

Tefilla Notebook

8 Iyyar • Acharei Mot - Kedoshim

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

April 28-29, 2023

www.yinbh.org

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Dear Members and Friends,

This week, I had an extraordinary experience – and it was all the more extraordinary because it was so unexpected. I planned to be in Miami for a couple of days, and in anticipation of my trip asked the members of my “Baker Street Irregulars” WhatsApp group if any of them knew of an antiquarian Hebrew books and manuscripts dealer

anywhere in the Miami area. Just so you know, I have been to Miami dozens of times over the years, but until now have never had any success finding such a dealer. But I never give up hope; perhaps with the influx of Orthodox Jews escaping New York and New Jersey, and even California, and the resulting exponential growth of the Orthodox community in south Florida, there was finally a Miami-based dealer I could spend time with.

Sure enough, one of the Irregulars posted the name and number of someone he’d been told had started selling old books and manuscripts in Miami, and I immediately got in touch with him. The dealer – a rabbi and trained sofer (ritual scribe) – was rather surprised to hear from me, not least because he regularly watches my Jewish history videos and listens to my Torah classes online. We chatted about books and history – and he asked me if I own a particular rare book he needed for a project he’s working on, as his copy is missing pages. I do have it, I told him, and assured him I would bring it with me when I visited, so he could make scans of the pages missing in his copy.

It was pouring rain as I arrived at his office, and the parking lot was six inches deep in water. I waded through the flood and was met by my new friend at an anonymous-looking side door, straight off the parking lot. What I encountered on the other side of that door was nothing less than astonishing. Tables and shelves lined the walls to a long room, and a table ran the length of the room’s center. The side tables and shelves were piled with Torah scrolls – dozens of them, of varying sizes – while on the central table, several Torah scrolls were unfurled as scribes worked on them. I just stood there, in a trance. I’d never seen anything like it before. I felt as if I was in an Aladdin’s Cave of Torah scrolls.

“What is this?” I asked him, “Where am I?” It turned out I had stumbled on the headquarters of a Torah scroll restoration organization run by the intrepid sofer, Rabbi Moshe Druin, an American-born Israel-trained expert who has mastered the art of repairing and preserving Torah scrolls – even those that are a century old or more. I asked to speak to Rabbi Druin, but he wasn’t in Miami. Evidently, he is constantly on the road repairing Sifrei Torah in synagogues where they are kept and used. That day he was in Norfolk, Virginia, and when I spoke to him on the phone later in the week, he was in Detroit.

Rabbi Druin has a wonderful disposition. Constantly upbeat and positive, he is obviously totally comfortable with his unique, very niche profession. “I’m a Torah restorer and conservator,” he told me, “I travel wherever I’m needed – it can be an Orthodox synagogue, or Reform and Conservative Temples – and I work on their Sifrei Torah to make sure they are kosher and remain kosher.” Rabbi Druin trained to be a sofer in Israel, and then learned Torah restoration

from experts in Johannesburg, South Africa, of all places. There’s no shortage of Torah scrolls for Rabbi Druin to restore, and he told me that he has personally worked on over 20,000 scrolls throughout the United States and elsewhere around the world, in a career that has so far spanned over 40 years. One Torah scroll he worked on in Texas is 750 years old. “It’s a small Torah,” he told me, “that has somehow survived journeys and wars, and it then ended up in Texas.”

“That Torah is kosher,” he added, “you can use it for Kriat HaTorah.” If a Torah is treated well, he explained, which means that it’s kept in the proper conditions while also being regularly maintained by a sofer – it can literally last for hundreds of years. If not, within 50 years it might deteriorate to a state where it is not even restorable. The key point is that congregations and individuals who are assiduous about doing annual checks on their Torah scrolls can prevent the worst from happening.

In Miami, Rabbi Druin’s associates were working on scrolls from the renowned Memorial Scrolls Trust Museum in London. In 1964, this extraordinary collection of 1,564 Torah scrolls found its way to Westminster Synagogue in London. These scrolls were originally removed from synagogues in Bohemia and Moravia by a Nazi official in charge of the Czech “Protectorate” and kept in Prague. The idea was to have them displayed as relics of a bygone culture once all the Jews of Europe had been exterminated. But when the Nazis were gone, the Torahs were returned to the Jews, and restoration began. Each year dozens of these Torah scrolls find new homes after being lovingly and painstakingly restored by soferim, and Rabbi Druin’s team was hard at work on a few of them while I was there.

The range of different scripts I saw in these Torahs was dazzling. Many of the customs that once prevailed in European Torah-writing have long since disappeared in the mists of time, but here they were alive and well – even including one scroll that had the inverted “nun” letters within the text of Parshat Behaalotecha, that I wrote about in an article a couple of years ago. That Torah must be well over two centuries old.

As I looked at the Torah scrolls in Miami, and marveled together with the scribes at the unique and unusual aspects of each one of them, I suddenly realized that this is the week of Parshat Kedoshim, which begins with an instruction for the Jewish nation to “be holy” – God’s call to the Jewish people to always aspire to sanctity, and to always embrace the sacred. An important consequence of the Jewish people adopting this concept of holiness as our central motif is that we treat sacred objects with care and reverence specifically so that we can maintain their aura of holiness. A perfect example of this is a Torah scroll. In and of itself it is not inherently sacred – after all, it is just a roll of parchment with writing on it – but a Torah becomes holy purely because of our attitude towards it. And as I gazed at Torah after Torah at Rabbi Druin’s center, and witnessed the love and respect that each of them receives from those tending to them, I truly observed the concept of “be holy” come to life right there in front of my eyes. It was an inspirational moment I will never forget.

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



FRIDAY, APRIL 28

7:16pm CANDLELIGHTING
6:30pm KABBALAT SHABBAT

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

8:30 am GEMARA SHIUR
9:15 am SHACHARIT
7:00 pm PIRKEI AVOT SHIUR
7:25 pm MINCHA
8:15 pm MAARIV
8:16pm SHABBAT ENDS

WEEKDAY DAVENING

Sun	8:00am	7:25pm
Mon-Thu	7:00am	7:25pm
Fri	7:00am	6:30pm

WELCOME

Rabbi Aryeh & Rebbetzin Mushky Perlstein. Rabbi Perlstein will be speaking during services at approximately 11am

Sisterhood Corner

April / May

Breakfast Shiur with

Judy Klitsner

Sunday, April 30th

Bagels & lox at approx. 8:30 am

Shiur at 9:00am

Come enjoy an educational shiur led by Judy Klitsner, a senior lecturer in Bible at Pardes Institute.

RSVP at www.yinbh.org/klitsner

Reserve Your Seat Now!

YINBH Annual Gala Banquet

Sunday, May 21st at 5:30 pm

Jim Henson Studio

RSVP at www.bhsbanquet.com

Shabbat Shalom,

Cecile & Ruthie

Sisterhood Co-Presidents

YAHRTZEITS



Isadore Finkel

Oyzer ben Pinchas Halevi z"l

Father of

Harry Finkel

Yahrtzeit - 8 Iyyar

Kitty Elsie Finkelstein

Esther Rachael bat Avraham

Yaakov a"h

Mother of

Sharon Weiner

Yahrtzeit - 13 Iyyar

Jacob Samuel

Yaakov ben Moshe z"l

Father of

Joe Samuel

Yahrtzeit - 13 Iyyar

Jan Czucker

Yosef ben Menachem Mendel z"l

Husband of

Suzanne Zucker

Father of

Mark Zucker

Yahrtzeit - 14 Iyyar

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Maryjo Schnitzer

Alexander Fenner

Debbie Cohen

Elana Zeligman



If you would like to

join the

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

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



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

Kiddush Luncheon is sponsored by

Michael & Shari Weiner in memory of Shari's mother **Kitty Elsie Finkelstein**

Esther Rachael bat Avraham Yaakov a"h whose yahrtzeit is on 13th Iyyar

Steve & Vivian Dorfman

Stuart & Fran Miller in memory of Stuart's mother, Rita Miller, **Rivka bat Israel Moshe Halevi a"h** whose yahrtzeit is on the 21st of Iyyar.

Joe & Galina Samuel in memory of Joe's father, **Jacob Samuel, Yaakov ben Moshe z"l** whose yahrtzeit is on 13th Iyyar



GUEST SPEAKER

Shabbat 29th April 2023

Rabbi Aryeh Perlstein

Rabbi Perlstein will address the community at 11:00am

Born in Chicago, Rabbi Aryeh Perlstein was raised in a family of distinguished rabbis and community leaders. After completing his rabbinic internship in Cape Town, South Africa, he received semicha from Rabbi Yitzchak Yehuda Yeruslavsky of Central Chabad Beth Din in Israel. He continued his studies at Kollel Tzemach Tzedek in Jerusalem and was fortunate enough to be mentored by Rabbi Adin Even-Israel Steinsaltz OB"Y.

In October 2015, together with his Rebbetzin, Mushky, he founded Chabad of Echo Park and 'Anjewlino,' a community for young Jewish creatives and professionals in Northeast LA. Rabbi Perlstein is passionate about infusing contemporary life with Jewish teachings and inspiring a proud Jewish identity. He has lectured and officiated weddings in Israel, Europe, Canada and throughout the United States.

Rabbi Perlstein resides in Echo Park with Rebbetzin Mushky and their three children, where Mushky's modern approach to traditional Jewish cuisine has gained admiration throughout the Jewish community and social media.

Rabbi Perlstein will also speak during Seudah Shlishit

BREAKFAST SHIUR

Sunday 30th April, 2023
Shacharit 8am
Bagels & Lox at approx 8:30am
Shiur 9am



BROTHERS CRYING FROM THE GROUND: BIBLICAL ORIGINS OF OUR FRACTURED SOCIETY

**JUDY
KLITSNER**

Judy Klitsner is a senior lecturer in Bible at Pardes Institute, where she has empowered a generation of students to seek meaning and relevance in the text through a skills-based method of learning. Judy has taught Bible to Christian and Muslim religious leaders and she has served as a regular visiting lecturer at the London School of Jewish Studies. Judy is the author of the acclaimed book *Subversive Sequels in the Bible: How Biblical Stories Mine and Undermine Each Other*, which received a National Jewish book award.

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ANNUAL BANQUET

Honoring
BILL LOPATIN
WITH A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO
STEPHEN ROTHMAN Z"L



Sunday, May 21st, 2023

**FEATURING THE FAB FOUR
AT JIM HENSON STUDIOS**

1416 N La Brea Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90028

5:30pm
Cocktails

6:30pm
Dinner

8:00pm
Concert

RSVP at WWW.BHSBANQUET.COM