

Tefilla Notebook

This week's Tefilla Notebook is sponsored by **Ed & Cecile Gromis** in memory of Ed's father, **Irving Gromis, Yisrael Tzvi ben Efraim HaLevi z"l**, whose yahrtzeit is on the 24th of Nissan

24 Nissan • Parshat Shemini • Birkat HaChodesh

April 14-15, 2023

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

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Dear Members and Friends,

Sir Winston Churchill, the master of pithy political one-liners, once told the House of Commons: "The truth is that an anarchist would not be able to carry on the functions of daily life for a single week without the aid of those whom he denounces as his oppressors and enemies." Churchill's utter contempt for anarchists is well-documented; on another occasion, he told the House of Commons that "anarchism is the philosophy of the vandal, the ghoul, and the assassin."

I have often pondered over a particularly startling anomaly: most people, not just Winston Churchill, despise anarchists and anarchy. But often, these same people don't like conformists and conventionality either. Churchill was no exception. Throughout his life, he was fiercely independent, unconstrained by conventional norms. And yet, surely conformity is the opposite of anarchy? Why would someone who doesn't like anarchists scorn conformity and conventionality?

It is perfectly understandable that right-thinking people abhor anarchy. Whether as a political philosophy or as an individual creed, anarchism is appropriately perceived as dangerous because of its total disdain for social order, laws, authority, and for regulations that promote the well-being and safety of society as a whole. In an idealized anarchic society, there is no recognized authority or government, and everyone is totally free to act according to their own will. Even the kind of people who subvert authority and are critical of government understand that a complete lack of regulation and control inevitably results in utter chaos, ultimately harming both individuals and society at large.

Which should automatically mean that these same people embrace conformity and conventionality. But curiously, that is not the case at all. Most people consider blindly following conventional norms and expectations as excessively restrictive and limiting, and think that being too conventional prevents a person from expressing their true selves and from pursuing interests and desires which will help them grow. In fact, conformists are widely derided for stifling creativity and originality, and for preventing innovation. Instead of promoting conformity, good educators always encourage their students to think independently and to be as creative and as innovative as they can be.

How is thinking independently, Churchill style, any different from thinking like an anarchist? Seemingly, anarchism is the ultimate form of independent spiritedness – with all restrictions and conventions removed. Shouldn't this mean that only an anarchist can reach the zenith of human creativity?

The answer is an emphatic 'no!' Independent thinking, even being fiercely independent, is a positive trait, but only as long as it is tempered with an understanding of social responsibility and respect for the rights and needs of others. Independent thinkers – like Winston Churchill – make positive contributions to society by challenging established norms and advocating for change. But it only works if they also recognize the importance of compromise and cooperation to achieve common goals. The key difference between anarchism and a healthy spirit of independence is a recognition of the need for social order and the importance of working within a framework of laws and regulations. Anarchists reject any form of

authority and accepted wisdom, while a constructive independent spirit understands the value of what came before, treating it as a platform for the present, with a view to improving the future.

Remarkably, this entire idea of independent-spiritedness being a good thing, as opposed to anarchism, which is a bad thing, is preserved in a puzzling inconsistency in Parshat Shemini. Rabbi Chaim ibn Attar (1696-1743), in his seminal Ohr Hachaim Torah commentary (Lev. 10:19), addresses the question of whether a rabbinical student is ever permitted to rule on halachic matters in the presence of their teacher. His conclusion is that if they are asked by someone else for a ruling while their rabbi is present, they must defer to their rabbi, in accordance with the prohibition against ruling on halachic matters in the presence of one's teacher. However, if they make the ruling for themselves, without being asked by someone else, this is altogether different, and they can decide what to do based on what they have previously learned. To support this leniency, the Ohr Hachaim cites the example of Aaron, who independently decided – without consulting his brother and teacher, Moses – that it was inappropriate for him and his sons to eat the Rosh Chodesh sin offering (Lev. 9).

But if that is the case, asks the Ohr Hachaim, why did God react so severely to Nadav and Avihu, Aaron's sons, when they offered an independent incense offering at the dedication of the sanctuary? According to one opinion in the Talmud, Nadav and Avihu were punished for deciding that they could offer incense without first consulting Moses. What sets apart their independent decision to offer incense from Aaron's earlier independent decision regarding the Rosh Chodesh sin offering?

To solve this seeming inconsistency, the Ohr Hachaim distinguishes between two types of independence: anarchic independence, which is incompatible with Torah, and an independent approach that builds on the existing framework of Torah. This latter category should always be admired and encouraged, he says. Not every autonomous halachic decision is necessarily misguided, as there are instances when acting independently is both necessary and warranted. The key is to discern when and how to exercise this autonomy, and to do so in such a way that you have not severed ties with the prevailing structure.

Although Moses was Aaron's teacher, it was Aaron, not Moses, who recognized – based on what Moses had previously taught him – that the Rosh Chodesh sin offering should not be consumed. Aaron may not have been Moses' equal, but there are occasions when a student can match or even exceed the stature of their rabbi, achieving equality and independence. Indeed, this is a phenomenon that should be cherished and celebrated. Meanwhile, Nadav and Avihu had abandoned what Moses had taught them in favor of an anarchic alternative structure that ignored prevailing norms. Anarchy is always independence that has been taken too far, inexorably leading to a path of ruin.

At its very heart, Judaism is a faith that strikes a balance between conformity and anarchy, offering every opportunity for new ideas and innovation, while at the same time venerating the past and striving to preserve the existing order. Stray too far in either direction, and you've lost the plot.

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

FRIDAY, APRIL 14

7:06pm CANDLELIGHTING
6:30pm KABBALAT SHABBAT

SATURDAY, APRIL 15

8:30 am GEMARA SHIUR
9:15 am SHACHARIT
6:45 pm PIRKEI AVOT SHIUR
7:10 pm MINCHA
8:00 pm MAARIV
8:04 pm SHABBAT ENDS

WEEKDAY DAVENING

Sun	8:00am	7:10pm
Mon-Thu	7:00am	7:10pm
Fri	7:00am	6:30pm

Rosh Chodesh is Fri/Sat

YINBH Gala

Full details to be announced
this week! You don't want to
miss it!

Sisterhood Corner

April / May

We hope you and your family had a happy and healthy Pesach.

RESCHEDULED

YINBH Book Group read!

We will be reading

The Periodic Table by Primo Levi

Chosen by The Royal Institution of Great Britain as the best science book ever written.

Thursday, April 20th at 7:30 pm

Private home address will be provided upon RSVP

RSVP at yinbh.org/bookgroup

Get ready for an insightful discussion!

Save the Date!

YINBH Annual Gala Banquet

Sunday, May 21st at 5:30 pm

Details announced next week!!

Shabbat Shalom,

Cecile & Ruthie

Sisterhood Co-Presidents

STEVEN & VIVIAN DORFMAN KEILIM MIKVAH



The Keilim Mikvah is now open for use. You can buzz-in for access via the intercom at the entrance to the garage, during weekday office hours. It is customary to give tzedakah before doing to mitzvah of tovelling Keilim. You can give a donation directly to the keilim mikvah by visiting beverlyhillssynagogue.org/keilim

YAHRTZEITS



Irving Gromis

Yisrael Tzvi ben Efraim HaLevi z"l

Father of

Edwin Gromis

Yahrtzeit - 24 Nissan

Dina Pat-yha

Dina bat Elyahu a"h

Sister of

Ruth Gaba

Yahrtzeit - 24 Nissan

Alex Dorfman

Tzvi ben David Hachohen z"l

Father of

Steven Dorfman

Yahrtzeit - 26 Nissan

Sam Hirt

Shmuel Yishaya ben Zeev z"l

Husband of

Diana Hirt

Yahrtzeit - 27 Nissan

Sara Tenenbaum

Sara Henya bat Moshe a"h

Mother of

Bart Tanenbaum

Yahrtzeit - 28 Nissan

Irving Glatter

Yitzchak ben Dov Berr z"l

Father of

Lillian Fuchs

Grandfather of

Jason Fuchs

Yahrtzeit - 29 Nissan

Esther Rubinstein

Esther bat Mordechai Yaakov a"h

Mother of

Simon Rubinstein

Yahrtzeit - 19 Nissan

This week's Parsha shiur is sponsored by **Aaron & Lillian Fuchs and Jason Fuchs** in memory of Lillian's father and Jason's grandfather, **Iris Glatter, Yitzchak ben Dov Berr z"l**, whose yahrtzeit is on the 29th of Nissan.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Susy Rubinstein

Michael Novack

Robin Rosenzweig Broidy

David Yamin

David Silvas

Jonathan Soroudi



If you would like to join the

Mincha/Maariv WhatsApp Group, please send a message to the Rabbi on WhatsApp at 310-499-3407



We have two gorgeous displays of marble yahrtzeit plaques on the back walls of our sanctuary. This is a beautiful way of memorializing the names of departed loved ones. Yahrtzeit plaques cost \$1,800. To order a plaque or for more information contact Madeline Kramer at mkramer@yinbh.org



MAOT CHITIM

Thank you to everyone who so generously donated to the YINBH Maot Chitim/Passover Fund. This year, we received **\$15,837** in donations. The money received was allocated and distributed to a range of very worthy causes, as follows:

- **Afikim Afikim.org** This charity helps children in Israel who are at risk of poverty, neglect and abuse by addressing educational, nutritional, and recreational needs. The money YINBH sent to Afikim was given to families of children to help them with food for seder and educational materials to use at the seder.
- **Keren Torah Chesed Tzedoka Fund foktc.com** – Distributes money to struggling families in Mattersdorf, Jerusalem.
- **Lemaan Achai lemaanachai.org** – Distributes money to struggling families in Beit Shemesh.
- **Tomchei Shabbos LA tomcheishabbos.org** – Distributes money to struggling families in Los Angeles.
- **The Jewish Center in Kaunas Lithuania Soup Kitchen kaunasjewish.eu** Provides food along with holiday programs, classes, and recreational programs for the Jewish community in Kaunas (Kovno), Lithuania.
- **Keter Torah Inc.** – Distributes money to struggling families in Meah Shearim, Jerusalem.
- Rabbi Dunner also gave money privately to families in Los Angeles and New Jersey who are facing financial hardships.



YINBH MIKVAH Young Israel of North Beverly Hills • Beverly Hills Synagogue • Beverly Hills, CA

THE YINBH MIKVAH IS OPEN!

- All appointments must be made at least 24 hours in advance.
- Motzai Shabbat appointments must be made 48 hours in advance.
- **Regular Appointments \$45 • Kallah Appointments \$100**
- Should you encounter any problems or have any questions while booking your appointment, please don't hesitate to contact us.
- Visit our website for mikvah hours and more information.

We are now taking Friday appointments!

To make a Friday appointment, please reserve 24 hours in advance by booking a "Shower" Appointment for Friday on the MikvahCloud app. The Friday evening entrance is the door to the left of the garage.



The entrance to the Mikvah is through gate at the top of the garage. Please press buzzer to be let in. Once in the garage, follow the signs to the Mikvah. Mikvah parking will be to your left.



WEBSITE

www.yinbh.org/mikvah



APPT. APP

MikvahCloud



PHONE

310-278-7485



TEXT ONLY

310-299-1792



ADDRESS

9261 Alden Dr. BH



You're invited to a kiddush luncheon to celebrate the engagement of



Meir & Ronia

Shabbos
22
April

Shacharit starts at 9:15am and will be followed by Kiddush Luncheon
Rabbi Pini & Sabine Dunner

YINBH SISTERHOOD

Book Group

The Periodic Table
PRIMO LEVI

ORDER NOW
amazon

Primo Levi

The Periodic Table

RESCHEDULED TO
APRIL 20TH, 2023
7:30PM

The Periodic Table is largely a memoir of the years before and after Primo Levi's transportation from his native Italy to Auschwitz as an anti-Facist partisan and a Jew.

RSVP at
yinbh.org/bookgroup
LOCATION GIVEN UPON RSVP

 **BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE**
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

Save The Date

ANNUAL BANQUET HONORING

BILL LOPATIN

WITH A SPECIAL TRIBUTE
TO STEPHEN ROTHMAN Z"L

FEATURING THE FAB FOUR

🎵 *Ultimate Beatles Concert* 🎵

5/21/23

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