them to add crunch to another snack. Just remember: the nutrition numbers are for a serving, not the whole bag.

15 StarKist — Light Tuna in Water Pouch

For when you would really prefer food to another sweet snack

No, it isn't a bar. That's precisely the appeal. A 2.6-ounce pouch provides **17 grams of protein and 70 calories**, and it doesn't need refrigeration before opening. Add crackers and a fork for something closer to a small lunch. Perhaps save this one for a proper break rather than opening it halfway through a crowded meeting.

Price and label notes:

[1] CLIF's price is the lowest displayed starting offer under Amazon's other sellers, not a guaranteed featured checkout price.

[2] Sam's Club price; membership terms apply. The KIND flavors have different calorie counts: **240 for Dark Chocolate Nut and 250 for Crunchy Peanut Butter**. (KIND Snacks US)

[3] LÄRABAR's displayed wrapper shows **6g protein/220 calories,** while its website's text panel shows **5g/210**. The table follows the wrapper image; confirm your purchased package.

[4] Kosher certification is reported by the manufacturer or retailer, but the exact package symbol and/or dairy designation was not independently confirmed for these entries. Check the package before purchasing.

ONE LAST LOOK AT THE LABEL

Buy the exact flavor—not simply the brand name—and check its hechsher. Certification and dairy status can differ within the same product line. ALOHA, for example, identifies particular flavors as OU-D even though many of its bars are pareve. "Plant-based" or "dairy-free" wording is not a substitute for checking the kosher designation.

ALOHA

Start with one bar, one crunchy option, and something a little different. The goal isn't a pantry that looks like a nutrition store. It's having something you're happy to eat when those twenty-minute errands enter their third hour.

A SLICE OF HAKARAS HATOV

When Community Shows Up — A Little Thanks Goes a Long Way

By Rabbi Avichai Pepper

Everybody knows the phrase "safety first." It is a simple idea: no matter what else we are involved in, protecting people and keeping them safe has to come first.

On a regular basis, we rely on natural gas to heat our homes, cook our food, and power appliances. We rarely think about the network of pipes and connections beneath our streets that makes all of that possible. Yet, over the past couple of months, crews have been working throughout our neighborhood to improve those gas lines and add important safety features, including upgrades to the connections running from the public lines directly to our homes.

Construction is rarely convenient. Roads are narrowed, parking spaces disappear, equipment fills the street, and sometimes getting from one end of the neighborhood to the other takes a little more patience than usual. But behind that inconvenience is something worth appreciating: a team of people working day after day to improve the safety of our community.

That brings up an important idea about shared communal responsibility.

These workers are taking responsibility for our safety. The question is: What responsibility do we have toward them?

The first answer is simple. We need to help them do their jobs safely. As we drive through construction zones, we should slow down, be patient, give workers adequate space, and share the road appropriately. Saving a minute or two is never worth creating an unsafe situation for someone standing just a few feet away from our cars.

But perhaps our responsibility goes a little further.

These workers are spending long days outside in the heat, cold, and rain while doing work that directly benefits our families, not to mention the large crevices left around the area. A bottle of water on a hot day, an umbrella in the rain, a cup of coffee when it is cold, or simply stopping to say "thank you" can turn an inconvenience into an opportunity for kindness.

Today, I had the privilege of delivering pizza to one of the construction crews, courtesy of Sender Gross and the *Washington Jewish Journal*. After watching them work tirelessly through the pouring rain over the past two days, it was nice to be able to offer them something warm to eat and, perhaps more importantly, to let them know that their work is noticed and appreciated.

One of the workers told me how much he really appreciates Ben Yehuda's pizza. In fact, he joked that he has even learned to eat pizza without pepperoni!

It was a lighthearted moment, but perhaps there is something deeper behind it.

Community is not only about the people who live in our homes, attend our shuls, or walk our streets each Shabbos. At different moments, many people become part of the network that keeps a community functioning. Police officers, firefighters, sanitation workers, utility crews, delivery drivers, construction workers, and countless others each play a role.

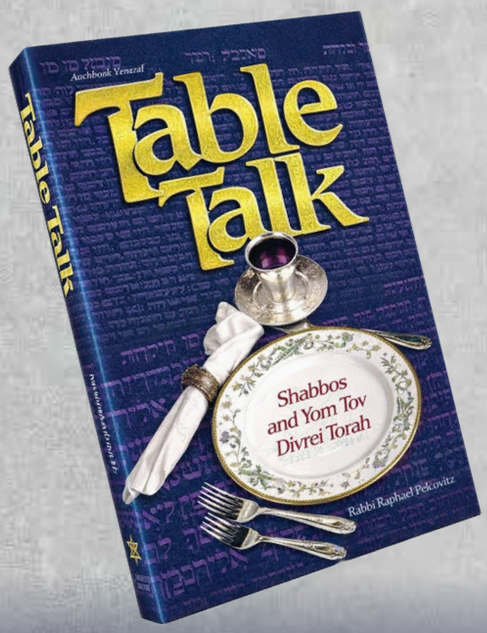
Shared responsibility means recognizing that relationship.

When someone is working to make our neighborhood safer, our responsibility is not merely to tolerate the inconvenience. It is to make sure that we are contributing to their safety as well, and, when possible, to show a little appreciation along the way.

Sometimes building a stronger community begins with something as simple as slowing down near a construction crew, saying thank you, or sharing a few slices of pizza.

Rabbi Avichai Pepper, Ed.D is a seasoned educator with nearly 30 years of experience in Jewish education, leadership, and community development. A graduate of the New England Rabbinical College in Providence, Rhode Island, he has devoted his career to teaching Torah, developing educators, and strengthening Jewish communities. Rabbi Pepper holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Liberty University, a master's degree in Educational Leadership from Bellevue University, and a master's degree in Counseling from Liberty University. He currently serves as Director of Operations and a member of the Hanhalah at the Yeshiva of Greater Washington. In addition, he serves as a Lomdei Educational Coach and presenter, supporting educators in their professional growth, and is a member of Chai Lifeline's Crisis Services team.

EDUCATION, GROWTH AND MATURITY



As we return to Bereishis after Sukkos and begin the Torah anew, a profound lesson from the dawn of Creation about chinuch, human potential, and the lifelong work of becoming who we are capable of being.

Rabbi Raphael Pelcovitz
Adapted from Table Talk

After the Torah relates the majestic story of Creation and introduces us to Adam, Chavah and the serpent, and after man has been driven from Gan Eden, we are presented with a simple yet most puzzling and profound verse.

In Chapter 5, verse 1, we read:

זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם

"This is the account of the descendants of Adam."

Commenting on this verse, an obscure *Midrash states*:

לֹא לְאָדָם אֲנִי נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה כִּי לְבָנָיו

"I will not give the Torah to Adam, but to his children."

The *Midrash* is apparently interpreting the word סֵפֶר, "book," in this verse as referring to the Sefer Torah, and the word תּוֹלְדֹת as meaning the offspring of Adam, as opposed to Adam himself.

In other words, we are being given an answer to a question which has bothered many commentators: **Why was the Torah not given immediately to Adam when he was created?**

After all, the Torah is the ultimate book of instruction, meant to guide man in how he should live and conduct himself. Why, then, should Adam — the very first human being — have had to live without it?

The Midrash seems to be saying that the giving of the Torah had to be postponed for a while and given only to the descendants of Adam, to future generations.

That answer itself demands an explanation.

What was different about Adam? And what would his children and grandchildren possess that he did not?

A HUMAN BEING, FULLY FORMED

Our Sages pose a most interesting question regarding the creation of man, as well as the creation of all living creatures.

They ask: At what stage of development was Adam created — as an infant, a child, an adolescent, or a young adult?

They answer that the creation of all living creatures, including man, was:

בְּקוֹמָתָן לְדַעְתָּן וּלְצִבְיוֹנָן

"with full stature, full capacity and full beauty"

(Rosh Hashanah 11a).

In other words, they were all finished products, which makes sense logically, for they had to be self-sufficient since there were no others to care for them and meet their needs.

"Growth itself is not merely the preparation for life. Growth is part of the purpose of life."

However, there is a much deeper thought hidden in this statement of our Sages.

We are being taught that, psychologically, for man to fulfill the charge given to him from the beginning of Creation,

לְעָבְדָהּ וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ

"to work it and preserve it" (2:15),

he required a vision of the end product to motivate him to labor and sacrifice in order to develop and nurture the growth of all creation.

Since the dawn of Creation, man needed an image of the finished product from the very outset — a model, as it were, to inspire him.

What motivates us always is the potential; our imagination is inspired by the knowledge of what the end product will be.

We work differently when we can envision what our work may ultimately produce. A parent looking at a child sees not only the child standing before him today, but the person that child may one day become. A teacher must learn to see the same. The present is important precisely because of the future contained within it.

That is why, at Creation, man could not be an infant or a child, but had to be complete. For how else would one know the full capacity and full beauty of a human being or, for that matter, of any living creature?

Before mankind could begin the work of growth, it first had to see what growth could produce.

THE VISION OF GREATNESS

A writer once wrote that all education requires a constant vision of greatness, in order to spur us on and motivate us to reach noble goals.

Obviously, the potential of every human being is realized only through the process of growth, development and maturation.

That process is neither instantaneous nor automatic.

Torah is taught to a child at a very early age, and we continue to educate our children for many years, in order to create the finished product.

But, in truth, there is never a moment at which that work is entirely finished.

Even after we are adults, we continue to study Torah, for we realize that our "full stature and full capacity" has not been reached, and we must ever strive to actualize our potential — the potential of man who is created in the image of G-d.

The child grows into the adult, but the adult must continue growing as well. Torah does not merely accompany childhood; it accompanies a human being through life. There is always another level of understanding, another refinement of character, another possibility waiting to be realized.

Perhaps this is why the language of potential is so essential to chinuch. We do not educate merely for what a person is. We educate for what he can become.

WHY TORAH REQUIRES CHINUCH

Torah was given to us for this reason, and that is why there is no greater *mitzvah* than to learn and teach Torah, be it for ourselves or to our children.

True, those who come to Judaism later on in life can still master the Torah and live according to its teachings, but we appreciate how difficult it is for the *baal teshuvah* to change and reorder the values and priorities of his life.

This is what the *Midrash* is teaching us.

Since Adam was created as a young adult, the Sefer Torah could not be given to him, for he lacked one of the most essential elements — namely, a period of childhood and growth.

The Torah, the Book of Torah, had to be reserved for, and given to, the descendants of man, to those who could be taught and trained from childhood to understand the teachings of the Almighty as revealed in the Torah.

Without *chinuch*, "education," the Sefer Torah would be of minimal value.

Hence:

זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם

This Book was meant for the descendants of man, not for Adam, for they, unlike him, will go through the stages of infancy, childhood and adolescence before they mature into adults.

Adam, who was created as an adult, lacked this experience of gradual growth.

And therein lies something extraordinary.

Growth itself is not merely the preparation for life. Growth is part of the purpose of life.

Adam possessed the finished form from the moment he was created. His descendants would receive something different: the opportunity to become.

"We do not educate merely for what a person is. We educate for what he can become."

A CHILD NEEDS MORE THAN A HOME

This may well explain why Cain called his son חֲנוֹךְ, for it would always remind him that his child needed חִנּוּךְ, *chinuch*, "education."

But even that is insufficient.

Cain built a city and named the city חֲנוֹךְ as well, for it is not enough to educate your child; there must also be an environment and society in which he can live, one which appreciates and values what education teaches.

The lesson is strikingly relevant in every generation.

Parents may teach. Rebbeim and teachers may inspire. But a child is also shaped by the world surrounding him — by the home, the school, the neighborhood, the friendships and the values that are treated as important by the community around him.

True chinuch therefore asks more of us than simply deciding what we will tell our children. It asks us to consider what kind of world we are building around them.

Cain did not merely give his son a name associated with chinuch. He gave that name to a city.

Because the education of a child cannot be separated entirely from the environment in which that child is expected to grow.

BEGINNING AGAIN

The lesson taught at the dawn of Creation in our Sedrah is one that we must learn and also teach to subsequent generations.

And perhaps there is no more appropriate time to consider that lesson than when we return once again to Bereishis.

The Yamim Tovim have passed. We roll the Torah back to its opening words. The world is created again before our eyes, and we begin again with Adam, with the first family, and with the first generations of mankind.

Yet beginning again does not mean returning to the same place.

The Torah invites us to begin again having grown.

A child does not become an adult in an instant. A student does not become learned in a day. Character is not formed in a single dramatic moment.

The great work of a human life takes place gradually — lesson by lesson, year by year, generation by generation.

And so the Torah begins by teaching us not only about Creation, but about potential.

It teaches us to look beyond what stands before us and to envision what may yet emerge. It teaches parents and teachers to recognize the greatness still hidden within a child. And it reminds each of us that our own growth is not finished either.

Perhaps that is one of the great gifts of Bereishis. Every year, the Torah gives us the opportunity to return to the beginning — not because we have learned nothing, but because we are ready to begin again as people who have grown.

Rabbi Raphael Pelcovitz, zt"l (1921–2018), was a distinguished rav, educator and author who served for decades as the spiritual leader of Congregation Knesseth Israel, widely known as the White Shul, in Far Rockaway, New York. A respected Torah teacher and communal leader, Rabbi Pelcovitz became especially known for presenting profound Torah ideas in a clear, elegant and accessible manner.

Among his works is Table Talk, a collection of insights on the weekly parashah and Yamim Tovim, as well as his acclaimed English translation and commentary on the Sforno on Chumash. Together with his son, Dr. David Pelcovitz, he also authored Balanced Parenting, bringing timeless Torah principles to the challenges of raising and educating children.

His writings continue to speak with unusual warmth and clarity about Torah, family, chinuch and the lifelong responsibility to grow.

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THE BRIEFING

SQUISHY TOYS LAND ON THE RECALL LIST

That cute little squishy may not be so harmless. Popular squishy toys have been recalled over concerns that the water beads inside can expand if swallowed, potentially causing serious intestinal injuries.

Parents are being urged to remove the recalled toys from children immediately.

We spend a lot of time teaching children what not to touch. Sometimes the more important question is what we've already placed in their hands.

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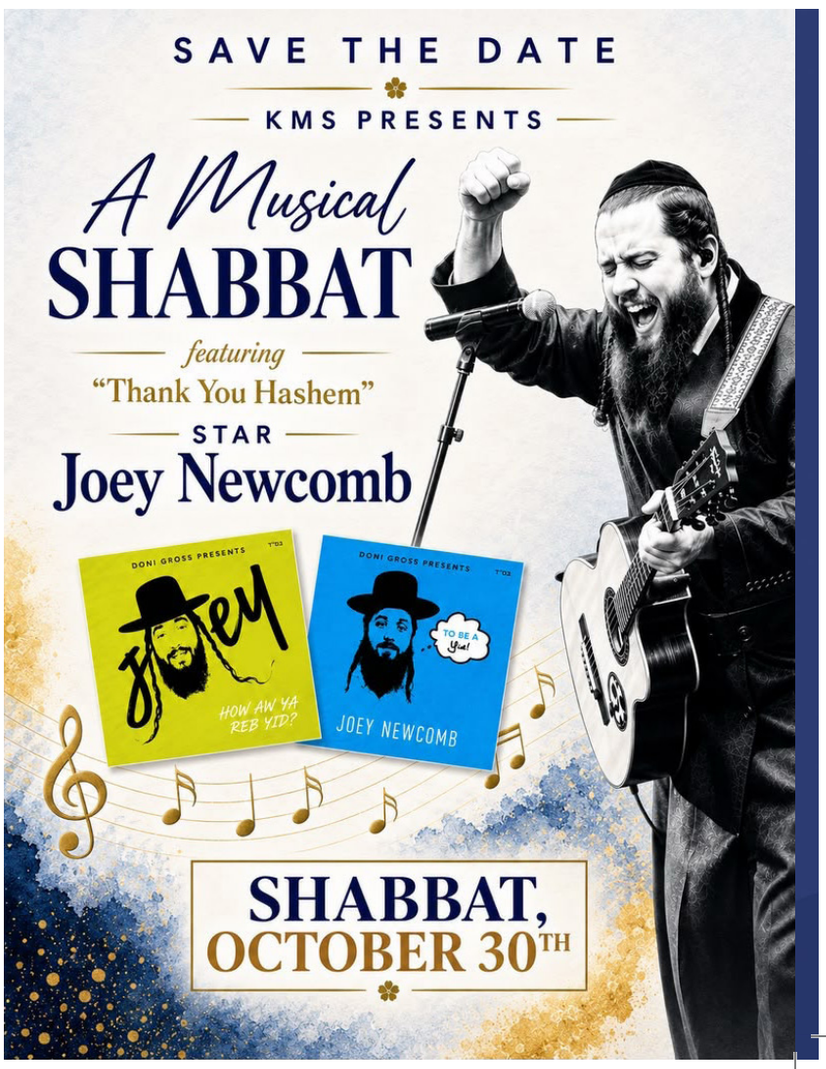

SHABBAT, OCTOBER 30TH

BARILLA BETS BIG ON GOODLES

The mac-and-cheese aisle is getting a shake-up. Barilla is acquiring GOODLES, the colorful brand launched in 2020 that turned classic comfort food into a higher-protein, higher-fiber pantry favorite.

GOODLES has already captured nearly 8% of U.S. boxed mac-and-cheese spending and reportedly added about 2 million new customers in just 90 days. Many of its products are also kosher-certified, helping it earn plenty of space in kosher pantries. The brand will continue operating independently with its current team. Not bad for a six-year-old company competing in an aisle that seemed to have all its winners already.

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FROM DEAD MALL TO MEDICAL CITY

For years, Alexandria's Landmark Mall was a symbol of a retail era that had quietly passed. Now, the 52-acre property is being rebuilt into WestEnd, a nearly four-million-square-foot neighborhood centered around a new Inova Alexandria Hospital.

The roughly $2 billion redevelopment is expected to include more than 2,500 homes, 300,000 square feet of shops and restaurants, medical offices, parks and a regional transit hub. At its center, the new hospital campus will feature private patient rooms, an expanded emergency department and a full-service cancer center, with an opening planned for 2028. It is an unusually dramatic second act for a dead shopping mall. What once depended on department stores to draw people in may soon become a place built around something far more lasting: where people live, work, gather—and, when they need it most, heal.

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WHEN: OCTOBER 18, 2026
WHERE: YOUNG ISRAEL SHOMRAI EMUNAH
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PICKUP: 5:30 - 7:30 PM

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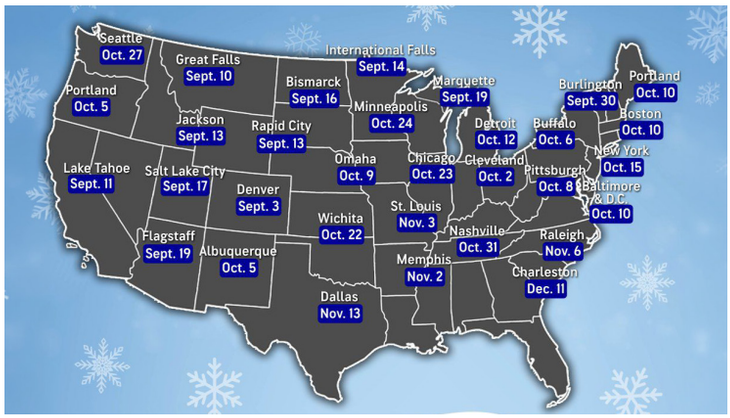
SNOW IN OCTOBER? D.C. HAS DONE IT BEFORE

Washington may not usually think snow until well into winter, but the record books tell a colder story. According to NOAA data compiled by AccuWeather, the earliest measurable snowfall ever recorded in the Baltimore–Washington area came on October 10.

That is earlier than New York's October 15 record and not far behind places such as Buffalo and Pittsburgh. Of course, a record is not a forecast—and an October 10 snowfall is very much the exception. Still, as September settles in, it is a reminder that Washington weather has never been particularly interested in following the calendar. For now, keep the coats in the closet. Just maybe not too far back.



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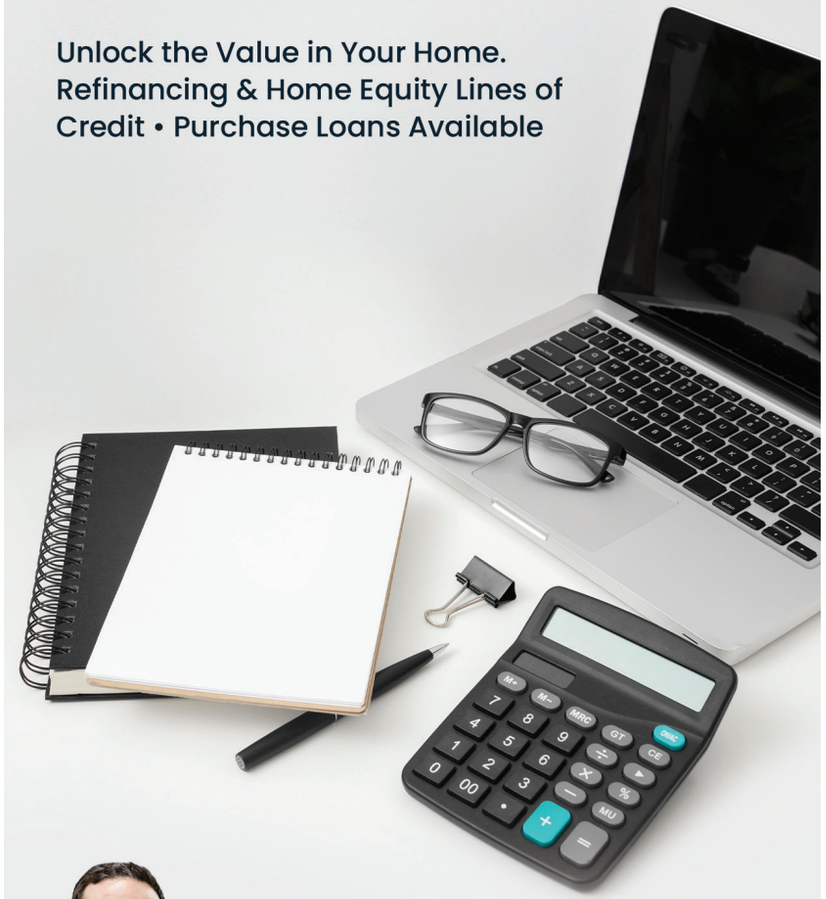

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7 Cozy Soups for Chilly Sukkos Nights

Bring a sweater. Leave room for seconds.

The decorations are swaying, someone's asking for another sweater, and a steaming bowl of soup suddenly feels like the best part of the evening. From golden chicken broth to a playful twist on matzo balls, these seven recipes bring a little extra comfort to the sukkah.

1 Classic Chicken Soup

By Jamie Geller | Meat

SCAN FOR THE FULL RECIPE!

Some traditions do not need a makeover. Jamie's chicken soup brings together chicken, carrots, parsnip, turnip, and celery, with fresh dill and parsley for that unmistakable homemade aroma. Golden, familiar, and exactly what belongs between the challah and the main course. Bubby would understand.

2 Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

By Chanie Apfelbaum, Busy in Brooklyn | Pareve

SCAN FOR THE FULL RECIPE!

Fall, wearing its nicest Yom Tov outfit. Roasted squash and shallots meet a Honeycrisp apple, a touch of Chinese five-spice, and coconut milk for a smooth, naturally sweet soup without dairy. The roasting gives this orange classic its extra depth; the warm spices keep every spoonful interesting.

3 Crockpot Onion and Flanken Soup

By Naomi Nachman, Perfect Flavors | Meat

SCAN FOR THE FULL RECIPE!

This is the soup that might steal the main course's thunder. Slowly cooked onions, bone-in flanken, red wine, and a little red miso build a rich, deeply savory bowl. Best of all, the slow cooker handles the onions—no standing over the stove stirring while seventeen other things need your attention.

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4

Mushroom Barley Soup Done Right

By Renee Muller, Our Table | Pareve

SCAN FOR THE FULL RECIPE!

No fancy tricks. Just a very good reason to reach for the ladle again. White and baby bella mushrooms, barley, and a generous collection of vegetables make this a hearty, old-fashioned bowl. A finishing addition of tomato sauce brings extra depth. Think cozy family supper, with the sukkah lights twinkling overhead.

5

Cauliflower and Leek Soup

By Rivky Kleiman, Family Table | Pareve

SCAN FOR THE FULL RECIPE!

For the evening when you want something a little elegant—but still wonderfully comforting. Roasted cauliflower, leeks, onions, and a whole head of garlic create a velvety soup without a drop of cream. A splash of cooking sherry adds another layer of flavor. Bonus for the holiday cook: the recipe freezes well.

6

Hearty Lentil Soup with Meatballs

By Miriam Pascal Cohen, Overtime Cook | Meat

SCAN FOR THE FULL RECIPE!

After a full Chol Hamoed outing, "What's for dinner?" deserves an easy answer. This substantial soup combines red lentils, vegetables, kale, and little beef meatballs in one satisfying pot. Add some bread and call everyone to the sukkah. The author also includes freezing instructions—excellent news for your future, very tired self.

7

Tomato Soup with Cheddar Matzo Balls

By Danielle Renov, Peas Love & Carrots | Dairy — for a dairy Chol Hamoed supper

SCAN FOR THE FULL RECIPE!

The matzo balls have switched teams. Danielle mixes cheddar directly into the matzo-ball batter, then cooks the little dumplings in a buttery tomato soup. It has the cozy spirit of tomato soup and grilled cheese, with a distinctly Jewish twist. A cheerful change of pace between all those meat meals.

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Chag Sameach

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 Sukkos filled with peace, happiness, and countless momemnt 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.

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