



SUMMER  
5778/2018

# G E S H E R

Washington Heights Congregation

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## *A Message From The Rabbi ...*

# Can't Happen to Me

by Rabbi Yaakov Hoffman

**T**he order of topics that the Torah discusses often seems haphazard. For example, the law of a Nazir, who vows to refrain from grape products, getting haircuts, and having contact with the dead, immediately follows the law of the Sotah, the suspected adulteress. What could God be teaching us with this juxtaposition?

The Talmud in several places (Brachos 63a, Nazir 2a, Sotah 2a) gives the following answer: *לומר לך שכל הרואה סוטה בקלוקולה יזיר עצמו מן היין*. The Torah alludes to the fact that the proper response to witnessing the ordeal of a Sotah is to abstain from drinking wine. Seeing such a terrible event should move one to go to great lengths to ensure that alcohol never clouds one's judgment and leads *לז"ז* to being in a similar position.

However, this advice seems a bit far fetched. Unless there are other problems present, it is nearly impossible that wine in moderation will lead to promiscuity. Furthermore, why would someone who simply views the Sotah need the extra dose of prevention? What makes a spectator more susceptible to immorality?


Because of these questions, I believe that our Sages were not offering literal, practical advice on how to avoid being involved in a case of real or suspected adultery. Rather, they were trying to recalibrate our reaction to witnessing such an ordeal. Our natural response to seeing a Sotah, her hair disheveled and her clothes torn, is to disassociate ourselves in utter disgust: "Ugh, what a nebech. Such things will never happen to me," and not give the matter another thought.

By suggesting that one immediately undertake a Nazirite vow, Chazal are telling us that such a detached response is improper, as it prevents us from growing spiritually. When we see others having succumbed, it must serve as a reminder how low human beings can sink: no one is immune to temptation. Being unlikely to fall into exactly the same trap is not an excuse not to be on guard. Such a sight is an opportunity for inspiration to take active steps to strengthen our religious diligence.

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Although we no longer have the Temple or the Sotah ordeal, Chazal's teaching about how to respond is as relevant as ever. Unfortunately, we frequently encounter failures in the Jewish community. We may think, "Oy, that is terrible, but I will never do such thing," and shrug it off. However, this response is incorrect. We must take heed and channel our reaction into increased intensity and care in our Torah observance. 

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## Shul Events:

**Pesach, March 30 – April 7:** Thanks to the **Rebbetzin's** delicious mezonot, we had kiddush every day of yom tov as well as on Shabbat. Thanks also to **Morris & Laura Whitcup** for their special donation, which made the kiddushes festive indeed!

**Shabbat Emor, May 5:** This year we celebrated Israel's 70th anniversary with a special sit-down kiddush, sponsored by **Laura Whitcup** to celebrate **Morris Whitcup's** bar mitzvah parsha. **Rabbi Ellis Bloch**, visiting with **Leah** from Jerusalem, spoke about "70 Years of Israel."

**Shavuot, May 19-21:** As has been our custom for some years, we had shiurim both after our cheesecake kiddushes and before and after mincha on both days of yom tov. Thanks to **Rabbi Hoffman** and **Elan Rieser** for organizing them. And many thanks to the speakers: **Rabbi Hoffman**, **Elan Rieser**, **Dr. Rivka Schwartz**, **Rabbi Ezra Schwartz**, **Dr. David Sclar**, **Dr. Morris Whitcup**, and **Rabbi Netanel Wiederblank**.

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## מזל טוב / Congratulations

To **Sonya Jacobs** on the marriage of a granddaughter, **Devorah Horowitz**, to **Yisroel Young**, and to the parents of the bride, **Nechama & Tovia Horowitz**

To **May & Gary Deutsch** on the birth of a grandson, **Ezra Brown**, in Israel, and to the parents, **Naavah & Josh Brown**

**Sonya Jacobs** on the birth of a great-grandson, and to the grandparents, **Nechama & Tovia Horowitz**, and to the parents, **Shaindy & Dovid Horowitz**

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## Kiddush Sponsors:

**April 21, Tazria-Metzora:** Mordecai & Leslie Segall

**April 28, Acharei Mot-Kedoshim:** Rabbi Ellis & Leah Bloch in honor of all their friends at the Bridge shul

**May 5, Emor:** sit-down kiddush given by **Laura Whitcup** in honor of **Morris's** bar mitzvah parasha

**May 12, Behar-Bechukotai:** **May & Gary Deutsch** on the birth of their newest grandson, **Ezra Brown**

**May 19, Bamidbar:** **Margot Fein** on the yahrzeit of Margot's mother, **Sylvia Fein**

**May 26, Nasso:** **Morris & Laura Whitcup** on the yahrzeit of Morris's father, **Jacob Whitcup**

**June 2, Beha'alotcha:** **Melchior Nutovich** on the first yahrzeit of his mother, **Audrey Nutovich (Chaya Fraida bat Yaakov)**

**June 9, Shlach:** **MSJC Shavuot BBQ guests**, thanking **WHC** for letting them use the **TTC**

**June 16, Korach:** **Helena Meiri** in honor of her son **Moxe's** graduation from **Joseph Kushner Hebrew Academy** middle school

**June 23, Chukat:** **David & Yafit Selar** in honor of **Ayala's** 2nd birthday

If you are interested in sponsoring a Kiddush,  
please call the Shul office **(212) 923-4407**

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## Condolences to:

We regret to inform you of the passing of our long-term member **Ferna Kaufman (Fratcha bat Shimon)**

*May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem*

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

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This year, we expanded our program to include a Wellness Project, offering weekly yoga classes and monthly massage therapy sessions.

For more information and/or to receive their e-mail news letter please go to <http://www.moriahseniorcenter.org>  
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The answering machine is checked frequently.  
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# Washington Heights Congregation Zmanim

## Summer 5778

Zmanim subject to change: please consult the website and weekly e-mails for the latest times

### SHABBAT PARASHAT CHUKAT

#### JUNE 22-23

Earliest candles	6:57
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:15*
Candle Lighting	8:13
Shacharit (note early start)	8:30
Mincha	8:10
Maariv/Havdalah	9:22

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### SHABBAT PARASHAT BALAK

#### JUNE 29-30

Earliest candles	6:58
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:15*
Candle Lighting	8:13
Shacharit (note early start)	8:30
Mincha	8:10
Maariv/Havdalah	9:22

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### FAST OF TAMMUZ

#### SUNDAY, JULY 1

Fast begins	3:19 AM
Fast ends	9:12 PM

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### SHABBAT MEVARCHIM

### PARASHAT PINCHAS

#### JULY 6-7

Earliest candles	6:57
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:15*
Candle Lighting	8:12
Shacharit (note early start)	8:35
Mincha	8:10
Maariv/Havdalah	9:20

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### SHABBAT PARASHAT MATOT-MASEI

#### JULY 13-14

Earliest candles	6:55
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:15*
Candle Lighting	8:09
Shacharit (note early start)	8:35
Mincha	8:05
Maariv/Havdalah	9:16

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### SHABBAT HAZON

### PARASHAT DEVARIM

#### JULY 20-21

Earliest candles	6:51
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:10*
Candle Lighting	8:05
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:45
Fast begins	8:18
Shabbat ends	9:11
Maariv	9:40

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### TISHA B'AV

#### SUNDAY, JULY 22

Shacharit	8:20
Chatzot	1:02
Fast ends	9:00

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### SHABBAT NACHAMU

### PARASHAT VAETCHANAN

#### JULY 27-28

Earliest candles	6:47
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:05*
Candle Lighting	7:59
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:55
Maariv/Havdalah	9:03

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## SHABBAT MEVARCHIM PARASHAT EIKEV

### AUGUST 3-4

Earliest candles	6:41
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:00*
Candle Lighting	7:52
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:50
Maariv/Havdalah	8:54

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## ROSH CHODESH ELUL SHABBAT PARASHAT RE'EH

### AUGUST 10-11

Earliest candles	6:34
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:00*
Candle Lighting	7:43
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:40
Maariv/Havdalah	8:44

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## SHABBAT PARASHAT SHOFTIM

### AUGUST 17-18

Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:00*
Candle Lighting	7:34
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:30
Maariv/Havdalah	8:34

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## SHABBAT PARASHAT KI TEITZEI

### AUGUST 24-25

Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:00
Candle Lighting	7:23
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:20
Maariv/Havdalah	8:22

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## SHABBAT PARASHAT KI TAVO

### AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 1

Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	7:00
Candle Lighting	7:12
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	7:10
Maariv/Havdalah	8:11

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\*For those whose families daven with the shul's minyan, candles should be lit no later than 25 minutes after Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat starts



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## The Eruv

Information about the boundaries of the Washington Heights and YU Eruvin can be found at [http://images.shulcloud.com/131/attachments/6279\\_DOC082112-003.pdf](http://images.shulcloud.com/131/attachments/6279_DOC082112-003.pdf).

Note that the eruv does not extend into Fort Tryon Park or Gorman Park.

Find the CURRENT STATUS of both eruvin at <http://www.mtsinaishul.com/>, or call 646-450-ERUV, or send a text message (SMS) to 412-213-8991. If only the YU eruv is listed as unchecked, check [www.yueruv.org](http://www.yueruv.org) closer to Shabbat, or listen to announcements in shul on Friday night.

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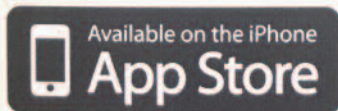
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