



# Congregation Spanish & Portuguese

שָׂרִית יִשְׂרָאֵל

בְּרָאשִׁית

## Parashat Vayigash

פָּרַשַׁת וַיִּגַּשׁ

Parasha Hertz: Page 169 ~ Haftarah Ezekiel Hertz: Page 187

**Resolving an Identity Crisis:  
Thoughts for Parashat Vayigash**  
By: Rabbi Marc D. Angel

"And Joseph said to his brothers: I am Joseph. Does my father still live?"

In re-uniting with his brothers, Joseph asked if his father was still alive. Yet, the brothers had already told him that Jacob was alive. Indeed, the rest of Joseph's words make clear that he knew Jacob was alive. So what is the significance of his question "does my father still live?" We need to understand Joseph's dilemma.

We gain insight into Joseph's inner life by the names he gave to his sons. He named his first-born Menasheh "for God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." Joseph was proclaiming himself an Egyptian. He was a ruler in Egypt, he had an Egyptian name, an Egyptian wife; he wanted to forget his father's house. Yet, he named his second son Ephraim, "for God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction." He described Egypt as a land of his affliction—he still wasn't at peace in Egypt in spite of his efforts to be a full Egyptian. Who was Joseph? Was he a fully assimilated Egyptian, or was he still tied to his ancestral home? Joseph had a serious identity crisis.

Joseph concealed this inner struggle until he actually was faced with his brothers, who had come to Egypt to buy food. Now Joseph was forced to decide who he was. Should he be an Egyptian and reject his brothers, or should he be an Israelite and identify with them. This uncertainty might explain his cruel treatment of his brothers. He strove to remain an Egyptian,

to avoid re-connecting with his brothers. Yet, he could not succeed. At last, he broke down crying: I am Joseph. Does my father still live?

The question about his father was rhetorical, since he already knew Jacob was alive. The question can be understood as Joseph speaking to himself: I thought I could assimilate and become a full, true Egyptian. I tried very hard to forget my father's home, my connection with my people. But I cannot keep up the charade any longer. Does my father still live within me, do my ties to my people continue to bind me to them, is this connection so powerful as to be able to draw me back to my roots?

When Joseph finally realizes that his father is still alive within himself and that he cannot break away from his family and traditions, he is able to reconcile with his brothers. Joseph, the archetypal "assimilated Jew", returns to the fold. He regains his true identity. I am Joseph your brother. I reclaim the ideas and ideals of my father's home.

The Joseph story foreshadows so many other stories of assimilated Jews who have found their ways back home. They had left their families and traditions, trying to adopt an entirely new identity. Yet, something happens in their lives, triggering a return to Judaism and the Jewish people. They are often perplexed by this return. They ask in amazement: "does my father still live?" And they answer: yes, the Jewish teachings and traditions and peoplehood still live within me. I will not run away any longer. I finally know who I am, and have made peace with myself, my family and my God.

**Shabbat Shalom**

## HALAKHA הלכה

### ASARAH B'TEVET

Although to many the only notable aspect of the upcoming fast of Asarah B'Tevet (10<sup>th</sup> of Tevet) is that it is by far the shortest fast day in the Jewish calendar for anyone in the Northern Hemisphere, nonetheless, the Fast of Asarah B'Tevet is quite unique. Exclusive to this fast is that it is the only one that we do actually observe as a fast on a Friday. Even Tisha B'Av, which commemorates the actual destructions of our Batei HaMikdash, gets pushed off. Yet, obviously, to maintain this distinction of being the only Fast Day that we actually do observe on Friday, there must be much more to it than meets the eye.

**Why This Fast?** Because Asarah B'Tevet is the day that the Babylonian king Nevuchadnetzar started his siege of Yerushalayim, foreshadowing the beginning of the end of the first Beit Hamikdash, which culminated with its destruction on Tisha B'Av several years later. Therefore, our sages declared it a public fast, one of 4 public fast days that memorialize different aspects of the national tragedies associated with the destruction of both Temples.

**Fasting on Friday?** Another exclusive characteristic of Asarah B'Tevet is that, it is the only fast that can fall out on a Friday. This is interesting as there is a whole

debate in the Gemara about how to conduct fasts on a Friday, when we also must take kavod Shabbat into account, implying that it is a common occurrence. However, according to our calendar, a Friday fast is only applicable with Asarah B'Tevet, and it happens quite infrequently.

The halachot of a Friday fast, parallel those of a regular fast day. Even though there is some debate - a Friday fast should be completed whether one accepts Shabbat early and thereby end the fast before nightfall, even so, the halacha is that one must fast the whole day and complete it at nightfall before making Kiddush.

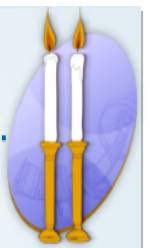
*Shabbat Shalom, Cantor Daniel Benlolo*

## Shabbat Shalom

Start/Début 3:58 pm.

End/Fin 5:08 pm.

Havdalah



Services Schedule

Horaires des Offices

**Our Week Day Services**  
SERVICES SCHEDULE IS AS FOLLOWS:

**SHAHRIIT:** 7:30 a.m.

Everyday Monday through Friday

Sunday: 8:30 a.m.

**Afternoon/Evening Services:**

**Minha/Arvit** 3:25

Join on Zoom ID: 914-650-9809

**SHABBAT SERVICES (RSVP)**  
**MASHAAL SANCTUARY - 9:00 a.m.**  
**Minha Friday & Shabbat 3:45**



**LEARNING WITH  
RABBI PINTO**

**Lundi 28 decembre**

**4:00 - 4:30 P.M.**

**PENSÉE JUIVE**

**Mardi 29 decembre**

**4:00 - 4:30 P.M.**

**DÉCOUVRIR LE SIDOUR - Adon Olam**

**Thursday, January 7, 2021**

**4:45 - 5:45 P.M.**

**In the Beginning**

שבת שבת שבת

**Monday through Thursday after Minha**  
**S&P SOUP TALK**

**Join us for a warm soup & enriching conversation with Rabbi Pinto**

שבת שבת שבת

**Sunday, January 17, 2021**

**10:30-11:30 A.M. ~ "Wrap & Roll"**

**With Rabbi Pinto & Hazzan Benlolo**

שבת שבת שבת

**Monday through Thursday**

**8:25AM. & 3:40PM.**

**RABBI'S DAILY THOUGHTS & HALAKHA**

**Quote Of The Week:** Worrying does not empty tomorrow of its troubles; it empties today of its strengths. - Aish HaTorah



# Beit Hamidrash Helwani

פרנס חלבני - Parnass Hakavod: Mayer & Muriel Sasson

PROGRAMME DU BEIT HAMIDRASH

שיעור יומי

PROGRAMME QUOTIDIEN - HOK LEISRAËL - DIM.-VEN. APRÈS SHAHRIT RABBI M. PINTO - ZOOM ID: 5264381158

## PARNASS HAYOM

## פרנס היום

Shabbat 11 Tevet - December 26 décembre

Famille Abitan, à la mémoire de Flora Zari Abitan ז"ל.

Sunday/Dimanche 12 Tevet - December 27 décembre

Sylvia Shahin, in memory of her mother, Salima Akairib ז"ל.

Iris & Jacob Haimovici, in honour of their son, Leon David Nachman Lieb.

Monday/Lundi 13 Tevet - December 28 décembre

Henri & Arlene Abitan, à la mémoire de sa mère, Simone Madar ז"ל.

Tuesday/Mardi 14 Tevet - December 29 décembre

Familles Abittan & Nezri,

à la mémoire de leur beau-frère, Sam Abittan Saul ben Aicha ז"ל.

Wednesday/Mercredi 15 Tevet - December 30 décembre

Dorothy Karkoukly, in memory of her husband, Solly Karkoukly ז"ל.

Thursday/Jendredi 16 Tevet - December 31 décembre

Martha Lawee, in memory of her brother, Haim Tapiero ז"ל.

Friday/Vendredi 17 Tevet - January 1 janvier

Sampson Family, in memory of Simshon Nachshon Sampson ז"ל.

Sachs Families, in memory of Esther Cohen Hakak ז"ל.

CHEVRA SHAAS  
ADATH JESHURUN  
HADRATH KODESH  
SHEVET ACHIM  
CHAVERIM KOL YISRAEL  
D'BET ABRAHAM  
CONGREGATION

### SHABBOS, DECEMBER 26<sup>th</sup>

FOR TIMES OF WEEKDAY SERVICES, PLEASE  
FOLLOW WITH SPANISH & PORTUGUESE

WE HAVE MOVED THE STARTING TIME OF SHABBAT  
MORNING SERVICES IN CS HALL TO 9:30 A.M.

WORDS FROM RABBI WHITE  
VA-YIGGASH 5781

This past week, we have been hearing how the cases of corona in our province, and throughout the world, have been increasing. Hospitals in Montreal are above capacity. On the other hand, governments are beginning to distribute the vaccine, which hopefully will be the "light at the end of the tunnel."

WE have a great responsibility to take care of our health, and that of our friends and families.

Sefer Ha-chinuch, written in Spain in 13<sup>th</sup> century, in Hebrew, explains all of the 613 mitzvot. Though written many years ago, the explanations often seem most relevant.

Here is what it says about guarding one's health. (Mitsvah #546. Translation and abridgements are mine.) "...even though God supervises everything in the world, everyone is obligated to look out for their health. God created the world according to the rules of nature, so that, for example, fire burns and water extinguishes fire; and so that if a person were to fall from a high roof, that person will die. But God breathed into the human the gift of knowledge, so that a person should watch their body from injury. We cannot rely on miracles. So that's why in the Bible, when the Israelites had to wage war, they still had to be armed and to follow military tactics."

The lesson from here is that halacha obligates us to follow the recommendations of the medical authorities: masks, social distancing, limiting of contacts, etc. And the opinion of most rabbinic authorities is that one must be vaccinated when the vaccine is offered, unless one's medical advisor feels that the vaccine is not appropriate for him/her.

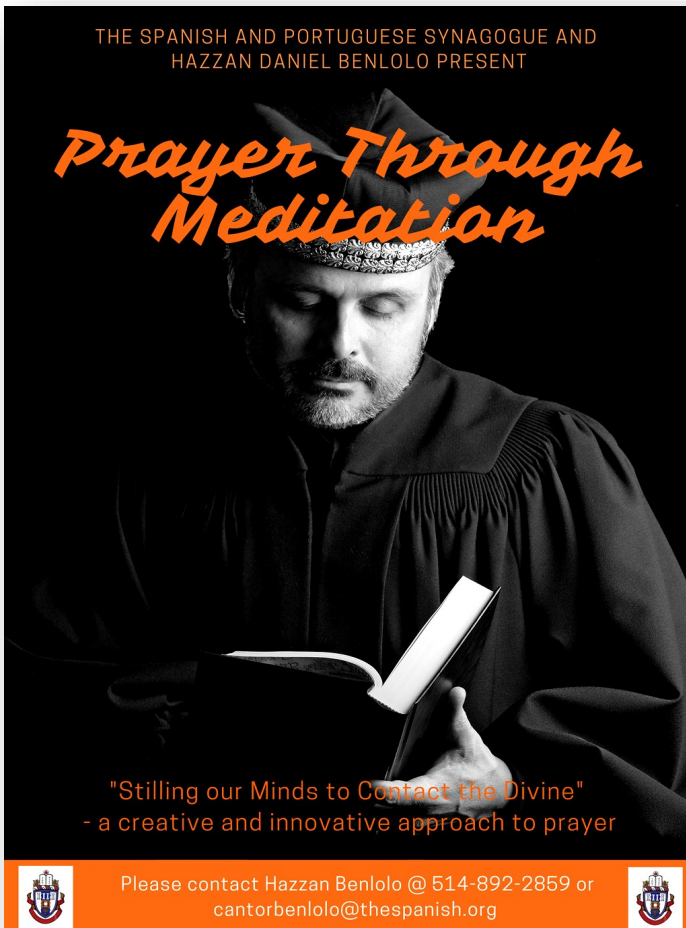
Indeed, Yosef's advice to Egypt, as we read in this week's and last week's parshiyot, may have been very difficult for many of the Egyptians to follow, but it succeeded in keeping the country of Egypt alive.

Let's hear good news. Be healthy and well!

**Shabbat shalom**

THE SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE SYNAGOGUE AND  
HAZZAN DANIEL BENLOLO PRESENT

## Prayer Through Meditation



"Stilling our Minds to Contact the Divine"  
- a creative and innovative approach to prayer

Please contact Hazzan Benlolo @ 514-892-2859 or  
cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org

# Major Donors Program

The Spanish & Portuguese has recently begun a fundraising program whereby our goal is to raise \$1.5 Million over 3 years to help fund our activities, programs, and events.

We are pleased to announce the following congregants who have made very generous 3-year donations:

Edward & Gertrude Mashaal & Family

Sam & Ann Aintabi & Family

Philip & Dahlia Lawee & Family

Mayer & Roberta Lawee & Family

Alfred & Martha Lawee

Friends of the Congregation

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Carla & Philip Khazzam

Morris & Evette Mashaal & Family

Mike & Monika Yuval & Family

Jacob & Iris Haimovici & Family

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Salim Mashaal & Family

Charles & Lucie Shemie & Family

David & Carole Nathaniel & Family

Ronald & Myriam Reuben & Family

Victor & Edna Mashaal & Family

Henri & Arlene Abitan & Family

David & Vivian Gabbay & Family

Manny & Denise Touaty & Family

## SPANISH & PORTUGUESE ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

With deep gratitude, we acknowledge the following generous donors who are supporting the operations, activities, and welfare of our synagogue.

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### SUPPORTER

Donald & Gladys Kattan

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Joseph & Niddam Amzallag

David & Lyson Haccoun

Gladys Mooallem

Maurice Douek

Robert Fattal

Rabbi Howard & Norma Joseph

Jim & Ruth Nabi



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29 - 12:00 - 1:00 P.M.**

Sisterhood Book Review "The Third Daughter" by Talia Carner  
Reviewer: Wilma Mashal - Zoom ID: 885 7489 6038 SISBOOK

**A YEAR OF HONOURING RABBI SACKS ZT'L - THE TEN PATHS TO GOD (SERIES)**

**NEW DATE STARTING MONDAY, JANUARY 4 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**"IDENTITY: ON BEING A JEW"**- Carole Basri, visiting Law Professor & History Scholar, Sami Sourani.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6 - 10:00 - 11:00 A.M.**

Sisterhood Health Series: Yoga Class with Lisa Shebath - Registration required.  
lisashebath@gmail.com OR sisterhood2020@hotmail.com

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021 - 7:00 - 8:00 P.M.**

Sisterhood Health Series "Let's Dance" with Silvia Lebensztajn Shahrabani  
Zoom ID: 899 8627 6146 SUPERSIS

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021**

Rosh Hodesh Sh'vat Musical Experience  
Rabbi Maimon Pinto & Hazzan Daniel Benlolo

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021 - 7:00 - 8:00 P.M.**

Sisterhood Health Series Healthy Mind for the Daily Grind  
Speakers: Dr. Melanie Bilbul & Dr. Sheida Rabipour

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2021 - 7:00 - 8:00 P.M.**

Sisterhood: Tu B'Shvat/Shabbat Shirah - Benefits of Music on Body, Mind...  
Guest Speaker Hazzan Daniel Benlolo

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2021**

Tu B'Shvat Seder Program - with Rabbi Pinto & Hazzan Benlolo  
**A YEAR OF HONOURING RABBI SACKS ZT'L - THE TEN PATHS TO GOD (SERIES)**  
**THURSDAY, JANUARY 28 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**"PRAYER: SPEAKING TO GOD"**- Cantor Rabbi Daniel Benlolo, Order of Canada; Cantor Eyal Bitton & Michèle Tredger, Cong. Neveh Shalom, Portland, OR.

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2021 - 7:00 - 8:00 P.M.**

Sisterhood Health Series Healthy Musings on Holistic Wellness  
Speaker: Denise Archambault Nathaniel  
Zoom ID 811 4151 0549 - SUPERSIS

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2021**

Rosh Hodesh Adar I - Musical Experience - with Rabbi Pinto & Hazzan Benlolo

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2021**

Rosh Hodesh Adar II - Shabbaton - Rabbi Pinto & Hazzan Benlolo

**A YEAR OF HONOURING RABBI SACKS ZT'L - THE TEN PATHS TO GOD (SERIES)**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**"STUDY: LISTENING TO GOD"**- Edmond Elbaz, B.Sc, M. Ed, Immed. Past President S&P.

JPPS-Bialik High School Administrator; 30 years Canadian Délégué Général to L'Alliance Israelite Universelle; Order of France in Arts and Letters.



## CONGREGATION ☆ MAGHEN ☆ ABRAHAM

THOUGHTS FROM MAYER SASSON ~ "TREAT OTHERS LIKE YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED"

In this week's parsha, Joseph reveals his true identity to his brothers. After Yehuda's impassioned plea for Binyamin's release, the Torah tells us (Genesis 45:1) that Joseph could not restrain himself any longer. Rashi explains that Joseph could not bear the thought of embarrassing his brothers in front of the Egyptians in the room. The revelation of his true identity would mean revealing that his brothers had sold him, and that this would be intensely humiliating for them. Therefore, Joseph ordered all his Egyptian servants to leave the room, before he stated, "I am Joseph."

We might wonder how Rashi knows that Joseph was primarily concerned with preventing his brothers' embarrassment. Perhaps he sent out his servants because it would not be proper for a great leader to cry in front of

his subordinates. In other words, maybe Joseph was interested only in preventing his OWN embarrassment!

The Iturei Torah counters this claim by pointing out that Joseph, immediately after sending out his servants, raised his voice and cried so loudly that all of Egypt and everyone in Pharaoh's palace heard his sobbing (Genesis 45:2). Clearly, Joseph was not concerned with maintaining his own dignity if this is how he behaved. Therefore, he must have dismissed the Egyptians only in order to prevent his brothers' public humiliation.

*Shabbat Shalom*

SPANISH & PORTUGUESE OFFICE WILL CLOSE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24 AT 12 NOON AND WILL REOPEN ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 28.

### SISTERHOOD NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

JULIA PERESS ROSENFELD ~ LISA PERESS ~ SHANI SEBAG ~ GENE RABIE ~ WILMA MASHAL ~ MICHELE SHERIE  
LISA JOY LAWEE ~ NATALIE LAWEE ~ GLENDA LISBONA ~ MARINA MASHAAL ~ EVELYNE BARCHICHAT

### SISTERHOOD "SUPER TUESDAY" DONORS (S&P GENERAL DONATIONS FUND)

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