

# Tefilla Notebook

6 Adar II • Pekudei

March 15-16, 2024

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



Dearest Members & Friends,

This week, conservative pundit Ben Shapiro got caught up in a controversy over remarks he made on his show in which he suggested scrapping retirement. "It's insane that we haven't raised the retirement age in the United States," he told his more than one million viewers.

"[Otherwise] Joe Biden should not be running for president... Joe Biden is 81 years old. The retirement age in the United States... is 65. Joe Biden has technically been eligible for Social Security and Medicare for 16 years, and he wants to continue in office until he is 86, which is 19 years past when he would be eligible for retirement."

"No one in the United States should be retiring at 65 years old," Ben emphatically continued. "Frankly, I think retirement itself is a stupid idea unless you have some sort of health problem. Everybody that I know who is elderly, who has retired, is dead within five years. And if you talk to people who are elderly and they lose their purpose in life by losing their job and they stop working, things go to hell in a handbasket real quick."

Not everyone agreed with Shapiro, and there are some quite compelling counter arguments to his thesis that Social Security is an unsustainable Ponzi Scheme, as he put it. But broadly speaking, his point is valid – people who lack any purpose in life wither away, and it is the dynamism of an active life that animates our world, often in ways that we are unaware of, far beyond the sphere of our limited personal lives.

Shapiro's controversial remarks reminded me of an interesting anomaly of the natural world, a world that can only thrive if all of its elements are engaged. One good example of this phenomenon is the sea otter. Sea otters play a crucial role in maintaining the balance of the kelp forest ecosystem through their predation on sea urchins. Much of North America's west coast waters are host to kelp forests, vast underwater communities which are formed by large brown algae which thrive in cool, relatively shallow waters near the shoreline. The kelp forms towering aquatic structures that offer sustenance and refuge to a diverse array of marine life, including thousands of species of fish, invertebrates, and marine mammals.

Sea urchins feed on kelp and can cause significant destruction to kelp forests if their population goes unchecked. Luckily, sea otters feed on sea urchins, and by preying on them they keep their populations at a level that prevents overgrazing of kelp, thereby preserving the kelp forest habitat. The sea otters are critical in maintaining the balance so that there the kelp can do its job, although, without kelp, there would be no sea urchins, and therefore no sea otters. If just one of these elements would cease to exist, the devastation would be overwhelming.

Shapiro argued that by removing the post-65 age group from the equation, the effects on society at large – both on those who retire and on those who remain in the workforce – are devastating. This can be likened to what is known as the "trophic effect" seen in natural ecosystems, where the removal or decline of one species can have cascading effects on the entire community. Just as the sea otters' presence influences the well-being of the kelp forest and its inhabitants, the active participation of the older generation contributes to the social and economic fabric of society.

This dynamic is very evident in the health of the Jewish world, in terms of the interdependence of Israel's population and Jews of the diaspora. The ebbs and flows of this relationship, often unseen by those who are part of it, are critical to the health of the Jewish nation as a whole. And never has it more obvious than it has been over these past few months, since October 7th. What happens in Israel affects Jews across the world, and

what happens to Jews and what Jews do outside Israel affects the situation for Jews in Israel.

When Jews around the world are subjected to wanton antisemitism, as we have been ever-increasingly over the past five months, it simply reinforces the will of Israel's leaders and of the IDF to ensure that Israel remains the one place in the world where Jews are always free from the scourge of antisemitism – the age-old hatred to which Jews are subjected simply for being born Jewish. Meanwhile, when Jews outside Israel see the existential challenges of their brethren in Israel, they redouble and strengthen their efforts to ensure that no stone is left unturned in the relentless pursuit of security and justice for the world's only Jewish state in the halls of power and in every forum where pro-Israel voices can make a difference.

And the opposite is also true. When Jewish voices in the Diaspora are raised against Israel, the forces of destruction are reinforced in ways that far exceed the seeming reach of those voices. When director Jonathan Glazer stood up at the Oscars on Sunday after winning an Academy Award, and he declared that he and the producer James Wilson "stand here as men who refute their Jewishness and the Holocaust being hijacked by an occupation which has led to conflict for so many innocent people," the impact of those words stretch way beyond his intent – perhaps innocent, perhaps malign – of absolving himself of some kind of collective Jewish guilt for what he perceives as injustices perpetrated by Israel in Gaza.

Thankfully, the forces of community spirit and fraternity in the Jewish world have been ignited like never before, somewhat reminiscent of the 'Blitz spirit' of London during the Second World War, a spirit of stoicism and determination to make the best of it so that we triumph over every adversity thrown our way. Wherever we are, in Israel or outside Israel, we are there to help each other, and to provide each other with the support that is needed to get through it all.

In Parshat Pekudei, we find a poignant reflection of enduring spirit and commitment. As the Israelites continued to contribute resources for the construction of the Mishkan, their generosity was so overwhelming that Moses had to ask them to stop, declaring (Ex. 36:6): "Let no man or woman make further effort toward gifts for the sanctuary!" Reluctantly, the people stopped bringing stuff for the builders to use, as "their efforts had been more than enough for all the tasks to be done."

This historical moment encapsulates a profound truth about our community's default nature: namely, our willingness to go above and beyond for the collective good, even when we've already done enough. No true Jew can ever retire from their Jewish identity, nor from their commitment to doing everything they can do to sustain Jewish life, wherever it lives and breathes.

This is the story of the Jewish people – always there for each other, continuing to give of themselves and from what they have, even when it's more than enough. The vitality of our collective existence, much like the ecological balance, relies on the active participation of every member. When we withdraw our engagement, the effects ripple through our community, diminishing our collective strength and resilience. This is how we have kept the ecosystem going for well over three millennia, and the story continues apace. Those who opt out are the outliers. But the rest of us continue to thrive and prosper, and whether you are in Israel or in the Diaspora, the future remains bright.

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

**FRIDAY, MARCH 15th**  
6:43 PM CANDLELIGHTING  
6:30 PM KABBALAT SHABBAT

**SATURDAY, MARCH 16th**  
8:30 AM GEMARA SHIUR  
9:15 AM SHACHARIT  
6:45 PM MINCHA  
7:35 PM MAARIV  
7:40 PM SHABBAT ENDS

## WEEKDAY DAVENING

|           |        |        |
|-----------|--------|--------|
| Sun       | 8:00am | 6:45pm |
| Mon-Wed   | 7:00am | 6:45pm |
| Thursday* | 7:00am | 6:40pm |
| Fri       | 7:00am | 6:30pm |

\*Thursday is Taanit Esther. See page 2 for full schedule.

**BRING THEM HOME NOW**

## THANK YOU

**Franck & Evelina Ruimy** for sponsoring this week's Kiddush in memory of Franck's father, **Isaac Jack Ruimy, Yitzhak ben Yaakov z"l**, whose yahrtzeit is on the 6th of Adar

# Yahrtzeits

**Isaac Jack Ruimy**  
Yitzhak ben Yaakov z"l  
Father of  
**Franck Ruimy**  
Yahrtzeit - 6 Adar

**Robert Rosenthal**  
Brother of  
**Karen Fisher**  
Yahrtzeit - 8 Adar

**Fania Fontak**  
Fania Tzipporah bat Yenta a"h  
Mother of  
**Janet Sasson**  
Yahrtzeit - 12 Adar

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Jacqueline Cohenca  
Andre Rosenblatt  
July Hodara  
Ariel Richter  
Jesse Shaked  
Edward Tanenbaum  
Cecile Gromis  
Benjamin Imanuel  
Emma Almond  
Vera Markowitz

## MAZAL TOV

**Lee Samson** on new twin great-granddaughters born to **Tamar & Hillel Jacobson**. Mazal Tov to grandparents **Dani & Rivkie Samson** and **Ephraim & Adeena Jacobson**.



## Purim Schedule

Thursday, March 21st  
*Taanit Esther*  
Fast Begins: 5:40am  
Shacharit: 7:00am  
Mincha/Maariv: 6:40pm  
Fast Ends: 7:34pm

Saturday, March 23rd  
Shacharit: 9:15am  
Parshat Zachor: 10:30am  
Mincha: 6:50pm  
Maariv/Havdalah: 7:46pm  
Megilla Reading: 8:00pm

Sunday, March 24th  
*Purim Day*  
Shacharit: 8:00am  
Megilla Reading: 8:30am  
Second Megilla Reading: 10:30am  
Mincha: 3:45pm  
Purim Seudah Begins: 4:00pm  
Maariv: 7:30pm

## TZEDAKAH FOR PURIM

**Matanot La'Evyonim** is one of the four designated mitzvot on Purim, along with hearing the **Megilla**, **Mishloach Manot** and **Seudat Purim**.

As part of the unifying theme of the Purim festival, it is a mitzvah to give money to needy families in the community, so that they too can afford to celebrate this festival properly, and have some welcome respite from their difficult financial circumstances, both on Purim, and after Purim.

This year, as in past years, Rabbi Dunner will be distributing the money raised from our membership for Matanot La'evyonim to needy families here in Los Angeles and in Israel.

If you would like to pay with a check, checks can be made payable to "Young Israel of North Beverly Hills". Please write on the memo of the checks "Purim Appeal". You can also donate online at [yinhb.org/donate](http://yinhb.org/donate)

## WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO PACK

We will be packing the Mishloach Manot on Wednesday, March 20th at 10:00am. Please join us!

## RETRIEVING YOUR MISHLOACH MANOT

You can pick up your Mishloach Manot bags on the following dates and times:

- Following the Megilla Reading on Saturday Evening, March 23rd at 8:00pm
- Following the Megilla Reading on Sunday, March 24th at 8:00am
- Following the second Megilla Reading on Sunday, March 24th at 10:30am



**\$275**

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## THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS FOR SIGNING UP FOR MISHLOACH MANOT

Jonathan & Jessica Akhavan  
Susan & Michael Baum  
Michael & Maggie Bayer  
Donald & Manya Beier  
Lizbeth Berman  
Barbara Bernstein  
Ruth Brandt  
William & June Brenner  
Arik Casden & Marita Richardson  
Hart & Debbie Cohen  
Victor & Jacqueline Cohenca  
Shoshana Dai  
Steven & Vivian Dorfman  
Rabbi Pini & Sabine Dunner  
Georgette Dunst  
Simon Elhiani & Rita Lewkowicz  
Marty & Eva Feldberg  
Adam & Debby Fenner  
Shawney & Richard Fine  
Harry Finkel  
James & Debby Fogelman  
David & Gloria Frankel

Jerry & Jean Friedman  
Jason Fuchs  
Aaron & Lillian Fuchs  
Tuvia Ganz & Joanne Sacks  
Larry & Judith Garshofsky  
Jeffrey Golden & Allyson Kimmel  
Regina Goldberger  
Susan Graysen  
Evan & Liz Greenspan  
Daniel & Tanner Gromis  
Edwin & Cecile Gromis  
Chavi Hertz  
Diana Hirt  
Eva Hogan  
Vahid Javaherian & Shirin Azizzadeh  
David & Phyllis Katzin  
Philip & Janice Kaufler  
Jonathan & Faye Kellerman  
Hillel & Ruth Kellerman  
Mark & Amy Kestenbaum  
David & Roberta Kimmel

Hillel Laks  
Ari & Esther Lastenko  
William Levin  
William & Joan Lopatin  
Vera Markowitz  
Stuart & Fran Miller  
Adley Morison  
Barry Novack & Annie Baum  
Michael & Ariella Novack  
Rabbi Aryeh & Mushky Perlstein  
Leo & Katie Pustilnikov  
Howard & Judy Raykoff  
Weston & Denise Richter  
David & Leah Ross  
Roselyn Rothman  
Simon & Susy Rubinstein  
Franck & Evelina Ruimy  
Faramarz & Sheilagh Sadeghi  
Lee Samson  
Stephen & Jessica Samuel  
Joseph & Galina Samuel  
Moshe & Helen Sassover

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Jacques & Natalie Wizman  
Michael & Tova Zaghi  
Bob Zeller & Nadine Gerson

**SAVE  
THE DATE**  
YINBH Gala  
**JUNE 2, 2024**



**I'm in! Sign me  
up. Can't wait  
to be there.**



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Passover Seder - First Night**

**Monday, April 22, 2024**

Led by **Rabbi Pini Dunner & Rabbi Aryeh Perlstein**

For more information, email [office@yinhb.org](mailto:office@yinhb.org)



ישיבת ינב"ח  
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