

Tefilla Notebook

This week's Tefilla Notebook is sponsored by **Bob Zeller and Nadine Gerson** in memory of Bob's mother, **Reba Zeller, Rivka bat Max a"h**, whose yahrtzeit is on 3 Tammuz

2 Tammuz • Parshat Korach

June 11-12, 2021

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

Nati Bar-Am, Chazan

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SHABBAT SCHEDULE

FRIDAY JUNE 11TH

CANDLELIGHTING 7:47pm

FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICES 6:30pm

SATURDAY, JUNE 12TH

GEMARA SHIUR: 8:30AM

SHACHARIT 9:15AM

MINCHA 8:00PM

MAARIV 8:50pm

SHABBAT ENDS 8:50pm

Dear Members & Friends,

If you're British and of a certain age, you are probably a fan of the irreverent 70's comedy sketch show Monty Python's Flying Circus. I was introduced to their zany humor in my early teens. It had been a few years since the original TV shows aired, and at the time the only medium available to access their sketches was audio recordings.

I found Monty Python's Flying Circus incredibly refreshing. It was like stepping through the looking-glass into an alternative world, and I was helplessly drawn into the countless unlikely scenarios that were the backdrop to their skits – a roller-coaster mix of surreal setups and clever wordplays. And Monty Python comedy does much more than make you laugh – it forces you to see just how ridiculous the human condition can be, particularly if people take themselves too seriously.

One particularly preposterous Monty Python skit is known as the "argument sketch". The premise is simple. An average-looking chap enters a generic office and tells the receptionist that he'd "like to have an argument." Unfazed, the receptionist asks if he's interested in a one-off argument, or if he's thinking of taking a course. The penny drops – this is no ordinary office; it is a facility which offers a variety of human interactions that in a non-Monty Python world we all try and avoid: arguments, verbal abuse, listening to complaints, and even being hit over the head.

After some false starts, the guy walks into a room and asks if he's in "the right room for an argument." The man looks up at him, quizzically. "I've told you once," he says. "No you haven't." "Yes I have." "When?" "Just now." "No you didn't!" "Yes I did!" "You didn't!" And so it goes on, back and forth, until the customer, in total frustration, challenges his interlocutor: "Look," he says, "this isn't an argument!" Predictably, the other guy responds: "Yes it is!" "No it isn't!" says the customer, "it's just contradiction – and an argument isn't just contradiction." "Well, it can be." "No, it can't!" he protests, "an argument is a connected series of statements intended to establish a proposition."

And so it goes on – and on, and on. Eventually, the sketch descends into total farce, with the comedy meandering off in a different direction – but I was always struck by this particular point: that an argument is only an argument if it is a connected series of statements intended to establish a proposition, rather than just being a series of pointless, futile disagreements.

Writing in the Harvard Business Review, the award-winning executive coach Peter Bregman explained why most arguments are utterly ineffective: "Think about it. You and someone have an opposing view and you argue. You pretend to listen to what they're saying but what you're really doing is thinking about the weakness in their argument so you can disprove it. Or perhaps, if they've debunked a previous point, you're thinking of new counterarguments. Or, maybe, you've made it personal: it's not just their argument that's the problem – it's them. And everyone who agrees with them. In some rare cases, you might think their argument has merit. What then? Do you change your mind? Probably not. Instead, you make a mental note that you need to investigate the issue more to uncover the right argument to prove the person wrong."

Remarkably, Bregman is making the exact same point as Monty Python: an argument – however sophisticated you may think your point-of-view may be – is never going to be productive if it is merely a series of contradictions between two opposing viewpoints. That's because if the object of an argument is just disagreement, no proposition is ever established – and the longer such an exchange of views persists, the more it will lead to frustration, rancor, and worse.

The Talmud records a number of Jewish traditions regarding arguments, the most famous of which can be found in Pirkei Avot (5:17): "Any argument for the sake of Heaven will endure, while [an argument that is] not for the sake of Heaven will not endure." The Mishna continues by informing us that a controversy for the sake of Heaven is exemplified by the disagreements between Hillel and Shammai, while Korach's polemic is identified as the paradigm of an argument that is not for the sake of Heaven. Elsewhere (Sanhedrin 110a), the Talmud teaches us that "someone who is persistently argumentative has sinned, as it says 'do not be like Korach and his supporters' (Num. 17:5)."

Puzzlingly, the Talmud is almost exclusively dominated by arguments between rabbis. Paradoxically, it seems as if our Talmudic sages reveled in disagreement. And although Hillel and Shammai disagreed with each other quite frequently, the schools they founded and inspired remained in constant dispute over major and minor points of Jewish law for centuries.

In fact, over 300 debates are recorded between Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai, and yet, the Talmud informs us (Yebamot 14b): "Beit Shammai did not refrain from marrying women from Beit Hillel, nor did Beit Hillel refrain from marrying women from Beit Shammai, which means that they remained friendly and affable towards each other, fulfilling what [Zechariah] said: "Love truth and peace" (Zech. 8:19).

Not only was there a constructive purpose in their debates – namely, the establishment of Jewish law – when it came down to practical life, there was a total accommodation of each other's opinions. As the Talmud records elsewhere (Erubin 13b), both points of view were considered the "words of the living God," an attitude these adversaries seem to have adopted as an overriding principle.

Meanwhile, Korach's intent was anarchy: he wanted to disrupt the social order, to deconstruct society, and to undermine the leadership. Korach was not interested in an honest debate, nor was he concerned with anyone else's point of view. As if this was not enough, he knew that there was no endgame in which he could emerge successful. Gainsaying Moses may have been satisfying in the short term, but ultimately, just like the Monty Python sketch, it was an exercise in futility.

Nothing has changed. Human beings still argue. And there are those who argue like Hillel and Shammai, and those who argue like Korach. The difference between the two remains the same, and we all know why one kind of argument is right, and why the other is wrong. And while truth is undoubtedly important, ultimately it is always more important for peace to prevail.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom and a great week ahead,

Rabbi Pini Dunner

WEEKDAY DAVENING TIMES

SUN 8:00AM & 8:00PM

MON - THURS 7:00AM & 8:00PM

FRI 7:00AM & 6:30PM

THANK YOU

Mark & Amy Kestenbaum
for sponsoring this week's
extended kiddush in
memory of Mark's mother,
Gail Kestenbaum,
Gittel bat Zev Velvel a"h,
whose yahrtzeit is on
2 Tammuz.

WELCOME TEENS!

Teen Minyan will be taking
place in the shul back Patio
starting at 10am followed by
a teen-only kiddush.

THANK YOU

Next Week's Parsha Shiur will be
sponsored by **George & Suzi**
Fischmann in memory of George's
sister, **Klary Fischmann, Rivka bat**
Chaim Yehuda a"h, whose yahrtzeit is
on the 8th of Tammuz.

Join the weekly Parsha shiur on
Wednesdays at 11am via zoom -
beverlyhillssynagogue.org/zoom

Sisterhood Corner

June

Teen Minyan is Back!

Shabbat Day, June 12th at 10:00am

Teen led services and participation will take place in the shul patio!

RSVP to office@yinh.org

Save the date!

Treasure's from the Rabbi's Library

The next Episode is airing June 21st at 5pm!

Email office@yinh.org for more information

Coming Soon!

YINBH Book group

Our first meeting's selection

Never Alone: Prison, Politics, and My People.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 13th at 7:30pm See the Flyer for full details and registration info!

Rosh Chodesh Tov!

&

Shabbat Shalom,

Cecile & Ruthie

Sisterhood Co-Presidents

YAHRTZEITS

Gail Kestenbaum
Gittel bat Zev Velvel a"h
Mother of
Mark Kestenbaum
Yahrtzeit - 2 Tammuz

Reba Zeller
Rivka bat Max a"h
Mother of
Bob Zeller
Yahrtzeit - 3 Tammuz

Rose Garshofsky
Bayla Raiza bat Moshe Eliezer
HaKohen z"h
Mother of
Larry Garshofsky
Yahrtzeit - 7 Tammuz

Karen Banker
Chaya Mindel bat Gershon a"h
Sister of
Janice Kaufler
Yahrtzeit - 6 Tammuz

Lawrence Gittler
Lavi ben Yosef z"l
Father of
Gregg Gittler
Yahrtzeit - 7 Tammuz

Klary Fischmann
Rivka bat Chaim Yehudah a"h
Sister of
George Fischmann
Yahrtzeit - 8 Tammuz



*George Fischmann
Judith Garshofsky
Waverly Laksman
Evan Brenner
Ben Richter
Andrea Richter
Meir Naim
Shirley Aizenstein*

Happy Anniversary



*Nasrin & Manucher
Mostadim*

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.

HAVE A GRADUATE?



MEMBERS - IF YOU HAVE A CHILD OR GRANDCHILD WHO IS GRADUATING THIS YEAR, PLEASE SEND THEIR INFORMATION TO MKRAMER@YINBH.ORG. PLEASE INCLUDE A PHOTO, WHERE THEY ARE GRADUATING FROM, AND THE DEGREE THEY ARE RECEIVING. WE WILL BE LISTING ALL THE GRADUATES IN THE JUNE 26TH TEFILLA NOTEBOOK. PLEASE SEND NAMES BY JUNE 23RD

TREASURES FROM THE RABBI'S LIBRARY



BRAND NEW SERIES

**2nd EPISODE
MONDAY
June 21st
5pm PST**

July 19th • August 23rd

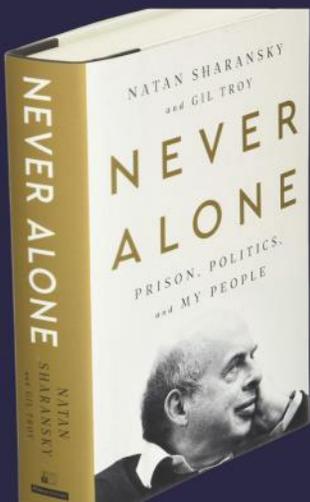
Join the zoom at

beverlyhillssynagogue.org/zoom

BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS



This week Meir Dunner received his paratrooper wings after participating in parachute jumps together with his unit.



SAVE THE DATE!

JULY 13th, 2021

AT 7:30PM (PST)
MEN & WOMEN WELCOME

Order now on
amazon

YINBH BOOK GROUP

JOIN SISTERHOOD ON JULY 13TH, 2021 FOR OUR FIRST BOOK SELECTION *NEVER ALONE PRISON, POLITICS, AND MY PEOPLE* A RECENT MEMOIR OF NATAN SHARANSKY.

WE WILL BE IN CONVERSATION WITH CO-AUTHOR AND DISTINGUISHED HISTORIAN **Gil Troy**

\$18 Suggested donation
MEETING DETAILS TO FOLLOW!
Email Office@yinbh.org to register

YINBH DUBAI MISSION OCTOBER 21-31, 2021



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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

IN-PERSON SOLD OUT

THURSDAY, JUNE 17

HONORING



Rabbi
Pini Dunner



Chazzan
Nati Baram

IN PERSON & VIRTUAL
PRIVATE HOME IN BEVERLY HILLS
ADDRESS PROVIDED UPON RSVP

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