



# Tefilla Notebook

29 Iyyar • Parshat Bamidbar • Shabbat Mevarchim

May 22-23, 2020

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

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## SHABBAT SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY, MAY 22

7:35pm CANDLELIGHTING

### SATURDAY, MAY 23

8:38pm 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)

Bamidbar -- p. 726

Haftora Machor Chodesh -- p. 1207

**Weekday Mincha/Maariv 7:40pm**  
Via zoom

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

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



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## HAVE A GRADUATE?

**MEMBERS-** If you have a child or grandchild who is graduating this year, please send their information to [mkramer@yinh.org](mailto:mkramer@yinh.org). Please send a photo, where they are graduating from, and the degree they are receiving. We will be listing all the graduates in the June 13th Tefilla Notebook.

Dearest Members and Friends,

I would wager that until March of this year, most of us had never heard of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a federal agency charged with protecting public health and safety via the control and prevention of disease, injury, and disability, both in the US and internationally. But fast forward just a couple of months, and we are now all acutely aware of the "CDC", as it is known, and we anxiously follow its every pronouncement and directive.



One of those directives has been for all of us to wear masks if we are out in public. The said mask should cover mouth and nose, and be worn at all times. And although a mask does not substitute for social distancing, if one keeps six feet away and covers one's mouth and nose, it will protect people around you in case you are infected, and, correspondingly, if they are infected and wearing a mask you will be protected from them.

The reaction to this new ordinance has been extraordinary. As you will no doubt have seen if you've been out on the streets for a walk or to do your grocery shopping, everyone out there is wearing a mask. To the extent that seeing someone without a mask is actually jarring, when just three months ago the exact opposite would have been true, and seeing someone with a mask on might have set alarm bells ringing. But what has struck me more than this mask-wearing ubiquity has been the fact that the masks now come in all kinds of different colors and designs. At the beginning of the coronavirus outbreak masks were all plain white and pale blue, but very soon we began to see customized masks – and now it is rare to see any of the plain ones.

This phenomenon has not escaped mainstream media attention. A couple of weeks ago the Washington Post ran an article headlined: "Masks are here to stay. And they're quickly becoming a way to express ourselves." Companies are all busy ordering branded masks for when their employees return to work, and an entire cottage industry of enterprising mask makers has sprung up out of nowhere, exponentially popularized by the various social media platforms.

My daughter Dalia, who studied fashion design at FIDM, has been inundated by growing customer demand for personalized masks. Indeed, I consider myself lucky that she found the time to make me my very own personalized mask – a comfortable denim one emblazoned with the word 'rabbi' in capitals. Which means that even behind a face mask, my calling is still out there for all to see.

What are we to make of this proliferation of bespoke face protection? In my view this new fashion item reflects an astounding anomaly of human nature, powerfully underpinned by the curious name given by our ancient sages to the fourth book of the Torah: Sefer Hapekudim – the Book of Numbers.

Human beings crave individuality, particularly in western countries, and especially the United States, that bastion of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," self-expression and individualism are seen as an ultimate manifestation of the human spirit. Writing in Psychology Today, Tom Henricks, Professor of Sociology at Elon University, suggests that growing up in western society "most of us experienced what anthropologists call "independence training." According to Henricks, it is exactly this value system that "teaches us to resist collectivism, the most dangerous examples of [which] are countries with totalitarian governments... like Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Communist China." According to popular belief, such countries "rob individuals of their rightful expressions and rewards, and ultimately turn their citizens into masses."

Henricks forcefully argues that this idealized view flies in the face of societal reality. Much of what we think and do, however individual we may feel it to be, is congruent with the views and actions of countless others. And truthfully, that is very healthy. A society purely made up of fiercely independent individuals is a society that cannot function, and it will ultimately descend into anarchy. Individualism has its place only if those who wish to practice it buy into a society that has a shared respect for the rule of law, common goals and accepts its collective identity.

One might presume that the reason Chazal referred to the book of Bamidbar as Sefer Hapekudim is that it begins with a population census. Confusingly, however, this was not the first census conducted by Moses. There was an earlier census recorded in Ki Tissa. In which case, what is so exceptional about this second census that led Chazal to define the entire book by its presence at the beginning of the book?

I think the answer cuts to the heart of this tension between individualism and society. Counting people has two distinct purposes. The first is to combine individual elements into a cohesive group. The second is to give each of those different elements its own identity, so that individuals within the group feel that they count. The purpose of the first counting in Ki Tissa was to unify the Jewish nation into one complete whole after their miraculous redemption from Egyptian slavery. But in the Bamidbar census we find the expression **בְּמִסְפָּר שְׁמוֹת** –which means that the Jews were counted "according to their names." This second counting differed from the earlier one in that its purpose was to emphasize the individuality of each person, even though they belonged to the larger group. When you identify a person by their name you are automatically focusing on their individuality.

Although it is important to be part of a large group, and to belong to a society or a community, as part of that larger group one may end up losing one's sense of uniqueness – the danger of collectivism so ingrained into us from a young age. Those who yearn for their own self-expression but are forced to belong to a group where this is not possible may very well break away from the group so that they can express their individuality. The idea behind Chazal's moniker for Bamidbar – Sefer Hapekudim – is that individuality and self-expression have a very important role to play in society, and indeed a society that has multiple unique individuals all pulling in the same direction is far stronger and much more robust than a society where total conformism is enforced.

Wearing a mask in public is a legal requirement, and will remain so for some time – but that doesn't mean we should all wear the same face protection. Even as we pull together to ensure that the worst ravages of COVID-19 will not destroy us, there is room for individuality and self-expression, and the fact that customized face masks are the new fashion accessory of choice is a testament to a healthy society of individuals all looking to pull together in the face of an equal-opportunity epidemic that threatens every one of us, whatever mask you choose to wear.

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

*Pini Dunner*

## Sisterhood Corner

May

Our next Ladies Night In will be held on May 25<sup>th</sup> at 8pm via Zoom, tune in and share your favorite Shavuot recipes.

Yom Yerushalayim Sameach!

Chodesh Sivan Tov!

Shabbat Shalom,

Cecile & Ruthie

Sisterhood Co-Presidents



*Justin Silver*

*Sydney Gross*

*Maiah Chava Cohenca*

*Alicia Rosenberg*

*Scott Richter*

*Susanne Czucker*

*Katie Kest*

## Happy Anniversary

*Chazzean Nati & Carmit Baram*

*Daniel & Nathalie Paluch*

*Stephen & Jessica Samuel*

*Simon & Rita Elhiani*

## YAHRTZEITS

**Mel Gross**  
Moshe z"l  
Father of  
**Jeff Gross**  
Yahrtzeit— 29 Iyyar

**Mary Friedman**  
Mother of  
**Karen Fisher**  
Yahrtzeit— 4 Sivan

**Shmuel Goldberger**  
Shmuel ben Yosf z"l  
Brother of  
**Ernie Goldberger**  
Yahrtzeit— 6 Sivan

**Jozef Goldberger**  
Jozef ben Yosef z"l  
Brother of  
**Ernie Goldberger**  
Yahrtzeit— 6 Sivan

**Baruch Goldberger**  
Baruch ben Yosef z"l  
Brother of  
**Ernie Goldberger**  
Yahrtzeit— 6 Sivan

**Adina Goldberger**  
Adina bat Asher z"l  
Mother of  
**Ernie Goldberger**  
Yahrtzeit— 6 Sivan

**Yosef Goldberger**  
Yosef ben Yishayahu z"l  
Father of  
**Ernie Goldberger**  
Yahrtzeit— 6 Sivan

## Afternoon Tea With the Rabbi

Wednesdays at 2pm

Email  
[office@yinh.org](mailto:office@yinh.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

YINBH Sisterhood presents...

## Ladies Evening In

Monday, May 25th 8pm

Bring your favorite  
Shavuot Recipe

Via zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3102767650>

zoom code 310 276 7650

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[youtube.com/beverlyhillssynagogue](https://youtube.com/beverlyhillssynagogue)

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If interested, email [mkramer@yinh.org](mailto:mkramer@yinh.org)

**CLASS SCHEDULE - WEEK OF MAY 24-30**  
**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 24	11:00am	Treasures from the Rabbi's Library	History
Sunday May 24	1:00pm	Pirkei Avot with Rabbi Pini Dunner	Class
Sunday May 24	8:00pm	Tzurva MeRabanan with Chazzan Nati Baram	Class
Monday May 25	12:00pm	Shavuot shiur with Chazzan Nati Baram	Class
Monday May 25	8:00pm	Ladies Evening In	Sisterhood
Tuesday May 26	12:00pm	Tanach Shiur with Chazzan Nati Baram	Class
Wednesday May 27	10:00am	Rabbi Dunner talks to Eli Beer	Class
Wednesday May 27	11:00am	Shavuot Shiur with Rabbi Dunner	Class
Wednesday May 27	2:00pm	Afternoon tea with Rabbi Pini Dunner	Social
Thursday May 28	11:00am	Yizkor Service	Tefilla
Thursday May 28	6:35pm	Mincha/Kabbalat Yom Tov	Tefilla
Saturday May 30	8:50pm	Havdalah	Tefilla

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



**RABBI DUNNER  
 TALKS TO ELI BEER**

**LIFESAVER WHOSE LIFE WAS SAVED**

**WEDNESDAY MAY 27TH 2020**

• 10AM PST • 1PM EST • 6PM LONDON • 8PM ISRAEL

Eli Beer was born in Israel, where he witnessed his first terror attack at the age of seven. This traumatic experience, coupled with his desire to help save people, encouraged him to become a volunteer medic. With over 30 years of life-saving experience, he has responded to some of the worst civil, wartime and terror-related incidents. He currently serves as Founder and President of United Hatzalah. Eli recently recovered from a month in the ICU on a respirator battling COVID. His recovery has been called "miraculous".



EMAIL OFFICE@YINBH.ORG TO RECIEVE THE ZOOM LINK

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

*Shacharit*

Sunday at 8am  
 Monday-Friday at 7:30am  
 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