

Tefilla Notebook

This week's Tefilla Notebook is sponsored by **Dr. William Levin** and **Diana Hirt** in memory of their mother, **Lillian Levin, Leah bat Elchanan a"h** whose yahrtzeit is on the 27th of Cheshvan

27 Cheshvan • Chayei Sara • Birkat Hachodesh

November 10-11, 2023

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

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Dear Members and Friends,

This week, Israel entered the second month since the October 7th massacre that wreaked havoc in Southern Israel, leaving 1400 people dead, 240 kidnapped, and thousands more injured, all at the hands of brutal hordes of Iran-trained Qatar-funded Hamas terrorists. Israelis and Jews across the world have barely had time to process this devastating event.

At the Shloshim event held at our shul to mark the one-month anniversary of the worst pogrom in living memory, I focused on this exact problem. Has any one of us had time to grieve, I asked? Has any one of us truly had time to reflect on the barbaric torture and murder of 1400 innocent lives, and then the evil desecration of their bodies? Has any one of us had time to absorb the pain of their loss? Who in Israel, or anywhere in the Jewish world, has had even one moment to catch their breath during the past month?

We have endured and continue to endure body-blow after body-blow – and we are not even allowed to talk about it. Conventional “wisdom” has it that we, the Jewish people, are not a persecuted minority. Which means that when we are attacked and killed, in a pogrom so massive that it is hard to comprehend – we cannot grieve, we cannot complain, and we cannot protest. On the contrary – we are called the aggressor. And by we, I don’t mean Israel or Israelis – I mean Jews. Yes, all Jews, in every country around the globe, is guilty by association for being in pain at the loss of so many of our loved ones.

Meanwhile, a mere month since the brazen incursion by Hamas, Israel and its people are navigating adversity so intense, it is hard to fathom. The nation is in the midst of an escalating conflict in Gaza, with no resolution in sight, and a climbing death toll of Israeli soldiers battling to take control of Gaza. Rocket barrages are the norm, and everyone is still in a state of shock from the haunting events of October 7th.

Earlier this week, a Jerusalem Post article listed Israel’s five most formidable challenges. Firstly, it appears that international diplomatic support is ebbing. In the immediate aftermath of the Hamas attack, global leaders were vocal in their solidarity with Israel. But as Israel’s response has proceeded, first with airstrikes, and more recently with the ground incursion into Gaza, Gazan civilian casualties have mounted, and the chorus of international support has dimmed. Even steadfast supporters, such as US President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken, have called for “humanitarian pauses,” and other friends of Israel have gone further, calling for a ceasefire, notwithstanding Israel’s rightful determination to root out Hamas from its doorstep.

Secondly, antisemitism is surging with an almost unprecedented virulence. In the wake of Israel’s justified response to the war started by Hamas, antisemitic incidents have soared dramatically, manifesting in both physical attacks and an alarming proliferation of online vitriol. Rallies against Israel are at fever pitch, and on college campuses the vitriol is at record levels. Jewish students are frightened to display their Jewish identity or affinity with Israel, and in neighborhoods across the world, Jews have removed their mezuzot from front doors so as not to reveal they are Jewish.

Thirdly, the specter of collective trauma looms large. Studies indicate escalating PTSD diagnoses among Israeli children and a general decline in resilience across the population, all of which is exacerbated by the previous conflicts and ongoing rocket attacks, and of course the lingering pall of the

pandemic. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have been displaced from their homes near the Gaza border and on the northern border, and the impact on family life and communities is devastating.

Fourthly, an economic downturn threatens. Israel’s economy is teetering on the brink of recession, exacerbated by the continued conflict and the mobilization of a vast swathe of the workforce into military service. No tourists are visiting, and all airlines besides for El Al have stopped flying to Israel. The impact, yet to be felt fully, is expected to be devastating.

And lastly, but by far the most worrying of all, Israel finds itself enmeshed in a seemingly interminable war. Defense strategies and the quest for a decisive end to the threat from Hamas are mired in complexity, with concerns over the length of time the war will take, the humanitarian impact of prolonged military engagement, and the uncertain aftermath of the planned destruction of Hamas.

As Israel confronts these challenges, the question that looms large is this: How will the nation navigate these multiple crises, all going on at once, and what will be the long-term impact on Israeli society and on the position of Jews across the globe?

There is a curious Midrash about the Talmudic sage, Rabbi Akiva. He was once lecturing to his students, and he noticed them nodding off. In an attempt to wake them up, he posed an intriguing question: Why did Queen Esther of Purim fame rule over 127 provinces? This rather odd inquiry piqued his students’ curiosity, and they woke up. The answer, said Rabbi Akiva, no doubt with a twinkle in his eye, lies in the lifespan of our matriarch Sarah, as revealed to us in Parshat Chayei Sarah. Sarah lived for 127 years, and that was why Queen Esther ruled over 127 provinces.

This strange Midrashic narrative raises various questions, not least of which is this one: why specify that Rabbi Akiva’s students were sleeping as an introduction to this homily? While it might offer solace to educators to know that classroom drowsiness is not a modern dilemma, it seems irrelevant to the homily itself. And what was it about Rabbi Akiva’s inquiry that so captivated his audience?

Perhaps the answer is that Rabbi Akiva lived and taught during the dreadful era after the destruction of the Second Jerusalem Temple, when the Jewish people were gripped by fear for the future, amidst some of the most challenging problems ever faced by the nation. It was a period marked not just by physical lethargy but by a profound spiritual exhaustion. Esther, whose name signifies the divine concealment of “hester panim,” also lived at a time when God’s presence was obscured, and yet she ascended to rule an empire. And her success is attributed by Rabbi Akiva to the enduring legacy of Sarah, whose spiritual fortitude safeguarded her descendants from oblivion.

Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Alter, author of the seminal Chiddushei HaRim commentary, reveals that Rabbi Akiva’s message to his pupils was one of hope and resilience: despite the darkness of their days, they had nothing to fear, as they would be sustained by the enduring strength of their ancestors. They, too, possessed the potential for greatness. And this is precisely the message that we must carry with us at this very difficult moment: as descendants of spiritual giants, we have within us the tenacity to surmount the daunting challenges of our times, ensuring that the legacy of the past propels us forward toward future triumphs.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Pini Dunner



FRIDAY, NOV 10

4:35 PM CANDLELIGHTING
4:40 PM KABBALAT SHABBAT

SATURDAY, NOV 11

8:30 AM GEMARA SHIUR
9:15 AM SHACHARIT
4:40PM MINCHA
5:30 PM MAARIV
5:32 PM SHABBAT ENDS

WEEKDAY DAVENING

Sun	8:00am	4:40pm
Mon- Thur	7:00am	4:40pm
Fri	7:00am	4:35pm

Rosh Chodesh Kislev is on Tuesday

MAZAL TOV

Yoni Samson on his engagement to **Ayala Bodenheim**. Mazal Tov to parents **Dani & Rivkie Samson, Deborah & Edward Jutkowitz** and **Dovid Bodenheim**. Mazal Tov to Grandparents **Lee Samson, Harriet Berger**, and **Dov & Marilyn Wolowitz**

Let's Talk Sisterhood

with Gina Raphael & Maryjo Schnitzer

Let's remember the words of Rabbi Sacks: "Love is stronger than hate; freedom more powerful than its enemies; and the human spirit too resilient to be intimidated for long."



Let's also continue to support our brothers and sisters in Eretz Israel.

Am Yisrael Chai

Yahrtzeits

Lillian Levin

Leah bat Elchanan a"h

Mother of

Dr. William Levin

Diana Hirt

Yahrtzeit - 27 Cheshvan

Lois Hirt

Aliza bat Gershon a"h

Mother of

Kerri Suissa

Randy Hirt

Michael Hirt

Yahrtzeit - 2 Kislev

Hilda Eisen

Hinda bat Avraham a"h

Mother of

Fran Miller

Yahrtzeit - 4 Kislev

Peggy Einfeld

Pearl bat Yona a"h

Grandmother of

Carly Einfeld

Yahrtzeit - 3 Kislev

Helen Deutsch

Ruchel Leah bat Yitzchak

Isaac a"h

Mother of

Galina Samuel

Yahrtzeit - 4 Kislev

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

MICHAEL WEINER

STEVEN MARKOWITZ

ELI DUNNER

JULIAN MOSTADIM

MAGGIE BAYER

JOSEPH SCHLESINGER

RITA CARLA GLASTEIN

JASON LEVIN

NOAH ZELIGMAN

FULFILL YOUR PLEDGE TO ISRAEL

We have raised a lot of money for Israel causes over the last few weeks. As the money comes in, we send it out to the organizations who are expecting it.

If you made a pledge, we counted that pledge and the organizations are expecting that money. We can only send what we receive so please fulfill your pledges so we can fulfill ours.

We are continually raising money for Israel and you can donate directly at yinhb.org/israel

Cards & Letters for Israeli Soldiers



Our shipment of letters and cards have been sent to Israel to, Never Alone **לעולם לא לבד**, to distribute to Israeli soldiers on active duty.

If you would still like to drop off letters, please either drop them in our mailbox, or come during office hours, 9-5 Monday thru Friday.

Thank you to the schools who have already sent us letters written by their students: Yeshivah Ohr Eliyahu, Temple Israel of Hollywood Religious School, Chabad of Bel Air Religious School, and Bais Yaakov. And thank you to the many individuals who have written cards and dropped them off at the shul. Your kindness and personal support for the IDF soldiers means so much to them.

9261 Alden Drive, Beverly Hills, 90210

Happy Anniversary

George & Irina Schaeffer

Paul Feder z"l Gemara Shiur

לע"נ פנחס אליהו בן שמשון הלוי

Join Rabbi Dunner for his Gemara Shiur on Shabbat

45 minutes before Shacharit

HACHNASAT ORCHIM

In an effort to continue to make our shul a warm and welcoming environment, we ask that all our congregants introduce themselves to at least one new person this shabbat.



YINBH
BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE

SUPPORT ISRAEL

As soon as the news hit over Shemini Atzeret about the Hamas massacre in Southern Israel, our community swung into action and has donated countless hours and resources to ensuring that IDF soldiers and displaced communities are taken care of, and all their needs addressed. We have already raised significant funds of money to be distributed in Israel and we urge you to continue supporting our fundraising efforts.

Please use the link below to make a donation to help Israel at this difficult time. Please be generous with your support. Every dollar raised will be used to fund the critical needs of the communities that were decimated by Hamas terrorists during the massacre. Each recipient will be personally vetted by Rabbi Dunner to ensure that every dollar gets to where it is most needed.



DONATE NOW

WWW.YINBH.ORG/ISRAEL

You can also mail checks to
9261 Alden Drive, Beverly Hills, 90210

☎ 310-276-7650 ✉ office@yinhb.org 🌐 www.yinhb.org

Show your support for Israel
with an Israeli Flag

Big 3 x 5 flags - \$8.00/flag
Small for car - \$3/piece

T-shirts with Flag Of Israel - \$6.00

Special order T-shirts

S-XL \$5, 2XL & 3 XL is \$7

send logo & design

5 days turn around time for custom items

Yossi Behal – 818-968-9660

Offprice2015@yahoo.com

YINBH
SISTERHOOD



CHANUKAH KIDDUSH LUNCHEON

This event is sponsored by Gina Raphael & Jeff Gross in memory of Gina Raphael's Father Sheldon Robert Raphael Zalman Yehudah ben Tzvi z"l on his 25th yahrtzeit.

**SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 9TH
2ND DAY OF
CHANUKAH**

**FREE FOR MEMBERS
\$54 FOR NON MEMBERS**

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

Photos from this past Sunday's Shloshim Event at our Synagogue
You can watch the full video on our Youtube channel
youtube.com/BeverlyHillsSynagogue



Photo Credit: Barry Novack