

# Tefilla Notebook

9 Elul • Ki Tetze

August 25-26, 2023

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

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Dear Members and Friends,

Recently, I started to listen to a series of podcasts called "The Rest is History," featuring British historians Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook. No stone is left unturned, and no fact is left unexplored, as they survey, with the lightest of touches and a generous helping of ribald humor, the vast span of history – tackling everything from the mainstream to the totally ridiculous, as well as historical episodes that shape our lives today.

Podcast topics include: "the origins of humanity, the Roman emperors, the French Revolution, the top ten eunuchs in history, the Watergate scandal, even the roots of the Marvel superhero films." Before listening to these podcasts, I had never heard of the last emperor of Brazil, or of the Nika riots against Emperor Justinian, nor had I heard about the Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio, who precipitated Benito Mussolini's fascism. Simply put, "The Rest is History" is the true definition of "edutainment" – which, of course, is why I like it.

A recent podcast, about New York in the summer of 1977, was an absolute eye opener. Using the citywide blackout of July 13-14 as their foundation, Holland and Sandbrook revealed that New York in 1977 was on its knees: totally bankrupt, rife with corruption from top to bottom, socially broke, and imploding in every possible way. What I like so much about their podcasts is this: aside from solid historical facts, they pepper the dialogue with vignettes and digressions that are totally captivating – and the New York one is no exception, not least the story involving beer bottle-throwing cops!

Many of the podcasts cover topics well outside my realm of historical knowledge, which is great. Occasionally, however, a podcast covers a familiar topic. Listening to these two knowledgeable historians banter on a topic I know well offers me an opportunity to refresh my knowledge. Although, when I hear such a podcast, I certainly don't expect to learn anything I don't already know. So imagine my surprise when listening to their podcast about the Jewish Revolt against the Romans, to hear a detail I had never come across before.

On July 18 in the year 64 C.E., a fire broke out in a shopping district in Rome, and before it could be contained, strong winds spread the fire throughout the city. Out of Rome's 14 districts, only 4 remained completely untouched, 3 were completely destroyed, and 7 suffered serious damage. Estimates of the number of homes, buildings, and structures destroyed are not exact, but the damage was overwhelming, with tens of thousands of the city's residents rendered homeless. Inevitably, poor leadership was spotlighted as the primary cause for the disaster's enormity, and in particular, Emperor Nero faced accusations of negligence, and heartless indifference – although the myth that he fiddled while the city burned is just that, a myth.

Clearly, though, the widespread criticism struck a chord, and Nero was determined to rebuild Rome into the foremost city of the known world – if only to convince his detractors that he cared. Except that construction costs real money, and Rome's coffers were in no position to fund a major rebuilding program. And so, Nero decided to send tax collectors to every region of the empire to raise money for Rome's reconstruction. One of those places was the province of Judaea, well-known for the opulent wealth of its central shrine, the Jerusalem Temple, to which Jews from across the empire gave an annual tithe, as well as countless other gifts.

Soon after the fire subsided, Nero dispatched his good friend Gessius Florus to be the procurator in Judaea, so that he could raise money to rebuild Rome. According to Josephus, "this Florus was so wicked and so violent in the use of his authority," that the Jews of Judaea yearned for his predecessor Luceius Albinus, whose rule had itself been marred by problems and difficulties. Florus' unrepressed hostility to Jews and the Jewish faith, and his

unquenchable thirst for money by any means at his disposal, soon raised tensions, which then escalated to a fever pitch when Florus helped himself to 17 talents of gold from the Temple treasury – equivalent to \$28,500,000 in today's value.

The local population began to publicly disparage the procurator, which prompted him to have Jewish leaders arrested and publicly crucified. This only inflamed tensions further, and a rebellion erupted. Within days, insurgents had overrun the main Roman garrison in Jerusalem, prompting the pro-Roman Jewish king Herod Agrippa II and Roman officials to flee. Cestius Gallus, the Syrian legate, decided to intervene, and sent in the Syrian Legion XII Fulminata together with auxiliary forces. Although they initially captured Jaffa, the Roman army ultimately suffered a major defeat at the Battle of Beth Horon, where 6,000 Romans were killed and the Legion's prized eagle standard was lost. By this time Jerusalem was totally under the control of extremist rebels, who battered down the hatches and decided to fight Rome to the death. Things spiraled out of control, and Nero dispatched his best general, Vespasian, to crush the revolt.

The battle between Vespasian and his son Titus on one side, and fanatical Jewish militants on the other, endlessly accelerated until the Romans finally ransacked Jerusalem and obliterated the Temple, thereby relegating Judaea to the margins of relevance in the Roman Empire. Judaea was shattered, and the whole area would struggle economically as well as battle invaders of every color and stripe for almost two millennia, only reemerging from its depressed state with the establishment of Israel in the twentieth century.

What I learned from Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook was a tiny factoid that I'd previously missed – despite having intensively studied this era of history in general, and the Jewish Revolt in particular: that the destruction of Jerusalem came about as an indirect result of the Great Fire of Rome. Had Nero not sent to Gessius Florus to milk money out of the citizens of Judaea – things might have turned out very differently. As John Locke warned, "Beware the danger of unintended consequences." The trajectory of life and history is unpredictably random, and the end results may be way off one's initial expectations. Seemingly insignificant aspects of an event that may seem marginal at the time take center stage, and before you know it – you are somewhere you didn't expect to be.

Parshat Ki Teitzei begins with three short passages which seem to be unconnected. The first passage deals with a soldier who falls in love with a girl from the enemy nation during a war; the Torah offers guidance as to how such a girl might become the soldier's wife. The second passage addresses the vexed situation of a man with two wives, one of whom has become his favorite, causing untold domestic problems. The third passage tackles the problem of a wayward child, whose behavior has become totally unmanageable for his parents and even a danger to society – the Torah prescribes the death penalty. The Talmud describes this latter scenario as something that never happened, and that never will. Truthfully, the first two scenarios are considered equally unlikely, which prompts the question – why does the Torah present us with this sequence of three?

My late teacher, Rabbi Zev Cohen of Gateshead Yeshiva (1927-2009), would cite the great teachers of Jewish ethics, who suggested that the Torah here is giving us a lesson in unintended consequences. An unsuitable girl married under duress can give rise to domestic problems, which in turn will lead to a crisis with your children. What seemed like it was heading in one direction – namely, a lifelong relationship of devoted love with the spoils of war – can end up destroying everything of value in your life, and worse. It's the same lesson that Nero might well have heeded after the Great Fire of Rome – the danger of unintended consequences.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom, and a great week ahead,

Rabbi Pini Dunner



## FRIDAY, AUGUST 25

7:10pm CANDLELIGHTING  
6:30pm KABBALAT SHABBAT

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 26

8:30 am GEMARA SHIUR  
9:15 am SHACHARIT  
6:50 pm PIRKEI AVOT SHIUR  
7:15 pm MINCHA  
8:05 pm MAARIV  
8:06 pm SHABBAT ENDS

## WEEKDAY DAVENING

Sun	8:00am	7:15pm
Mon- Thurs	7:00am	7:15pm
Fri	7:00am	6:30pm

Thank you to **Sam and Sue Varon** for sponsoring this week's Kiddush in memory of Sue's mother, **Helen Fixler, Henna bat Chaim a"h**, whose 5th yahrtzeit is on the 9th of Elul

# Let's Talk Sisterhood

with Gina Raphael & Maryjo Schnitzer

**Come to our special pre-New Year evening of inspiration and challah braiding for teens and women of all ages.**

Featuring special guest hosts "**The Sephardic Spice Girls**" and Jewish Children's Author **Sarah Sassoon**.

**Sign up** now, space is limited

Tickets not sold at door.

Thursday August 31st, 5-7pm

**Register at [yinh.org/challah](http://yinh.org/challah)**

Thank you to sponsors

**Gina Raphael & Kateryna Lastenko**



**Join** us for the book launch of **Hearts & Minds II** on September 7th with special guest **Ruth Wasserman Lande**, former MK and News Correspondent.

We are so grateful to **WIZO**, The Women's International Zionist Organization, for partnering with us.

**Register at [yinh.org/booklaunch](http://yinh.org/booklaunch)**

## Happy Anniversary

Shawney & Richard Fine  
Michael & Margaret Bayer  
Stuart & Fran Miller  
Mark & Deborah Goldenberg

## Mazal Tov

Mazal Tov to **Avital Szulc and Jonathan Garshofsky** on the birth of

**Emmanuelle Clara**

Sister to **Leo Garshofsky**.



Mazal Tov to Grandparents **Judith & Larry Garshofsky** and **Teri Szulc** and to Great Grandmother **Shirley Sweetbaum**.

## Yahrtzeits

**Yael Hodara**

Yael bat Avraham a"h

Mother of

**Patrick Hodara**

Yahrtzeit - 9 Elul

**Helena Fixler**

Henna bat Chaim a"h

Mother of

**Sue Varon**

Yahrtzeit - 9 Elul

**Anne Samson**

Rochel Rivkah bat Matisyahu

Ha'cohen a"h

Wife of

**Lee Samson**

Yahrtzeit - 11 Elul

**Anne Marder z"l**

Mother of

**Faye Kellerman**

Yahrtzeit - 13 Elul

**Joseph Dunst**

Yosef Dovid ben Yaakov

Shlomo z"l

Husband of

**Georgette Dunst**

Father of

**Sol Dunst**

Yahrtzeit - 14 Elul

**Sylvia Glatter**

Zelda bat Leah a"h

Mother of

**Lillian Fuchs**

Grandmother of

**Jason Fuchs**

Yahrtzeit - 14 Elul

*Welcome  
New Members*

**David & Sylvie Czinn  
& Family**

**Reminder to take your  
personal items from the  
coat closet by  
September 8th**

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**NATHANIEL BROIDY**

**JEFFREY GOLDEN**

**MANYA BEIER**

**EMIL KESTENBAUM**

**HARRISON KESTENBAUM**

**MARK GOLDENBERG**

**ILANA KELLERMAN**

**ALIZA KELLERMAN**

**SARAH MATANKY**

**JESSE KELLERMAN**

**SILVIE CZINN**

**DAVID CZINN**

Mazal Tov to **Ella Belzberg** and **Benjamin Stuart Thompson** on the engagement of their daughter, **Deborah**, to **Ariel**, son of **Rosalind Carter Wertheim** and **William Wertheim**. May their wedding be held in a good and auspicious hour, and may they build a bayit ne'eman b'Yisrael.

## Thank You

**Aaron & Lillian Fuchs** and **Jason Fuchs** for sponsoring next week's Parsha Shiur in memory of Lillian's mother and Jason's grandmother, **Sylvia Glatter, Zelda bat Leah a"h**, whose yahrtzeit is on the 14th of Elul



יין YINBH  
SISTERHOOD

# Challah Braiding

THURSDAY, AUGUST 31ST

5:00-7:00PM

Challah braiding with inspiration for the new year.  
Teens & Women of all ages welcome!  
Light Refreshments served.

## FEATURING

Sharon Gomperts &  
Rachel Emquies Sheff,  
The Sephardic Spice Girls

## WITH SPECIAL GUEST

Sarah Sassoon,  
Author of "Shoham's Bangle"



Register at [yinbh.org/challah](http://yinbh.org/challah)

\$54 per person • \$18 under 25 • Sponsorships start at \$180



SHARSHERET  
The Jewish Breast & Ovarian Cancer Community



# COMING TO YINBH ON SEPTEMBER 9TH SATURDAY NIGHT FERVOR

MUSICAL KUMZITS AND SELICHOT



YINBH presents  
SATURDAY NIGHT FERVOR

MOTZEI SHABBAT KUMZITS AND SELICHOT  
starring RABBI PINI DUNNER, with RABBI ARYEH PERLSTEIN.

Featuring YOU!

Produced by THE STAFF OF YINBH.

Join us for an inspiring kumzits at 9:30pm followed by a  
soulful musical Selichot service.



KIDS CLUB  
יין YINBH  
BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE

HIGH HOLIDAYS 2023

MEET REBBETZIN MUSHKY  
"I'm so excited to meet  
you all and celebrate  
the Chagim in a fun and  
exciting way!"

Join Me At:  
Circle Time  
With Mushky  
For Toddlers  
10:00 AM



KID-DESIGNED SERVICE

Parents Invited to Join  
(Coffee Bar + Treats Served)

MEET RABBI ARYEH  
"Kick-off the new  
year with a  
memorable service  
designed for kids!"

Join Me At:  
Mini-yan  
For The Big  
Kids  
10:00 AM

KIDS CLUB  
יין YINBH  
BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE



SOFT PLAY



AMAZING KID COMPANY



LEGO PARTY



BUBBLEMANIA

### ENTERTAINMENT & ACTIVITIES

Children of all ages will enjoy a full schedule of  
activities, shows and games.

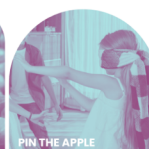
Additional Shows/Vendors:

SportBall - Hey Hey Magic & Puppet Show  
Master Cesar Karate

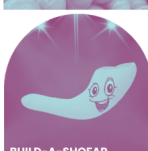
KIDS CLUB  
יין YINBH  
BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE



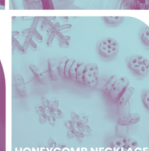
APPLE TASTE TEST



PIN THE APPLE



BUILD-A-SHOFAR



HONEYCOMB NECKLACES

### ROSH HASHANA STATION GAMES

Guided by our teen counselors, children will have a blast  
playing a variety of holiday themed carnival games.

+ More games & Raffles!

## Membership Renewal 5784

All current members are invited to renew  
their membership for the upcoming year  
5784. Please visit [yinbh.org/renewal](http://yinbh.org/renewal). You  
can also call the office at 310-276-7650 or  
email [office@yinbh.org](mailto:office@yinbh.org).

Once you renew your membership, you  
can...



Reserve your **High Holiday Seats**  
at [yinbh.org/seats](http://yinbh.org/seats). Please Reserve  
by September 8th.



Order your **Arba Minim** directly  
from the shul. Please order by  
September 21st. Order online at  
[yinbh.org/arbaminim](http://yinbh.org/arbaminim)



Place names in the **Yizkor Booklet**.  
Please submit by September 11th.  
Sign up at [yinbh.org/yizkor](http://yinbh.org/yizkor)



Sign up your children or  
grandchildren for **Kids Club**  
during High Holiday Services.  
Sign up at [yinbh.org/kidsclub](http://yinbh.org/kidsclub).

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO  
HAS ALREADY RENEWED THEIR  
MEMBERSHIP FOR 5784



# BOOK *Launch*

with

**Rabbi Pini Dunner**



**Thursday  
7 September 2023**

**6:30pm** – Cheese & Wine Reception

**7:30pm** – Book Launch Q&A:

Rabbi Dunner with Ruth Wasserman Lande



*Special Guest*

**Ruth Wasserman  
Lande**

Former MK & i24 news commentator



\$54 per person including a signed  
copy of Rabbi Dunner's New Book

Register at

**[www.yinbh.org/booklaunch](http://www.yinbh.org/booklaunch)**

This event is being graciously sponsored by

**Bob Zeller & Nadine Gerson**

