



# Tefilla Notebook

11-12 Iyyar • Acharei-Mot Kedoshim

April 23-24, 2021

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

Nati Bar-Am, Chazan

## SHABBAT SCHEDULE

**FRIDAY APRIL 23RD**

CANDLELIGHTING 7:12pm

FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICES 6:30pm

**SATURDAY, APRIL 24TH**

GEMARA SHIUR: 8:30AM

SHACHARIT 9:15AM

MORNING SERVICES 9:30AM

MINCHA 7:25pm

SHABBAT ENDS 8:17pm

## WEEKDAY DAVENING TIMES

Sunday 8:00am & 7:25pm

Mon- Thu 7:00am & 7:25pm

Thank you to  
**Mark & Amy  
 Kestenbaum**

for sponsoring the  
 kiddush to-go in  
 memory of  
 Mark's father,

**Emil Kestenbaum,  
 Menachem Mendel  
 ben Mordechai Gimpel  
 z"l**, whose yahrtzeit is  
 on 15 Iyyar.

## MAZEL TOV

Mazel Tov to

Harry Finkel and  
 Shirley Aizenstein on  
 a new great-grandson,  
 born to Talia and Eli  
 Weintrob.

Mazal Tov to  
 grandparents Bracha  
 Frieda & Nachum  
 Kurnick and David &  
 Devorah Weintrob.

## D'var Torah from Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks Z"L



The strangest element of the Temple service on Yom Kippur – set out in Acharei Mot (Lev. 16: 7-22) – was the ritual of the two goats, one offered as a sacrifice, the other sent away into the desert: “to Azazel.” They were brought before the High Priest, to all intents and purposes indistinguishable from one another. Lots were drawn, one bearing the words “to God,” the other “to Azazel.” The “to God” one was offered as a sacrifice. The “to Azazel” one was used for a confession by the high priest, for the sins of the entire nation, and it was then taken away into the desert outside Jerusalem, where it plunged to its death. Tradition tells us that a red thread would be attached to its horns, half of which was removed before the animal was sent away. If the rite had been effective, the red thread would turn to white.

Sin and guilt offerings were common in ancient Israel, but this ceremony was unique. Normally confession was made over the animal to be offered as a sacrifice. In this case confession was made over the goat not offered as a sacrifice. Why the division of the offering into two? Why two identical animals whose fate, so different, was decided by the drawing of a lot? And who or what was Azazel?

The word Azazel does not appear anywhere else in Scripture, and a number of theories emerged as to its meaning. According to the sages and Rashi it meant “a steep, rocky or hard place” – in other words a description of its destination. According to Ibn Ezra and Nahmanides, Azazel was the name of a spirit or demon – one of the fallen angels referred to in Genesis (6:2). The third interpretation is that the word simply means “the goat [ez] that was sent away [azal].”

But Maimonides offers the most compelling explanation. He says that the ritual was intended as a symbolic drama: “There is no doubt that sins cannot be carried like a burden, and taken off the shoulder of one being to be laid on that of another being. But these ceremonies are of a symbolic character, and serve to impress men with a certain idea, and to induce them to repent; as if to say, we have freed ourselves of our previous deeds, have cast them behind our backs, and removed them from us as far as possible” (Guide for the Perplexed, III:46). This makes sense, but the question remains. Why was this ritual different from all other sin or guilt offerings? Why two goats rather than one?

The simplest answer is that the High Priest’s service on Yom Kippur was intended to achieve something other and more than ordinary sacrifices occasioned by sin. The Torah specifies two objectives, not one: “On this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. Then, before God, you will be clean from all your sins” (Lev. 16: 30). Normally all that was aimed at was atonement – “kapparah”. On Yom Kippur something else was aimed at: cleansing and purification – “taharah”. Atonement is for acts. Purification is for people. Sins leave stains on the character of those who commit them, and these need to be cleansed before we can undergo catharsis and begin anew.

Clearly, the scapegoat ritual is psychological. A moral stain is not something physical. It exists in the mind, the emotions, the soul. It is hard to rid oneself of the feeling of defilement when you have committed a wrong, even when you know it has been forgiven. Some symbolic action seems necessary. The survival of such rites as Tashlich and Kapparot on Rosh Hashana and before Yom Kippur – the first involving crumbs, the second a live chicken – is evidence of this. Both practices were criticized by leading halakhic authorities, yet both survived for the reason Maimonides gives. It is easier to feel that defilement has gone if we have had some visible representation of its departure. We feel cleansed once we see it go somewhere, carried by something. This may not be rational, but then neither are we, much of the time.

That is the simplest explanation. The sacrificed goat represented kapparah, atonement. The goat sent away symbolized taharah, cleansing of the moral stain. But perhaps there is something more, and more fundamental, to the symbolism of the two goats.

The birth of monotheism changed the way people viewed the world. In polytheism, the elements, each of which is a different god with a different personality, clash. In monotheism, all tension – between justice and mercy, retribution and forgiveness – is located within the mind of the One God. The sages often dramatized this, in Midrash, as a dialogue between the Attribute of Justice [middat ha-din] and the Attribute of Compassion [middat rachamim]. With this single shift, external conflict between two separate forces is reconceptualized as internal, psychological conflict between two moral attributes.

This idea led to a reframing of the human situation. Monotheism relocates conflict from ‘out there’ to ‘in here’, transferring it from an objective fact about the world to an internal contest within the mind. This flows from our belief in God, but it changes our view of the soul, the self, the human personality.

In most cultures, the moral life is fraught with the danger of denial of responsibility. “It wasn’t me. Or if it was, I didn’t mean it. Or I had no choice.” The supreme expression of the opposite, the ethic of responsibility, is the act of confession. “It was me, and I offer no excuses, merely admission, remorse, and a determination to change.” That in essence is what the High Priest did on behalf of the whole nation, and what we now do as individuals and communities, on Yom Kippur.

Perhaps, then, the significance of the two goats, identical in appearance yet opposite in fate, is simply this: that they are both us. The Yom Kippur ritual dramatized the fact that we have within us two inclinations, one good, and one bad. The two goats are both us. One we offer to God. But the other we disown. We let it go into the wilderness where it belongs and where it will meet a violent death.

Monotheism created a new depth of human self-understanding. We have within us both good and evil. We can face our faults because God forgives, but God only forgives when we face our faults. The duality of our nature is symbolized by the two identical goats with opposite fates: a vivid visual display of the nature of the moral life.



## Sisterhood Corner

APRIL

We see cheesecake in your future!

Mark your calendar!

Shavuot Classes at YINBH

Sunday, May 16th classes beginning at 9:30am

A Dessert Bar will be available between classes!

Visit [beverlyhillssynagogue.org](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org) for details & registration

Save the date!

Thursday, June 17th

6:00pm to 8:00pm

YINBH's Gala Banquet

This year's Gala will honor Rabbi Dunner & our Chazzan Nati

The Gala will be virtual & in person!

Additional details coming soon!

Shabbat Shalom,

Cecile & Ruthie

Sisterhood Co-Presidents



## YAHRTZEITS

**Jacob Samuel**  
Yaakov ben Moshe z"l  
Father of  
**Joseph Samuel**  
Yahrtzeit - 13 Iyar

**Alan Kaplan**  
Yechezkel Yosef ben Mordechai  
HaCohen z"l  
Grandfather of  
**Madeline Kramer**  
Yahrtzeit - 13 Iyar

**Kitty Elsie Finkelstein**  
Esther Rachael bat Avraham  
Yaakov a"h  
Mother of  
**Sharon Weiner**  
Yahrtzeit - 13 Iyar

**Jan Czucker**  
Yosef ben Menachem Mendel z"l  
Husband of  
**Susanne Czucker**  
Father of  
**Mark Zucker**  
Yahrtzeit - 14 Iyar

**Emil Kestenbaum**  
Menachem Mendel ben  
Mordechai Gimpel z"l  
Father of  
**Mark Kestenbaum**  
Yahrtzeit - 15 Iyar

**Laszlo Weiss**  
Shmuel ben Yosef Ha Levi z"l  
Father of  
**Suzi Fischmann**  
Yahrtzeit - 17 Iyar



*Laurie Spencer*  
*Elana Zeligman*  
*Molly Boyer*  
*Noah Swartz*  
*Uri Dunner*

## PAUL FEDER Z"l GEMARA SHIUR

לע"נ פנחס אליהו בן שמשון הלוי  
Join Rabbi Dunner for  
his Gemara shiur on  
Shabbat mornings 45  
minutes before  
Shacharit.



If you would  
like to join the  
Mincha/Maariv  
WhatsApp Group,  
please send a  
message to the Rabbi  
on Whatsapp at  
310-499-3407

## HELP SAVE ZACK PLOTZKER'S LIFE

**A YOUNG  
FATHER OF 3  
IS IN  
DESPERATE  
NEED OF  
A KIDNEY DONOR**

Blood Type  
A or O



To see if you are a match,  
please contact Renewal at:  
718 431 9831 x 209 or  
[R24265@renewal.org](mailto:R24265@renewal.org)

 **Renewal**  
Renewal is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping living  
kidney donors navigate all aspects of the donation process.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE HIRT FAMILY

Our many thanks to all who participated in sponsoring a meal for us during our shiva. We greatly appreciate the warm notes of sympathy and to those who came and offered us condolences. Sam loved all of you and had many wonderful memories of being an active participant in the formation of the shul. That was one of his many accomplishments.

The Hirt Family



# TEEN MINYAN

## WITH CHAZZAN NATI BARAM

### SHABBAT DAY

#### MAY 8TH AT 10AM

TEEN MINYAN IS BACK!  
Teen led services and participation  
*in the shul patio*

Followed by a *teen only* kiddush to-go  
catered by Jeff's Gourmet

Sponsorship  
welcome

RSVP to [office@yinh.org](mailto:office@yinh.org)  
to attend

**ייןב** YINBH  
BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE

לא תרצח  
לא תנאף  
לא תגנב  
לא תענה  
לא תחמד

אנוכי ה'  
לא יהיה  
לא תשא  
זכור את  
בבד את

# Shavuot 2021

AT YINBH BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE

Sunday, May 16th

Class 1 - 9:30pm-10:15pm

Class 2 - 10:30pm-11:15pm

Class 3 - 11:30pm-12:15am

Dessert Bar Between Classes *Featuring...*

Magnolia Bakery Cheesecake  
Gourmet Handmade Cookies  
Deluxe Coffee & Herbal Tea  
Fresh Fruit

Sign up:

[beverlyhillssynagogue.org](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org)  
310-276-7650



MIZRACHI

MIZRACHI PRESENTS

## Two Virtual Tours for Lag BaOmer with Nachliel Selavan

SCREENING EXCLUSIVELY ON  [mizrachi.tv](http://mizrachi.tv)

**The Path of the Sword:  
Bar Kochba and Modern Zionism**

**The Path of the Spirit:  
Bar Yochai and Lag BaOmer**

VIEW ON DEMAND AT [MIZRACHI.TV](http://MIZRACHI.TV)  
FROM APRIL 29, 2021





YINBH BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE  
PRESENTS

# YINBH GALA BANQUET

A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

marking the full re-opening of our  
synagogue and the resilience of our  
community over the past year

THURSDAY, JUNE 17

HONORING



Rabbi  
Pini Dunner

Chazzan  
Nati Baram

IN PERSON & VIRTUAL

PRIVATE HOME IN BEVERLY HILLS  
ADDRESS PROVIDED UPON RSVP

[www.bhsbanquet.com](http://www.bhsbanquet.com)