



Tefilla Notebook

22 Iyyar • Parshat Behar-Bechukotai

May 15-16, 2020

Stephen Rothman, President • Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi • Nati Bar-Am, Chazan

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SHABBAT SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MAY 15

7:30pm CANDLELIGHTING

SATURDAY, MAY 16

8:32pm SHABBAT ENDS

Guidelines for Praying at home:

When davening at home, it is best to daven at the same time that you would have davened when in shul. Although you cannot *hear* the krias Hatorah, you should still read the torah portion and haftorah aloud, using the tunes if you know them.

Stone Chumash (Artscroll)

Behar -- p. 696
Bechukotai -- p.708

Haftora Bechukotai -- p. 1179

Mazal Tov

Abigail Kestenbaum
On being one of this year's
Valedictorians
at Harkham
Hillel Hebrew
Academy!



COMMUNITY CONNECTION

DURING THIS TIME OF MANDATED SOCIAL DISTANCING, WE ARE STILL KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTION.



CONNECT WITH OUR WHATSAPP GROUPS

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Dearest Members and Friends,

Earlier this week I stumbled across an absolutely remarkable article in The Guardian: "The real Lord of the Flies: what happened when six boys were shipwrecked for 15 months." The extraordinary story in the article – one of the most extraordinary I have ever read! – is particularly profound in the lesson that it conveys, a lesson I consider to be one of the most important any of us could ever learn. And so, if I may, please allow me to share this incredible story and the lesson it teaches. I just need to get it off my chest.



In his 1897 travelogue extravaganza, *Following the Equator: A Journey Around the World*, the famed American writer Mark Twain noted that "truth is stranger than fiction... because fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities, [while] truth isn't." And although you will have certainly come across other instances of this phenomenon in your life, I can assure you that you have never come across an instance like this one, and never has Twain's adage been so obvious and apparent.

One of the greatest of all philosophical debates addresses whether or not humankind is intrinsically good or evil. In 1651, the influential philosopher Thomas Hobbes wrote that the life of humans left to their own devices will inevitably be "solitary, poore, nasty brutish, and short." He was merely articulating a widely accepted view. Indeed, we are conditioned to believe that without rules, regulations, and the fear of retribution, human beings will descend into the kind of vile and selfish behavior that will certainly be to the detriment of others.

The Talmud, usually a fount of certitude, oddly conveys ambiguity on this topic. On the one hand we are told that everyone has a place in the afterlife (*Sanhedrin 10:1*), with the implication that over the course of our lives we will all rise above our animalistic selfishness and ultimately be deserving of divine reward. And yet, the Talmud entreats us to "pray for the welfare of the government, for were it not for the fear it inspires, every man would swallow his neighbor alive." (*Avot 3:2*) So which of them is it? Without empirical evidence we are simply left wondering.

Back to the Guardian article. In 1954, a British schoolteacher, William Golding, wrote his first novel, *Lord of the Flies*, later immortalized in several Hollywood movies. The plot was simple but very disturbing. A group of teenage boys find themselves stranded on a remote island after surviving an airplane crash, and they struggle to stay alive in a hostile environment that is exponentially exacerbated by their own descent into feral behavior. The takeaway message of the book was that human beings are inexorably drawn to brutality and savagery, and that it happens far faster than we are comfortable admitting to.

Hobbes might have agreed, but one is forced to wonder what he would have made of the story revealed in the Guardian article by Rutger Bregman, whose dismay at Golding's classic resulted in a lifelong search for some kind of alternative narrative that would prove the Nobel Prize winner wrong. Eventually, after years of searching, he came across a random blog about a group of boys who had found themselves stranded on an island south of Tonga in 1965. After researching the incident in detail, he discovered a tale that was so at odds with what Golding depicted in *Lord of the Flies* that he decided to write his own book – *Humankind* – about how human nature is inherently good, not evil. As it turns out, when faced with insurmountable odds, human beings find it in themselves to provide and nurture, as opposed to steal and murder.

Here is the story. One night in 1965, six boys who attended a strict Catholic boarding school in Tonga – the oldest 16, the youngest 13 – "borrowed" a boat and set sail with two sacks of bananas, a few coconuts and a small gas burner. None of them thought to bring a map, let alone a compass. They soon fell asleep and when they woke up a few hours later they discovered they were in the middle of a storm. Their sail was ripped to shreds, and their rudder fell apart. After the storm was over, they drifted at sea for eight days, until finally they spotted a small island on the horizon.

After making landfall, the boys decided they would work in pairs, and between them created a strict schedule which they adhered to religiously. Although they occasionally argued, they used "time-out" as a method of reconciliation. They prayed every day. One of them constructed a "guitar" from some driftwood, and wires that they found on their wrecked boat. They played the instrument and sang with each other to keep themselves in good spirits.

One day, one of the boys fell off a cliff and broke his leg. But rather than descending into a Darwinian "survival of the fittest", the others carried him back to their makeshift camp, and set his leg using sticks and leaves. Eventually they found an abandoned settlement on the island where there were wild chickens, and uncultivated fruits and vegetables. Somehow, using both ingenuity and carefully calibrated cooperation, all the boys survived for fifteen difficult months until they were finally discovered by a passing ship.

You couldn't make it up. Stranger than fiction. And do you know why it's stranger than fiction? Because rather than the predicted "possibilities" of Twain's fiction, where such an ordeal would surely bring out the worst in a group of teenage boys, as it did in Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, their nightmare situation brought out the best in them. In a sense the story is quite boring and undramatic. None of the boys evolved into one of Golding's beastly specimens. If anything, they returned to civilization better than they had been before they absconded. I guess that's why none of us have had ever heard about this story before now.

In Behar we read about the concept of Shemitta, the Sabbatical year when God demands that we go back-to-basics and exit the rat race, to depend on Him and – crucially! – each other. The Torah seems to be challenging us. How will we fare when we are stripped of our material comforts and the fundamentals on which we all rely? Will we descend into despair? Or worse, into egocentric 'natural selection'? From what we read in Behar it would appear that the Torah expects us all to devote an entire year to introspection, selflessness, and finding our connection to God. And, as we know, the Torah never demands anything of us that we are not capable of. Don't you see? Humans are not the antiheroes of Golding's novel, rather we are the heroes of Bregman's incredible Tonga teenagers story.

As we continue to endure our COVID Shemitta, transplanted onto our remote island of social isolation, devoid of so many things which we all took for granted until just a couple of months ago, let us rise up to the occasion and prove Hobbes and Golding wrong. We can get through this period, and emerge stronger, better, and charged up to take on an improved future.

Praying for your safety and health, and for only good news, with God's help. Shabbat Shalom!

Pini Dunner

Sisterhood Corner

May

Oysgezoozt?

Definition: over-exposed to, fatigued by, exhausted from, bored by, had it with...Zoom!

Who says Yiddish is dead?!

Using Zoom and screens for all of our social connection can be exhausting, it's okay to take a break, step away, & decompress.

Take stock of your needs and take care, it is a time of empathy and gratitude

Shabbat Shalom,
Cecile & Ruthie
Sisterhood Co-Presidents



YAHRTZEITS

Sylvia Samson
Shayna bat Aryeh Leib a"h
Mother of
Lee Samson
Yahrtzeit— 26 Iyyar

Sarah Chaya bat Aryeh HaCohen a"h
Mother of
Joanne Sacks
Yahrtzeit— 28 Iyyar



Samantha Rochelle

Tova Zaghi

Mark Kestenbaum

Debby Fogelman

Elizabeth Richter

Abigail Kestenbaum

Afternoon Tea With the Rabbi

Wednesdays at 2pm



Email
office@yinbh.org
for the zoom link

Grab a drink of choice and join for a chat, ask any questions on your mind, or simply connect with Rabbi Dunner and the community.

BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

**Mincha/Maariv including
sefirat haomer
Praying Together**
Weekdays at 7:35pm
via Zoom

This does not count as a minyan

**Meeting ID
226-829-899**

This is an extremely tough time for many, and although we know many of our members are aware of resources and organizations, we nevertheless put together a list of organizations available and other community resources.

Visit the community page at
Beverlyhillssynagogue.org/community

MISSED A CLASS? Visit Our YouTube Channel

YINBH Yom HaShoah Memorial Service

PIRKEI AVOT WITH RABBI DUNNER May 3rd, 2020 31:36

TREASURES FROM THE RABBI'S LIBRARY EPISODE 6 59:51

Treasures from the Rabbi's Library - Episode 6 39:32

RABBI DUNNER'S SHABBAT HAGADOL D... 31:31

THE ZOOM SEDER CONTROVERSY 31:31

YOM HA'ATZMAUT 2020 31:31

youtube.com/beverlyhillssynagogue

SPONSOR A CLASS



Honor the memory of a loved one, or celebrate a simcha by sponsoring one of our zoom classes. We will mention the sponsorship beforehand and in any class materials.

If interested, email mkramer@yinbh.org

Let's Pray Together

Sponsorship opportunity available

Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat on ZOOM

Friday, May 15th at 6:35pm



Candle lighting
7:30pm

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/3102767650>
Meeting ID: 310 276 7650

Join in with the community for Erev Shabbos prayers led by Chazzan Nati Baram. Shabbat message from Rabbi Pini Dunner



Join us again Motzei Shabbos for Havdalah at 8:50pm



ONE ISRAEL FUND

INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL WEBINAR PRESENTATION WITH

DR. AVI BELL

APPLYING ISRAELI SOVEREIGNTY TO JUDEA & SAMARIA



Dr. Avi Bell is a Harvard graduate and among the world's leading scholars of international law, economic analysis of law, property and intellectual property. A Professor at the University of San Diego School of Law and at Bar Ilan University's Faculty of Law, Dr. Bell also serves as a Senior Fellow at the Kohelet Policy Forum and as Dean of the summer program Law, Governance and the Foundations of Democracy in International Perspective, hosted by the Israel Law and Liberty Forum. In 2018, Dr. Bell was honorably discharged from the Israel Defense Forces after more than two and a half decades of service as a paratrooper in regular and reserve duty.

DATE:
TUESDAY, MAY 19TH
1PM EST

MODERATED BY:
EVE HAROW,
ONE ISRAEL FUND
DIRECTOR OF TOURISM



REGISTRATION REQUIRED

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

Shacharit

Sunday at 8am
Monday-Friday at 7am
Via zoom

MEETING ID 226-829-899

#PRAYTOGETHER

יזכור

LIVE
YIZKOR
SERVICE

Thursday, May 28th
Erev Shavuot
11:00am
via ZOOM

BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

CLASS SCHEDULE - WEEK OF MAY 17-23

THE ZOOM CODE FOR ALL CLASSES ARE **310 276 7650**

The log-in link is <https://zoom.us/j/3102767650>

DATE	TIME	TOPIC	CATEGORY
Sunday May 17	11:00am	Treasures from the Rabbi's Library**	History
Sunday May 17	1:00pm	Pirkei Avot with Rabbi Pini Dunner	Class
Sunday May 17	8:00pm	Tzurva MeRabanan with Chazzan Nati Baram	Class
Monday May 18	12:00pm	"Eretz Tzion Yerushalyim" shiur with Chazzan Nati Baram	Class
Tuesday May 19	12:00pm	Tanach Shiur with Chazzan Nati Baram	Class
Wednesday May 20	11:00am	Parsha Shiur with Rabbi Dunner	Class
Wednesday May 21	2:00pm	Afternoon tea with Rabbi Pini Dunner	Social
Thursday May 21	12:00pm	"Eretz Tzion Yerushalyim" shiur with Chazzan Nati Baram	Class
Friday May 22	6:35pm	Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	Tefilla
Saturday May 23	8:50pm	Havdalah	Tefilla

The Treasures from the Rabbi's Library Video is sponsored by **Myrtle Sitowitz in memory of her best friend and twin sister, **Renie Goldstein, Rifka bat Chaim Yaakov a"h**

CALENDAR FOR COUNTING THE OMER COUNT IN THE EVENING AT OR AFTER MAARIV

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				APRIL 9 COUNT 1	APRIL 10 COUNT 2	APRIL 11 COUNT 3
APRIL 12 COUNT 4	APRIL 13 COUNT 5	APRIL 14 COUNT 6	APRIL 15 COUNT 7	APRIL 16 COUNT 8	APRIL 17 COUNT 9	APRIL 18 COUNT 10
APRIL 19 COUNT 11	APRIL 20 COUNT 12	APRIL 21 COUNT 13	APRIL 22 COUNT 14	APRIL 23 COUNT 15	APRIL 24 COUNT 16	APRIL 25 COUNT 17
APRIL 26 COUNT 18	APRIL 27 COUNT 19	APRIL 28 COUNT 20	APRIL 29 COUNT 21	APRIL 30 COUNT 22	MAY 1 COUNT 23	MAY 2 COUNT 24
MAY 3 COUNT 25	MAY 4 COUNT 26	MAY 5 COUNT 27	MAY 6 COUNT 28	MAY 7 COUNT 29	MAY 8 COUNT 30	MAY 9 COUNT 31
MAY 10 COUNT 32	MAY 11 COUNT 33	MAY 12 COUNT 34	MAY 13 COUNT 35	MAY 14 COUNT 36	MAY 15 COUNT 37	MAY 16 COUNT 38
MAY 17 COUNT 39	MAY 18 COUNT 40	MAY 19 COUNT 41	MAY 20 COUNT 42	MAY 21 COUNT 43	MAY 22 COUNT 44	MAY 23 COUNT 45
MAY 24 COUNT 46	MAY 25 COUNT 47	MAY 26 COUNT 48	MAY 27 COUNT 49			