

# Tefilla Notebook

This week's Tefilla Notebook is sponsored by  
**Dr. William Levin** in memory of his father, **Isadore Levin,**  
**Yitzchok ben Aharon David HaLevi z"l**, whose yahrtzeit is  
on the 25th of Tammuz.

24 Tammuz • Pinchas • Birkat HaChodesh

July 22-23, 2022

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

Nati Bar-Am, Chazan

## SHABBAT SCHEDULE

**FRIDAY, JULY 22**

CANDLELIGHTING: 7:43PM

MINCHA/KABBALAT SHABBAT: 6:30PM

**SATURDAY, JULY 23**

GEMARA SHIUR: 8:30AM

SHACHARIT: 9:15AM

PIRKEI AVOT SHIUR: 7:20PM

MINCHA: 7:50pm

MAARIV: 8:40pm

SHABBAT ENDS: 8:46pm

## WEEKDAY DAVENING TIMES

	Shacharit	Mincha/Maariv
Sun	8:00am	7:50pm
Mon-Thurs	7:00am	7:50pm
Friday	7:00am	6:30pm

**Rosh Chodesh Av is on  
Friday, July 29th**

## MAZAL TOV

Shari & Michael Weiner on  
the birth of a grandson,  
James Lev  
(Haim)

Johnson,  
born to Ari  
& Alana  
Johnson.



Mazal Tov to Grandmother  
Resa Johnson. Mazal Tov to  
Aunts and Uncles Samantha  
Weiner, David & Gabi  
Johnson, and Tara and Josh  
Kornblum.

## THANK YOU

Aaron & Lillian Fuchs and  
Jason Fuchs for sponsoring  
next week's Parsha Shiur in  
memory of Aaron's mother,  
Sara Fuchs, Chaya Surah bat  
Gittel a"n, whose yahrtzeit is  
on the 26th of Tammuz.

Dear Members & Friends,

Earlier this week, a fascinating article in the New York Times caught my attention: How 'Stop the Steal' Captured the American Right. The article argues that the post-2020 election "stop the steal" movement has now evolved well beyond the initial legal challenges, and has even moved beyond Donald Trump as the protagonist. As of now it has become more of an entrenched viewpoint among right-wingers, that election results in the United States – whether federal, state or local – can no longer be trusted.

"Gone... are the big rallies, with their open calls for violence and ostentatious displays of military-style kit, and many of those who organized them. Gone, too, are most of the election audits and other inquiries into the results convened by Republican-controlled state legislatures and local governments, investigations that failed to produce evidence of meaningful fraud. What is left in their place is an insistence – a belief, a lie, or an act of motivated reasoning, depending on whom you're talking to – that the election was stolen..."

What we are seeing is a mainstream outlook among those on the right that U.S. election rules have been deliberately calibrated to throw elections in favor of those who are on the left. Evidence to the contrary is dismissed as misconceived, or worse, as fake, and if anyone on the right is willing to accept evidence, they are sneeringly rejected as misguided, or even as traitors.

I am not an expert on U.S. election law, but nonetheless, it makes no sense that people who have a vested interest in the stability of the U.S. political system are willing to willfully undermine the system to this extent. It strikes me that from now on, the possibility exists that no U.S. election result will ever be accepted by the right if their favored candidate doesn't win – a notion that at some point might just as easily become a left-wing fetish too.

The key phrase in the New York Times article encapsulating this daunting challenge to hitherto accepted norms of election result protocols is "motivated reasoning" – the phenomenon in cognitive science and social psychology that sees emotional biases result in justifications or decisions which are primarily based on desirability, rather than on an accurate reflection of any available empirical evidence. In other words, "I want to believe this, therefore it must be true – and all arguments or evidence to the contrary are wrong."

Of course I know this is a controversial topic, not least because there are those on the left, and even some on the right, who have their own "motivated reasons" to dismiss the claims of those who say that election results can't be trusted. What is undisputed, however, is that this dissonance cannot be repaired by any of the existing adjudication bodies in the U.S. government framework. Contrast this with the post-2000 presidential election debacle – which hinged on "hanging chads," "dimpled chads," "pregnant chads," and claims of both voter fraud and voter suppression. That election result was ultimately decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in favor of George W. Bush – a decision that was accepted by everyone. It is highly doubtful that a U.S. Supreme Court decision regarding a disputed election would be so easily and broadly accepted today.

How ironic that the United States, which is at the forefront of international election monitoring and observation, has been less willing to allow its own elections to be scrutinized, even by the homegrown Federal Election Commission (FEC), a bipartisan group established in 1974 to oversee presidential elections. Currently, the FEC is deadlocked over quorum issues as a result of partisan squabbling, and, most tellingly, the FEC was almost entirely out of action during the 2020 election year. Meanwhile, international observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) who supervised the 2020 U.S. election submitted their report in February 2021, stating that the 2020 "election featured record levels of participation and was... 'the most secure in American history.'" Well, are they guilty of "motivated reasoning"? I imagine "stop the steal" supporters would say that they were.

Jewish tradition is unequivocal about motivated reasoning – no one whose opinion is in question because of personal bias can ever adjudicate or testify in a formal process in which their opinion would need to be treated as objective. For example, relatives are barred from testifying in either a civil or criminal trial involving their relatives, based on a verse in Devarim (Deut. 24:16): "Fathers shall not be put to death because of sons, and sons shall not be put to death because of fathers."

A primary example of motivated reasoning impacting a major biblical narrative answers a puzzling question about Moses. At the beginning of Parshat Pinchas, it is not Moses who springs into action to tackle the flagrant licentiousness of the Simeonite prince, Zimri, together with the Midianite princess, Cozbi. Rather it is his great-nephew, Pinchas, grandson of his brother Aaron. The rabbinic commentaries struggle to justify Moses' act of omission, although the eminent prewar head of the Berlin Rabbinical Seminary, Rabbi Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg (1884-1966), offers a compelling explanation.

The solution to Zimri's public immorality could only be achieved via an extrajudicial execution – a boil-lancing operation the Torah refers to as an act of zealotry. But a zealot has to be free of any  
(Continued on page 3)



## *Sisterhood Corner*

August/September

We hope you are summering well!

Come expand your mind this summer!

### **Exploring Jewish History with Rabbi Pini Dunner**

Monday, August 1st at 7:00pm

Premiering on YouTube!

Tuesday, August 23rd at 8pm

In person at YINBH

More info at [beverlyhillssynagogue.org/jewishhistory](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org/jewishhistory)

Do good, feel good while enjoying  
Chazan Nati and Colin Schachat's  
amazing performance

### **Tikvah Slifkin Concert**

Monday, August 22nd at 7pm

Get your tickets at  
[beverlyhillssynagogue.org/tikvah](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org/tikvah)

Coming up soon!

Our next book group read is

### **"Let My People Know"**

The incredible story of Middle East peace  
and what lies ahead by Aryeh Lightstone

We invite you behind the scenes of  
Abraham Accords

More details to follow...

Shabbat Shalom,

Cecile & Ruthie

Sisterhood Co-Presidents

### **REMINDER**

Statements have been emailed  
to everyone with an  
outstanding invoice. Please  
make sure to pay any open  
balances to the Synagogue.  
You can log-in to your account  
at [beverlyhillssynagogue.org](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org)  
or call 310-276-7650

## **YAHRTZEITS**



### **Isadore Levin**

Yitzchok ben Aharon David HaLevi  
z"l

Father of

**Dr. William Levin  
Diana Hirt**

Yahrtzeit - 25 Tammuz

### **Sara Fuchs**

Chaya Surah bat Gittel a"h

Mother of

**Aaron Fuchs**

Yahrtzeit - 26 Tammuz

### **Paul Feder**

Pinchas Eliyahu ben Shimson  
HaLevi z"l

Father of

**Donald Feder**

**Helene Feder**

**Steven Feder**

Yahrtzeit - 26 Tammuz

### **Max Solomon Brozin**

Mordechai Zalman ben Nachum z"l

Father of

**Esther Feder**

Yahrtzeit - 26 Tammuz

### **Jeffrey Lawrence Gilson**

Eliyahu Yehuda ben Gerson z"l

Son of

**Shawney Fine**

Yahrtzeit - 26 Tammuz

## **PAUL FEDER Z"l GEMARA SHIUR**

לע"נ פנחס אליהו בן שמשון הלוי

Join Rabbi Dunner for his Gemara shiur on Shabbat and Yom Tov 45  
minutes before Shacharit.

*We are coming up to the 8th yahrtzeit of Paul Feder z"l.  
Join us for the Eight year anniversary of the weekly  
Shabbos Gemara Shiur.*

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

*Joan Lopatin*

*Shira Zargaran*

*Jaron Wallack*

*Lily Kramer*

*Madeline Kramer*

*Dena Sier*

*Darryl Kam*

*Michael Bayer*

*Mickey Tencer*

*Esther Miller*

*David Bayer*

### **Membership Renewal 5783**

All current members are invited  
to renew your membership for  
the upcoming year 5783. Please  
visit [yinbh.org/renewal](http://yinbh.org/renewal)

You can also call the office at  
310-276-7650 or email  
[office@yinbh.org](mailto:office@yinbh.org).

### **THANK YOU**

To everyone who has already  
renewed their membership.

*Once you log-in to our website, you can...*



Reserve your High Holiday  
Seats! Once you renew your  
membership, please reserve  
your seats for the High Holidays.



Order your Arba Minim  
directly from the shul. Order  
by October 3rd



Place Names in the Yizkor  
Booklet. Submit by  
September 19th



Sign up your children or  
grandchildren for youth  
groups during High Holiday  
Services

[Beverlyhillssynagogue.org](http://Beverlyhillssynagogue.org)

### **Happy Anniversary**

*Barry Novack & Annie Baum*



personal motivations and biases for their act to be accepted by all. The Midrashic sages fill in some of the narrative gaps, telling us that when Moshe rebuked Zimri for engaging with a Midianite, Zimri scoffed at him: "Are you serious? Aren't you married to a Midianite yourself?" Upon hearing these words, Moses immediately stepped back, in the knowledge that if he dealt with Zimri, he might be guilty – or thought of as being guilty – of acting in revenge for the public slight against his wife, an example of motivated reasoning if there ever was one. (Continued on page 3)

Meanwhile, Pinchas was an outsider who had never been involved in the nation's leadership, enabling him to proceed as an independent actor. And yet, he still suffered from demeaning comments regarding his Midianite ancestry, as his mother, like Moses' wife, was also one of Jethro's daughters. "Do you consider yourself you holier than Moses?" onlookers asked him, mockingly, "Moses refrained from direct action, but you're ok with it?" Which was why God charted Pinchas' ancestry to Aaron, to mitigate any claims against him of motivated reasoning (Num. 25:11): פִּינָחָס בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֵן הַשֵּׁיב אֶת חֲמַתִּי מֵעַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל - "Pinchas, son of Elazar, son of Aaron the Priest, has alleviated my anger against the Children of Israel." Pinchas, said God, was acting solely as a descendant of Aaron, and not to overcompensate because of his Midianite origins.

The dangers of motivated reasoning injecting itself into important processes and activities cannot be overestimated. This lesson from Parshat Pinchas could not come at a timelier moment. It is a lesson well worth reflecting on, and taking on board.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom, and a great week ahead,

Rabbi Pini Dunner

STEVEN & VIVIAN DORFMAN KEILIM MIKVAH



The Keilim Mikvah is now open for use. You can buzz-in for access via the intercom at the entrance to the garage, during weekday office hours.

It is customary to give tzedakah before doing to mitzvah of *tovelling* Keilim. You can give a donation directly to the keilim mikvah by visiting [beverlyhillssynagogue.org/keilim](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org/keilim).

On the back walls of our Sanctuary, we have two gorgeous displays of marble yahrtzeit plaques. This is a beautiful way of visibly showing the names and dates of our dearly departed loved ones. All members can add names to this yahrtzeit wall as a way to embed a lasting memory. **Yahrtzeit plaques cost \$1,800.**

If you would like to add a yahrtzeit plaque to our memorial wall, please contact Madeline at [mkramer@yinh.org](mailto:mkramer@yinh.org)

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YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

# Exploring Jewish History

## WITH RABBI PINI DUNNER

\*NEW SERIES\*

### Treasures from the Rabbi's Library

Curiosities from the shelves of Rabbi Dunner's Study

Monday, August 1st 7pm - Premiering on YouTube

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### Rabbi Shlomo Goren and the Langer Controversy

Tuesday, August 23rd 8pm

Live in-person lecture at YINBH

RSVP at [beverlyhillssynagogue.org/jewishhistory](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org/jewishhistory)

You can also use the above link to view past episodes

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This series is sponsored by George & Suzi Fischmann



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BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE



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