

Tefilla Notebook

This week's Tefilla Notebook is sponsored by
Maggie & Michael Bayer in memory of
Maggie's mother, **Bella Magenheim, Bayla
bat Shmuel a"h**, whose yahrtzeit is on the
22nd of Tevet

25 Tevet • Shemot • Birkat HaChodesh

January 5-6, 2024

Steven Dorfman, President • Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi • Rabbi Aryeh Perlstein, Assistant Rabbi



Dear Members and Friends,

On October 7th, 19-year-old Corporal Naama Boni was serving in the 77th Armored Corps Battalion of the IDF. It was 7:00am, and she was standing guard at the entrance of the Zikim military base just north of Gaza, soon after it had come under intense rocket fire. Suddenly, out of nowhere, dozens of Hamas fighters arrived at the

base, on motorcycles, trucks, and tractors, armed with high-caliber rifles and RPGs. Minutes earlier these terrorists had broken through the Gaza-Israel barrier and raced toward the base, intending to take it over and murder all the soldiers stationed there.

Naama called for reinforcements and was quickly joined by three soldiers who rushed to the gate without their uniforms on, and also by a member of the 13th Battalion of the Golani Brigade who had been stationed at the rear of the base. In the fierce exchange of fire that followed, Naama was wounded, as was her Golani colleague, and they both sought cover. It was at this point that Naama messaged her family. "I care deeply for all of you," she texted. "I have a head injury, and a terrorist nearby might start shooting at me. I am now with an injured soldier from the Golani Brigade, and no reinforcements are available." Soon afterward, she texted again: "There is a terrorist here who won't go away. I can hear someone screaming, and it looks like someone has been killed." That was her last text. Naama's body was discovered later that day, when the invading terrorists were all finally killed.

Naama's text messages – which went viral after being shared by her family a few days after she was killed – struck a chord in Israel and around the world, giving human depth and background to Naama's photo and name that initially appeared in the media after her death was announced. Since then, dozens of other similar stories have emerged. On December 3rd, 22-year-old Major General Ben Zussman, entered a building in Gaza with his unit. Inside they encountered Hamas terrorists who began firing their weapons. In the ensuing gun battle, Ben lost his life, along with four of his comrades. The following week, Ben's parents revealed a letter he had written to them, to be opened only if he became a casualty of war.

"I am writing this message to you on the way to the base," his letter began. "If you are reading this, something must have happened to me." What followed was both poignant and heartbreaking. "As you know, there is probably no one happier than me right now. I had the privilege of fulfilling my dream and vocation and you can be sure that I am looking down on you and smiling. I will probably sit next to Grandpa." Finally, he added that if "God forbid" his family had to sit shiva for him, "make sure it is a week of friends, family and fun."

Adi Leon, an IDF Staff Sergeant of 20, also left a letter for his family. They received it after he was killed in a gun battle on October 31st, the first day of the ground incursion into Gaza. "I go out to fight this war with the knowledge that I am not certain I will return, but I believe with a full heart in what I am doing. We do not have another land, and now it is my turn to protect it and to avenge all the civilians and soldiers, the children, the elderly, and all the women who were

defenseless in the face of the onslaught by Hamas. This is the education that my parents gave me. In this I believe. I hope I will be remembered. Adi."

The letter gained widespread attention and was quoted by President Isaac Herzog. That same week, Adi's aunt shared his favorite chocolate cake recipe, and that went viral too; people everywhere are now baking Adi's cherished cake, with some even sending them to soldiers on the frontlines as a tribute to his memory.

In the opening verses of Shemot, the Torah mentions the names of all twelve sons of Jacob, then telling us that they had died, along with their entire generation. The commentaries puzzle over this introduction; the sons of Jacob are seemingly irrelevant to the unfolding narrative of the Israelite's enslavement by the Egyptians, and the ultimate redemption of the Exodus story. Additionally, the Torah is well known to be sparing with its text – so why are we presented with this unconnected genealogical information?

The answer is simple. The opening verses of Shemot are not meant to be seen as a genealogical recounting, but rather they act as a meaningful link between the closing chapters of Bereishit and the story of Israel in Egypt. The names of Jacob's sons are invoked to remind us that although these superlative individuals were no longer present, their legacies endured, and were shaping the destiny of the nascent nation. This continuous thread of identity and purpose bound the trials of our patriarchal founders to the tribulations and aspirations of the Jewish people in their subsequent servitude and liberation.

The stories of Naama, Ben, and Adi, as recorded in the communications with their families – and the stories of all the many young soldiers whose lives have been sacrificed during this horrible war – are modern echoes of this unbroken chain of legacy. The values instilled by our patriarchs and the dreams nurtured through centuries of perseverance find their expression in the courage and sacrifice of these young guardians of Israel. Their letters, filled with echoes of love for family and nation, are a testament to the enduring influence of those who came before them. They are a powerful affirmation that the spirit of our founding fathers, their fortitude, and their faith, live on in the hearts of their descendants.

To be clear – mentioning the tribes at the beginning of Shemot is not just about using their names as a literary device to connect the end of Bereishit with Shemot. It is about reaffirming a promise—the promise that each generation will carry forward the sacred legacy bequeathed to them by the generation that preceded them. The tribulations in Egypt and the subsequent exodus were not just formative events but were chapters in a larger narrative of a people that was inexorably linked to their past, as they lived out the dreams and ideals of their forebears. So too today. Each act of bravery, every letter sent home, is testimony to a legacy of resilience and hope that stretches back to the dawn of Jewish history, and which will continue until the end of days.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Pini Dunner

FRIDAY, JAN 5th

4:40 PM CANDLELIGHTING
4:45 PM KABBALAT SHABBAT

SATURDAY, JAN 6th

8:30 AM GEMARA SHIUR
9:15 AM SHACHARIT
4:45 PM MINCHA
5:35 PM MAARIV
5:40 PM SHABBAT ENDS

WEEKDAY DAVENING

Sun	8:00am	4:45pm
Mon-Thur	7:00am	4:45pm
Fri	7:00am	4:45pm

Rosh Chodesh is on Thursday

**BRING THEM
HOME NOW**

THANK YOU

Seudah Shlishit is sponsored by
Benny and Shahla Zaghi in memory of
Benny's father, **Rahman ben
Yehuda z"l**, whose yahrtzeit is on the
2nd of Shevat.

Need Piano Lessons?
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

ROBERT PERL CAROLINE AZOUZ
 PAUL ALMOND ROSE KEMPS
 ANDREW PERL DANIEL PALUCH
 JASON HUBERMAN

Next week's Parsha Shiur is sponsored by **Ed & Cecile Gromis** in memory of Ed's mother, **Chana Gromis, Chana bat Moshe Yehudah HaCohen a"h**, whose yahrtzeit is on the 7th of Shevat

Happy Anniversary
 Jaime & Marilyn
 Sohacheski

Yahrtzeits

Isadore Bernstein
 Yecheil ben Yitzhak v' Etta z"l
 Father of
Barbara Bernstein
 Yahrtzeit - 25 Tevet

Sydney Weston z"l
 Father of
Richard Weston
 Yahrtzeit - 29 Tevet

Muriel Azouz
 Hanna bat Sulman Dellal a"h
 Mother of
David Azouz
 Yahrtzeit - 27 Tevet

Sherman Broidy
 Shaya Getzel z"l
 Father of
Elliott Broidy
 Yahrtzeit - 2 Shevat

Florence Presser
 Feige Neshe bat Binyomin
 Hacohen a"h
 Mother of
Marilyn Sohacheski
 Yahrtzeit - 27 Tevet

Albert Azouz
 Abraham ben Isaac z"l
 Father of
David Azouz
 Yahrtzeit - 2 Shevat

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For more info contact Rabbi Perlstein - office@yinhb.org

TARGET PRACTICE

January 8th, 2024 at 6pm

Location is in the San Fernando Valley and address will be given upon confirmation of RSVP.



Only for those with prior gun experience.



\$100 per person includes ammunition, targets, and gun lane. Gun rentals are available for an extra charge

REGISTER AT

www.yinhb.org/targetpractice



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PRESENTS

SATURDAY

NIGHT

LIVE

13
JANUARY



A Magical Evening of Mitzvot!

**Create special gifts and letters for soldiers & children of
displaced families in Israel.**

6:30 PM

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SOLIDARITY TRIP TO ISRAEL



3 DAY MISSION

TUESDAY JANUARY 23- THURSDAY JANUARY 25

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

Dedication ceremony of YINBH Nahal Haredi apartment

Visit wounded IDF soldiers
in the hospital, with gifts

Visit kibbutzim affected by
the October 7th massacres

Host a BBQ for soldiers
at an army base

Meet with released
hostages and their families

Volunteer with packing and
distributing essential needs

Meet with government
officials & dignitaries

COST: \$1200 PER PERSON

PARTICIPANTS WILL ARRANGE THEIR OWN TRAVEL
TO ISRAEL, LODGING & TRAVEL INSURANCE.

Includes transportation within
Israel, security, site visits, support
staff & meals.

FOR MORE INFO & REGISTRATION:

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Questions? Email carly@yinhb.org or call the office on (310) 276-7650