

HAVURAT YISRAEL WEEKLY NEWS

14 Tevet 5783

SHABBAT VAYECHI

January 7, 2023

Shabbat Shalom!

4:25 pm Candle Lighting
 4:30 pm Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat

8:45 am Mishnayot Shiur
 9:00 am Shacharit
 9:38 am Latest Shema
 Parasha p. 268 Haftorah p. 1145
 11:00 am Drasha, Kids Program
 3:45 pm Gemara Shiur
 4:15 pm Mincha, Seudah Shlisheet
 5:25 pm Maariv, Havdalah

Kiddush is sponsored commemorating the Yahrzeit of Michael Blau Z"L.

Seudah Shlisheet sponsorship available.

Upcoming Sponsorships

January 14 — Felicia Kulaya and Blanca Cifuentes
 February 4 — Anonymous
 February 11 — Jack & Shulie Goldhaber
 February 18 — Rachel & Louis Ordentlich
 February 25 — Sarah & Barney Paikin
 March 4 — Ephraim Grossbein
 March 25 — Anonymous


Mazal Tov Mazal Tov to Rabbi David & Tamara Algaze

- ☆ on the the engagement of his grandson Yaakov Cohen to Yehudit Biton in Israel.
- ☆ on the Bar Mitzvah of grandson Kobi. Also Mazal Tov to the parents Jillian and Hillel.

Condolences to Yehuda Mendieta on the passing of his mother.

SET ASIDE A TIME TO LEARN TORAH!

- **Sundays at 9:30 am-** Rabbi Algaze's Parsha class in Spanish
- **Mondays at 7 pm-** Journey in Jewish Literature
- **Tuesdays at 7 pm-** Parasha class
- **Wednesdays at 7 pm -** The Book of Samuel with guest teacher Avi Weschler



Trip to Israel!
with Rabbi & Tamara Algaze
March 12-23, 2023

- ◇ An exciting visit to Eretz Israel
- ◇ Meals and admissions included
- ◇ Complete land package only \$2,600
- ◇ Airfare approx. \$1,200 now

Details on the flyer.
 Contact the office to register. Registration fee \$100—MUST BE RECEIVED BY JAN. 15!

Start the New Year Right! Pay Your Dues!

Our shul has always distinguished itself by keeping membership dues low, so that everyone could be a full supporting member. That model only works if everyone becomes a member and pays their dues on time. Please be a part of your community. **If you're not yet a member, the time to join is NOW. If you are a member, the time to renew is now! Note: All members' privileges are for members in good standing. Don't let your membership lapse.**

MEMORIAL PLAQUES

THE AUTOMATED PLAQUES IN OUR SHUL HONOR THE MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES EVEN IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND SERVICES.

Please place your order now to ensure that the names of your loved ones will be included by the next Yizkor. Price for each plaque is \$500. *All orders must be pre-paid before they are processed.*

SUNDAY Jan. 8 / 15 Tevet	MONDAY Jan. 9 / 16 Tevet	TUESDAY Jan. 10 / 17 Tevet	WEDNESDAY Jan. 11 / 18 Tevet	THURSDAY Jan. 12 / 19 Tevet	FRIDAY Jan. 13 / 20 Tevet
7:30 am Gemara Shiur 8:00 am Shacharit 8:45 am Breakfast 9:30 am Parasha class in Spanish — Rabbi Algaze	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit 7:00 pm Journey in Jewish Literature — Rabbi Algaze	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit 7:00 pm Parsha Class — Rabbi Algaze	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit 7:00 pm The Book of Samuel — Avi Weschler	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit	6:30 am Gemara Shiur 7:00 am Shacharit 4:33 pm Candle Lighting 4:40 pm Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat

WHAT IS CONSOLATION?

"I wouldn't want it any other way!"

By Rabbi David Algaze

"But Joseph said to them, Fear not, for am I in the place of G-d? Although you intended me harm, G-d intended it for good...I will sustain you and your young ones. Thus he comforted them and spoke to their heart." (Bereshheet 50:20-21)

How do you comfort someone in pain? What words, gestures or actions can bring some solace to the bereaved? Moreover, what is consolation itself? Simple people regard the act of comforting as merely saying soothing words, bringing some positive light to the sad experience. In Joseph's comforting his brothers we have a profoundly new insight into the concept of consolation. As Joseph speaks to his brothers he does not merely utter sweet words; he recalls the entire incident of the sale by interpreting the tragic chain of events with a new perspective. "You meant to do evil, G-d meant it unto good, so as to bring to pass, as on this day, to give life to a numerous nation." (ibid. 20) His message is that although their intention had been for evil, nevertheless G-d used these very acts to create the conditions in which Joseph would rise to greatness in Egypt and consequently be able to support and take care of his brothers. The consolation is actually a new version of what happened. This new reading of history is actually what makes the brothers feel comforted. Consolation is therefore the ability to see the same things as before but in a totally different light and perspective.

This idea is precisely the etymology of the word *nachem* and *nechama*. The meaning of the verb *nachem* is "to change one's mind," as in the verse "G-d reconsidered (*vayinachem*) having made Man" (Genesis 6:6) when Man's behavior violated G-d's design and corrupted the Creation. A similar verb is used when G-d, after witnessing the unfaithfulness of the people as they built the Golden Calf, having decreed a severe punishment against them, alters his decision, "Hashem reconsidered (*vayinachem*) regarding the evil that He declared He would do to His people." (Exodus 32:14) When referring to G-d we cannot speak of G-d changing His mind for He knows the future and cannot be said to be surprised by any chain of events. The concept of *nechama* used in both these instances must be interpreted as an anthropomorphic idea, as if G-d's "new" plan resulted from the actions of people or other external circumstances. Only in this case, G-d is, so to speak "forced" to change direction and alter His original designs. G-d does not change His mind and is constant on His promises and gifts, "G-d is not a human who lies or a man who changes his mind." (Numbers 23:19) However, there is always a lesson to be learned in those instances where due to the actions of people, He "revises" His proposals and blueprints. We are left to wonder what would have been if we did not act this way, what could have been if G-d's original thought would have remained.

Thus, the idea of *nechama*, consolation is etymologically linked to the idea of reconsideration and seeing things from a different vantage point. Consolation is ultimately regret and a complete change of feelings towards what until now was causing us pain and guilt. In the reverse case, regret is feeling badly about something that before you were proud of. You thought it was right, you even boasted about it, but now you feel ashamed of it. Consolation works in the opposite direction: what you thought was terrible turns out to have been good. The brothers had felt profound guilt about having exposed Joseph to such

suffering and selling him to Egypt. Now, however, as they heard Joseph's explanation of the events, they saw themselves as acting out G-d's plan. They were the mere instruments of G-d's plan to bring about their good fortune and beyond.

The wrong concept of consolation is merely to have to accept what happened; "one must accept what cannot be avoided." (Baba Kamma 38a). This superficial understanding of consolation is what the Talmud calls derisively, the "Babylonian idea of consolation." Knowing that the Rabbis did not have high regard for the intelligence of the Babylonians of their time, they obviously thought this understanding of consolation to be foolish. Mere resignation to whatever happens to us is not appropriate to the Jewish view of Man that assigns to humanity a high level of dignity and intelligence. On the contrary, a genuine source of consolation resides in the mind, in the intellect. Since life is complex and we often suffer when we do not understand why certain things occur to us, true consolation follows when we understand things and when we comprehend why they happen. Just as Joseph comforts his brothers by turning around their conception of the events, so all modes of true consolation affect our interpretation of the experiences. Sometimes the truth is very opposite of what we perceive.

On a deeper level, consolation actually transforms the trials and episodes of our life as actually being the necessary causes of the resulting good. Once we understand why matters developed the way they did, and appreciate the results of these conditions and proceedings we see the whole picture and realize the link between them. This acceptance of the past events can be so compelling and overwhelming that we would not want to change the way they happened even if we could. This is the true consolation.

Rabbi S.R.Hirsch (Frankfurt, 1808-1888) points out that in the verse quoted above, Joseph first comforts the brothers and then speaks to their heart. The second is an emotive approach, while the first-- the comfort, is an appeal to their intellect. The true consolation is always the acquisition of a new and more appropriate way of comprehension. This is then how we offer comfort: you are suffering now because you think that what has happened is bad but the day may come when you will change your mind about this and see that this was the necessary cause to bring about some bliss and happiness that could never have happened in any other way. Once we see that this event that we interpreted as bad is actually the beginning of a blessing, we regret our own sadness and, analyzing all the events and results, would not want anything to have been different than the way it was.

REACHING THE RABBI

The Rabbi is always accessible but sometimes the volume of calls or the time when calls are received make it difficult to answer immediately.

A better way would be to first text or WhatsApp message the Rabbi. He will respond as soon as possible. You can also reach the Rabbi in the office,



Please only make calls to his cell phone for urgent matters.

Refuah Shlema Alte Ester Riva bat Devorah Shifra (Eileen Alter), Batya bat Rachel (Betty Feit), Malka bat Buca (Yeni Hassin), Zeev Zelig ben Sarah Tish (Tom Hamori), Zalman Modechai Yitzchak Halevy ben Alta Chana (Stuart Greenberg), Chava Naomi bat Doba Chana, Elca bat Rahel (Michelle Polonetsky's mother), Yaakov ben Leah, Yaakov David ben Bayla, Tzvi Ben Sara, Chavah Bat Rivka (Eileen Alter's cousin)