

Tefilla Notebook

7 Tevet • Parshat Vayigash

December 10-11, 2021

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

Nati Bar-Am, Chazan

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10

CANDLELIGHTING 4:26pm

MINCHA/KABBALAT SHABBAT 4:30pm

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11

GEMARA SHIUR 8:30AM

SHACHARIT 9:15AM

MINCHA 4:35PM

MAARIV: 5:25PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 5:29PM

WEEKDAY DAVENING TIMES

	Shacharit	Mincha/Maariv
Sunday	8:00am	4:30pm
Mon-Thurs	7:00am	4:30pm
Friday	7:00am	4:35pm

Fast of Tevet - Begins **5:31am**, End **5:24pm**
Tuesday December 14th

Welcome to all those joining for the
TEEN MINYAN this Shabbat at
10:00am in the beit midrash

Teen-led services and participation
followed by a teen-only kiddush

THANK YOU

Joan & Bill Lopatin and
Ruthie & Hillel Kellerman
for sponsoring the extended
kiddush in honor of
Bill and Hillel's

65th Birthday!

Thank You to the **YINBH**
Sisterhood for sponsoring
the Chanukah Breakfast
following the Musical Tefillah with
Gindi Maimonides Academy

Mazal Tov

Benjamin and Ella
Thompson on the
birth of a new
granddaughter,
Liora Tova, born to
Samuel and Esther Thompson



Dear Members & Friends,

Earlier this week, without warning, I found myself weeping uncontrollably. Allow me to tell you why. On Sunday night, a few guys came together in London to sing. None of them are professional singers. What brought them together was that all of them – at some point during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s – had sung in a boys' choir called the London School of Jewish Song. This remarkable musical ensemble was directed and conducted by a charismatic Israel-born educator, Yigal Calek, whose flamboyant style and exceptional ear for music propelled his young proteges into stardom across the Jewish world. Curiously, although Yigal Calek was undoubtedly an innovator, he was also deeply traditional. Consequently, while his songs were very much in tune with modernity and the zeitgeist, they were nonetheless firmly embedded in the music of the Jewish yesteryear.

Audiences flocked to the choir's concerts in London, Paris, Jerusalem, New York and Los Angeles – among countless other cities – and their albums became the musical backdrop for that generation. And that generation was my generation. We all hummed Yigal's tunes, we used them for synagogue prayers, we danced to them at weddings, and we played the LPs until the scratches rendered the records unplayable.

I sang for Yigal in the mid-1980s. He was a demanding, exacting perfectionist. Rehearsals lasted for hours. Every note had to be perfect, every harmony flawlessly synchronized. But it was all worth it. The results were stunning, and the audience appreciation gushing. And so it continued for a few more years, until eventually Yigal disbanded his choir and turned to other things. From time to time he would reappear with a new group to belt out a few hits in a tribute medley at a variety concert, but that was it. The London School of Jewish Song was no more.

Over the years, whenever we met, Yigal was effusive and charming. In the late 90s, on one extraordinary bus trip to a wedding in Gateshead, we sang together – and it was like old times. At one point we bantered about one of his songs that I said sounded similar to an early Shlomo Carlebach tune. He disagreed. We sang it. He still disagreed. Then we sang some more, moving on to other songs. It was as if we were back in the heady era of the choir's heyday. Time stood still.

More recently Yigal suffered some very difficult health issues, and word went around that he needed our prayers. Yigal Yisrael ben Blima Gitel. Thankfully he emerged from danger, but his health remains fragile. And so it was that a few of the old choir "boys" decided to arrange an evening of song and nostalgia to cheer his spirits. Last Sunday night, the last night of Chanukah, the impromptu gathering took place – just a couple of dozen guys around a table at someone's home in Golders Green. Most of them are already grandfathers, all of them were there to cheer up their childhood hero.

By Monday morning, a few cellphone video clips had emerged, and I posted some of them on my Twitter feed and on Facebook. But I was caught completely off guard. For as I watched the clips – I found that I just couldn't stop crying. Others who contacted me said the same thing. Tears flowed down our cheeks as we watched this bunch of guys in their 50s and 60s singing songs they haven't sung together for over 35 years, in perfect 3-part harmony, under the direction of an elderly, frail Yigal. And Yigal – I just couldn't take my eyes off him. With every passing minute and with each delicious note, his smile became broader, and his face brimmed with pleasure and pride.

A couple of hours after I first tweeted the clips someone sent me the full video file. It was very large, and I didn't want to lose it, so I posted it to my YouTube channel and sent the link to a few friends. Within hours it went viral, and after just a couple of days the video has already exceeded 30,000 views. Go figure, as we say in the United States.

Well, I can't just leave it at that. A phenomenon like this demands an explanation. Yes, Yigal's tunes are quite well-known, but that is not enough of an explanation for such an outpouring of emotion and such incredible depth of feeling. There really has got to be something more. I'm not totally sure I've nailed it, but a wonderful insight into this week's parsha might hold the key. Before Joseph revealed himself to his brothers at the beginning of Parshat Vayigash, he began to weep, and the verse informs us that the whole of Egypt were aware of his cries. It was at this exact point that he said something quite strange to his brothers: *אני יוסף העוד אני חי* - "I am Joseph, is my father still alive?" (Gen. 45:3) All the commentaries are astounded by his question. The brothers had told Joseph several times that their father – his father – was still alive. Why was he inquiring about something he already knew? Of the many answers suggested, it is the one proposed by the *Igra Dekalla*, Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Spira of Dinov (1783–1841), that truly stands out. As the Torah makes clear, at the point of revelation Joseph was totally overcome with emotion and he wept. Suddenly, as the tears flooded down his cheeks, the penny dropped: he might be the political ruler of Egypt, and he might be dressed as an Egyptian prince, but *od avinu chai* – the "od", the foundation, of Jacob still lived within him. It wasn't a question; it was a statement. Despite everything he had been through and everything he had experienced, at his core he was still Jacob's son, and Jacob was still his father.

Strikingly, the *Igra Dekalla* proves his point from a verse in Tehillim (Ps. 146:2): *אֶהְלֵל ה' בְּחַיִּי אֶזְמְרָה לְאֵלַיִךְ*. The simple translation of the verse is this: "I will praise God all my life, I will sing songs to my God while I exist." But to Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Spira of Dinov the last word of the verse – *be'odi* – conveys much more than the simple translation. What it means is that for a person of true faith, faith is their very foundation and the innermost seat of their emotions – hence the singing. Joseph had been in Egypt for 22 years, but – as he suddenly discovered when he welled up with tears – his "od" was alive and well, and it was the beating heart of who he was.

This week, as I and thousands of others heard the music of Yigal Calek's legendary choir rendered at an informal gathering in London, our souls weren't stirred by a symphonic extravaganza. Absolutely not. Rather, those evocative tunes put us in touch with our "od" – instinctively we knew *od avinu chai*. That is why we wept, and that is why we will continue to weep.

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



Sisterhood Corner

DECEMBER

Take a deep dive with Rabbi Dunner during his final episode of Treasures from the Rabbi's Library!
Monday, December 13th at 5:30pm

Join the Zoom at
beverlyhillssynagogue.org/zoom

Join us for the virtual inauguration of
The Biblical Museum of Natural History!

For those who were unable to attend in person, the virtual event will be held on

Sunday, December 12th

Link to be emailed!

Everyone loves *The Bridal Chair*
by Gloria Goldreich.

Join our next YINBH Sisterhood Book Group!

The next meeting will take place on

Tuesday, January 11th at 7:30pm

Location Provided upon RSVP

Shabbat Shalom,
Cecile & Ruthie

Sisterhood Co-Presidents

REMINDER:

As the year is coming to a close, please make sure to pay any outstanding pledges. You can pay online by logging into your shulcloud account at beverlyhillssynagogue.org or call the office at 310-276-7650

YAHRTZEITS

Margaret Friedman

Miriam bat Mendel a"h
Mother of

Jerry Friedman

Yahrtzeit - 7 Tevet

Imre Schaeffer

Noach ben Moshe z"l

Father of

George Schaeffer

Yahrtzeit - 8 Tevet

Yisroel David Mikel

Yisroel David Mikel z"l

Father of

Chavi Hertz

Yahrtzeit - 9 Tevet

Karen Fox

Chana Gittel bat Rav Yitzchak a"h
Mother of

Janice Kaufler

Yahrtzeit - 10 Tevet

Shalom Herskovitz

Shalom ben Avraham z"l

Father of

Jonas Herskovitz

Yahrtzeit - 10 Tevet

Eve Fine

Chava bat Mordechai a"h

Mother of

Richard Fine

Yahrtzeit - 12 Tevet

Lawrence Einfeld

Eliyahu ben Hechaver Mordechai
z"l

Grandfather of

Carly Einfeld

Yahrtzeit - 13 Tevet

A Message from the Perl Family...

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to Rabbi Dunner and Cantor Baram for their counsel and assistance after the passing of our mother, dear Jacqueline Perl.

Sincerely,

Mark Perl and family

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Sam Mostadim

Michelle Dordick

Hillel Kellerman

Blake Spencer

Arleen Tanenbaum

Bill Lopatin

Daniel Ross

Manucher Mostadim

Asher Arom

Sydney Hogan

Happy Anniversary

Rabbi Pini & Sabine Dunner

Rabbi Alan & Sandy Kalinsky

George & Suzi Fischmann

Hillel & Ruthie Kellerman

NEW! Bagel Breakfast with lox, cream cheese, whitefish, and coffee on Monday and Thursday Mornings!

Shacharit- Sunday 8am, Monday-Fri - 7am

Mincha/Maariv - see front page of the TN

Please join us for weekday Tefilla Services and pray along with your YINBH friends.

**WE NEED YOU
FOR WEEKDAY MINYAN**

A Message from the Rothman Family...

The Rothman family would like to thank Rabbi Dunner and whole YINBH community for your extraordinary kindness following the passing of our dear father, Steve Rothman, Shlomo Leib Gavriel ben Yosef z"l. We truly appreciate your warm wishes and messages of condolence.



MOTZAEI SHABBAT FAMILY LEARNING THE LA SHUL TOUR

BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

12/11 6:30 - 7:30 PM PRIZES! RAFFLES! PIZZA!



YINBH Families are welcome to join this evening for a fun program along with Hillel Hebrew Academy Students.

Tuesday,
January 11th
7:30pm



YINBH SISTERHOOD BOOK GROUP

THIS MONTH WE WILL BE READING
THE BRIDAL CHAIR
WRITTEN BY: GLORIA GOLDBREICH

Books can be purchased on Amazon



Location provided upon RSVP



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OF THE ONLY TORAH-BASED
MUSEUMS IN THE WORLD.**

ISRAEL EVENT
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2021
HAR TUV, ISRAEL

VIRTUAL EVENT
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2021
LINK TO BE EMAILED

inauguration.biblicalnaturalhistory.org
For more information or to make a dedication, visit
us online or contact Tobey at:
advancement@biblicalnaturalhistory.org

LEE SAMSON
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

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Chai Lifeline
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A NIGHT OF CHAMPIONS

CHAI LIFELINE WEST COAST
VIRTUAL GALA 2021
12.15.21

- CELEBRATING -



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COMMUNITY
AWARD



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CHAMPIONS OF HOPE



The Ellman Family
CHAMPIONS OF COURAGE



Dr. Dovi Prero
MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Special appearances by
MAYIM BIALIK & ELON GOLD

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TREASURES FROM THE RABBI'S LIBRARY



**FINAL
EPISODE
MONDAY
DECEMBER
13TH**

5:30pm PST

Join the zoom at
beverlyhillssynagogue.org/zoom



BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS