

Tefilla Notebook

22 Adar I • Ki Tisa

March 1-2, 2024

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Dearest Members & Friends,

In our ever-expanding world of technology and innovation, a relentless battle persists between the Goliaths of the tech industry and their David-like rivals, each determined to carve out their niche in this lucrative marketplace. The competition is always cutthroat and ruthless, with both sides intent on outsmarting one another to gain an advantage. But here's

the crux: while the Goliaths aim to obliterate the Davids, the Davids seek merely to survive and flourish. This is why Goliaths often insist that they are, in fact, Davids, even when the evidence suggests they are poised to obliterate their challengers and cast them into oblivion.

In the ancient biblical story from the Book of Samuel (1 Sam. 17), the Philistine giant Goliath's death at the hands of David did not rid Israel of the Philistines. Contrary to being weakened, the Philistines remained a formidable force in the region. Goliath's fall did not spell the end for the Philistines; they continued to be a significant enemy to the Israelites for centuries. David's victory was a moment of triumph, but the Philistine threat lingered, a persistent barbed thorn in Israel's side.

So it is in the technology world. Google, with its vast empire of data and digital dominance, stands out as the quintessential Goliath. Yet, in its confrontations with various technological Davids, Google portrays itself as the disadvantaged David, vulnerable to the hostilities of competitors. To some extent, they are right, not because their dominance is at risk, but because their refusal to allow smaller operators room to maneuver generates tactical disadvantages for Google. After all, if Google is aiming to destroy you, what have you got to lose by going all in?

British-Canadian journalist and author, Malcolm Gladwell, once noted that "Giants are not what we think they are – the same qualities that appear to give them strength are often the sources of great weakness." A prime example of this dynamic is the prolonged conflict between Google and Qwant, a privacy-focused European search engine that champions user privacy. This battle, seemingly lopsided, highlights the paradox. Qwant is perceived as ethical and agile, and is unburdened by bureaucratic layers, which initially positioned Google, the search engine behemoth, as the underdog in the fight, struggling against a tide of privacy-conscious Davids. However, this perception was a carefully crafted illusion by Google's PR machinery.

And this dynamic of the perceived underdog versus the ostensible giant is not exclusive to the digital realm. A similar paradox is evident on the global stage, most notably in the enduring conflict between Israel and those who wish to see it destroyed. Israel is a true David – a tiny country smaller than the state of New Jersey, founded in 1948 by indigenous Jews whose one common denominator was abject poverty, along with traumatized Holocaust survivors and immigrant refugees who had been summarily expelled from countries in the Middles East and North Africa.

Since its inception Israel has been surrounded and hounded by relentless adversaries, both local and international, with the vast majority of countries taking endless glee in condemning Israel at the United Nations, making Israel the most vilified country at the UN – exponentially more than North Korea, Iran, Libya, Syria, China, and Myanmar, whose human rights abuses are all off the charts. And yet, Israel is invariably cast in the role of Goliath by its enemies – seemingly because it is determined to win the battles against those who proudly proclaim that they wish to see Israel wiped off the face of the earth. And while David may win the day, the evil Goliath Israel-haters remain in place, ready to pounce anytime they sense a vulnerability or opening.

Just as Google's dominance in the tech sphere belies the vulnerabilities it claims in facing upstarts like Qwant, so too does the depiction of Israel as an overpowering Goliath mask its inherent David-like challenges. Despite its technological advancements and military capabilities, Israel remains

susceptible to being overrun and overwhelmed, which is why Israel is constantly seeking peace and security in a region that is marked by volatility and hostility. Israel's achievements in innovation, defense, and democracy are evidence of its resilience and determination to thrive against the odds, much like the smaller tech companies striving for a foothold in markets dominated by giants. But in the end, Israel is a plucky survivor living on the edge – a David with a meager sling rather than a mighty Goliath with every possible advantage.

The international narrative sympathizes with the Palestinian cause, framing it as a struggle of a persecuted David pitted against the Israeli Goliath. But truthfully, this oversimplified narrative ignores the complex reality of widespread support for the Palestinian position from numerous countries and international bodies, effectively reversing the roles in the battle of hearts and minds. The situation is further complicated by the tactics employed, where the perception of power does not always align with the reality of geopolitical dynamics and the historical context of the region.

In the final analysis, whether it is in the sphere of technology or international relations, the true nature of Davids and Goliaths are often obscured by narratives that oversimplify complex subtleties. The story of Israel is one of defying the odds, leveraging ingenuity and resilience in the face of challenges that belie size or capabilities.

During the darkest days of World War II, Winston Churchill, the indomitable British Prime Minister, traveled to Ottawa, Canada, to address its Parliament. It was December 30, 1941, a time when the outcome of the war was far from certain, and Britain stood defiantly against the Axis powers, almost entirely alone. In his speech, Churchill referenced a dismissive remark made by French generals in the early days of the war, suggesting that Britain would have its "neck wrung like a chicken" within three weeks of fighting alone against the Nazis. Churchill's response to this prediction was both defiant and humorous – smiling, he told the Canadian lawmakers: "Some chicken! Some neck!" His retort not only mocked the underestimation of Britain's resilience, but also rallied diminished spirits by highlighting Britain's unexpected strength and tenacity in the face of overwhelming odds. Britain may be a David, but no Goliath was going to take them down.

The Haftarah for Parashat Ki Tisa focuses on the Jewish prophet Elijah, and his determination to disprove the power and existence of the false gods, Baal and Asherah. It is a David and Goliath story. Elijah faces down the overwhelming might of the prophets of Baal, who were backed by the formidable King Ahab. This narrative, set on the dramatic stage of Mount Carmel, sees Elijah undeterred by the numerical and political dominance of his adversaries, challenging them to a divine test. And despite the odds stacked against him, Elijah's unwavering belief in the power of God becomes his sling and stone against the Goliath-like force of his opponents. The subsequent miraculous fire from heaven, consuming Elijah's water-drenched offering, unequivocally demonstrates the supremacy of God, echoing the triumph of faith and divine justice over might and numbers.

So too Israel, in its ongoing struggle amidst the international currents favoring the Palestinian cause, reflects the enduring spirit of Elijah. Facing a world that unquestioningly supports the Palestinians, even after the horrors of October 7th and the overwhelming evidence of the monstrous use of tunnels and human shields by Hamas, Israel's situation mirrors Elijah's solitary stand against the prophets of Baal – relying not on might, but on the justice of its cause and a profound faith in divine guidance. Israel's journey, much like Elijah's, highlights the strength found in conviction and the pursuit of peace, and the profound impact of standing for what is just and true, even when faced with seemingly insurmountable opposition.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom and a great week ahead,
Rabbi Pini Dunner



FRIDAY, MARCH 1st

5:32 PM CANDLELIGHTING
5:35 PM KABBALAT SHABBAT

SATURDAY, March 2nd

8:30 AM GEMARA SHIUR
9:15 AM SHACHARIT
5:35 PM MINCHA
6:25 PM MAARIV
6:29 PM SHABBAT ENDS

WEEKDAY DAVENING

Sun	8:00am	5:35pm
Mon-Thur	7:00am	5:35pm
Fri	7:00am	5:40pm

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HOME NOW**

THANK YOU

This week's kiddush is sponsored by **Moshe & Helen Sassover and family** in gratitude for the birth of their grandson, **Emanuel Naftali (Emanuel Arthur)** and in memory of the 2nd yahrtzeit of Moshe's beloved father, **Emil Sassover z"l**

Yahrtzeits

Emil Sassover

Emmanuel ben Yona HaLevi z"l
Father of
Moshe Sassover
Yahrtzeit - 23 Adar

Eva Singer

Bluma bat Chaim Yehuda
a"h
Sister of
George Fischmann
Yahrtzeit - 28 Adar

Benjamin Varon

Benzion ben Shmuel z"l
Father of
Samuel Varon
Yahrtzeit - 25 Adar

Philippe Anzel

Chaim ben Charles z"l
Brother of
Brigitte Silkin
Yahrtzeit - 28 Adar

Raymond Mann Fine

Rachmiel ben Shmuel z"l
Father of
Richard Fine
Yahrtzeit - 26 Adar

Avraham Elhiani

Avraham ben Masoud z"l
Father of
Simon Elhiani
Yahrtzeit - 28 Adar

Katarina de Widder

Chaia Pearl Esther bat
Menachem Mendel a"h
Mother of
George Fischmann
Yahrtzeit - 27 Adar

Samuel Hodara

Shmuel ben Baruch z"l
Father of
Patrick Hodara
Yahrtzeit - 28 Adar

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Adina Sadeghi

Adiela Sadeghi

Ben Neydavood

Samantha Weiner

Bob Zeller

Jason Fuchs

Jamie Spencer

Sean Cohen

Rena Perl

Raphy Nissel

Happy Anniversary

30th
ANNIVERSARY

Aaron & Lillian Fuchs

Marty & Eva Feldberg



RabbisUNITED, the rabbinic division of StandWithUs, gathered for a 2-day conference at YINBH this past Sunday and Monday. Over 40 rabbis of all denominations from across the US heard from SWU professionals about fighting antisemitism, legal experts about defending Jews who suffer discrimination on campus or in K-12 schools, and received live briefings from military officials in Israel.



On Monday afternoon, **Rabbi Dunner** and his colleagues from RabbisUNITED protested outside Qatar's consulate on S Rodeo Drive, along with other concerned members of the local community. Protesters heard from Rabbi Abraham Cooper of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Council Member **John Mirisch**, and StandWithUs founder and CEO **Roz Rothstein**. The protest was covered by FOX11 and NBC News.



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Ruth Brandt	William Levin
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Hart & Debbie Cohen	Vera Markowitz
Victor & Jacqueline Cohenca	Start & Fran Miller
Steve & Vivian Dorfman	Barry Novack & Annie Baum
Rabbi Pini & Sabine Dunner	Howard & Judy Raykoff
Marty & Eva Feldberg	Faramarz & Sheilagh Sadeghi
Adam & Debby Fenner	Lee Samson
Richard & Shawney Fine	George & Irina Schaeffer
Harry Finkel	Arnold & Sheri Schlesinger
James & Debby Fogelman	Adam & Jesse Shaked
Aaron & Lillian Fuchs	Jaime & Marilyn Sohacheski
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SOLIDARITY TRIP TO ISRAEL
FRIDAY JUNE 21 - WEDNESDAY JUNE 26

Following the success and profound impact of our January YINBH Israel Mission, we are delighted to unveil our forthcoming trip, centering on supporting our brothers and sisters move forward. This extraordinary opportunity will feature esteemed speakers, meetings, insightful visits and memorable experiences.

Trip **includes** accommodations at the **Inbal Hotel**, airport transfers, transportation within Israel, security, site visits, support staff & all meals.
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SUNDAY MARCH 24, 2024 • 4 PM

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