



This week's Kiddush is sponsored by the Kiddush Club



This week's Shalosh Seudos by the Shalosh Seudos Club

## Schedule for the Week

<b><u>Friday, July 6th (23rd Tammuz)</u></b>		<b><u>Tuesday, July 10th (27th Tammuz)</u></b>	
Candle lighting	7:00 P*	Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Minchah/Kabbalas Shabbos/Maariv	7:00 P*	Shachris	7:00 A
<b><u>Shabbos, July 7th (24th Tammuz)</u></b>		Tomer Devora class	12:00 N
Shachris	9:00 A	Seed Girls - Women's Event	7:00 P
Shabbos Women's Class @ Itzhak	5:00 P	Mincha/Maariv	8:10 P
Daf Yomi	7:00 P	<b><u>Wednesday, July 11th (28th Tammuz)</u></b>	
Pirkei Avos:	7:10 P	Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Mincha	8:00 P	Shachris	7:00 A
Maariv/Havdala	9:13 P	Mincha / Maariv	8:10 P
<b><u>Sunday, July 8th (25th Tammuz)</u></b>		<b><u>Thursday, July 12th (29th Tammuz)</u></b>	
Daf Yomi	7:00 A	Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Shachris	8:00 A	Shachris	6:45 A
Mincha / Maariv	8:10 P	Mincha / Maariv	8:10 P
<b><u>Monday, July 9th (26th Tammuz)</u></b>		<b><u>Friday, July 13th (1st Av)</u></b>	
Daf Yomi	6:00 A	Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Shachris	6:45 A	Shachris	6:35 A
Rabbi Haber's class:		Candle Lighting	7:00 P*
The Prelude to Destruction	7:00 P	Mincha	7:00 P*
Partners in Torah at JCC	8:00 P		
Mincha/Maariv	8:10 P		

**Until September 14th we will making an early Shabbos with Mincha at 7:00 PM.  
Candle lighting will be at 7:00 PM, and no later than 7:20 PM**

# Shabbos Classes

**3:00 PM** For boys grades: 5th to 8th Gemara Shiur at home of Rabbi Harpaz

**Boys Learning 5:15 PM** For all boys: Pirkei Avos - home of Dr. Gedalia Schwartz

**30 minutes before Mincha:** For boys 1st to 4th grades: Parsha with Rabbi Lipman

**Women's Class 5:00 PM** at the home of Shira Itzhak. Class to be given by one of the Seed girls

**Pirkei Avos with Rabbi Haber 50 minutes before Mincha:** Practical Lessons for Life

## Weekday Classes

	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.
<b>Daf Yomi with Rabbi Loiterman</b>						
Morning	7:00			6:00 AM		
Evening	After Maariv (as noted)					
<b>Rabbi Haber's Classes</b>						
	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.
The Prelude to Destruction		7:00 PM				
<b>Kollel Learning Programs</b>						
	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.
Partners in Torah at JCC		8:00 PM				
Night Kollel	After Maariv		After Maariv			
<b>Other Classes Available</b>						
	Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.
Tomer Devora with Amy Lefcoe			Noon			
Seed Women's Program			7:00 PM			
Gemara: Avoda Zora			75 min before Mincha			

## **SEED GIRLS: SUMMER OF 2018**

In addition to running the day camp, the girls will be at Partners in Torah at the JCC on Mondays, host a Women's Program each Tuesday and a teen program on Wednesday.

We are looking for families to host the Seed girls for dinners on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday as well as both meals on Shabbos. Please contact Mrs. Rivki Katz for hosting opportunities and Mrs. Chamie Haber for any other questions

## **SISTERHOOD FLOWER FUND**

The Sisterhood provides fresh flowers for the Bimah for every Yom Tov & other services for the shul. Contributions to the Bnai Israel Sisterhood "flower fund" can be mailed to Mrs. Irene B. Mazel or Mrs. Frances Berger.

## **SUMMER HOSPITALITY**

As the summer months are here and our guests are beginning to come, please let Mrs. Helen Griffin know if you are able to host guests for sleeping or eating. All guests placed by the hospitality committee are screened by Rabbi Haber. Please have all potential guests call Rabbi Haber's office directly. He will put them in touch with Mrs. Griffin. If you are interested in renting out your house over a portion of the summer please let Rabbi Haber know. We receive several requests each year.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY**

We are looking for volunteers to help prepare food and set up for Shalosh Seudos. Opportunity is open to men and women and food can be prepared in shul during the week at volunteer's convenience. Please contact Rabbi Haber or Jeff Brooke.

## **BABYSITTING**

We are looking for an additional volunteer to assist with hiring and managing babysitters. Please contact Jeff Brooke with any questions or to volunteer.

## **RABBI HABER'S MONDAY NIGHT CLASS**

*Monday, July 16th, 7:00 PM*

Rabbi Haber will be giving a class this Monday on "The Prelude to Destruction"

## **TISHA B'AV**

*Sunday, July 22nd*

Once again, we will spend the morning hearing meaningful and engaging Kinos (elegies) punctuated by remarks from local rabbis. In the afternoon, we will host the annual videos of the Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation as well as a presentation from 'Yizkereim' on the aftermath of World War II.

## **SAVE THE DATE: THE 2ND ANNUAL ANN ZUKERMAN SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM**

*Shabbos, September 1st, Parshas Ki Savo*

The second annual Ann Zukerman Scholar-in-Residence Program will take place on Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo, September 1st. Our guest will be Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein, a well known Torah scholar, author, and lecturer. If you would like to be involved in the program, please contact Rabbi Haber or Jeff Brooke.

## **BNAI ISRAEL CALENDAR FOR 2019**

Believe it or not, it's actually time to start getting ads for the 2019 Bnai Israel calendar. This year, the calendar will have an option to have ads in full color. If you have any companies (mechanic, electrician, plumber, painter, etc., or persons that you feel might benefit from placing an ad in the calendar, please send your list of names and addresses to the shul office and we will contact them for you.

## **SOFER COMING TO NORFOLK**

The month of Elul is considered an appropriate time to have one's Tefillin and Mezuzos checked. In conjunction with Rabbi Haber, the Norfolk Kollel has arranged for a highly qualified Sofer to give an interactive presentation describing the background and production of Tefillin.

He will be available to check Mezuzos for \$12 each, and Tefillin for \$150 per pair. This price is all inclusive, and includes taking down the Mezuzos and putting them back up, and any small repairs that may be necessary. He will also have Mezuzos of all prices and replacement straps for Tefillin for sale, as well as pairs of Tefillin (upon request).

If you have interest in these services please be in touch with Rabbi Davis or any of the Kollel Rabbis so we can have an idea of how much time he should plan on spending in Norfolk.

## THE KIDDUSH & SHALOSH SEUDOS CLUBS

Ever wonder how those non-sponsored Kiddushes and Shalosh Seudos meals get paid for? Although it doesn't look like a lot of food, it does cost us at least \$100.00 as week to put on the non-sponsored Kiddush for over 150 people and at least \$75.00 for a non-sponsored Shalosh Seudos.

It is through the generosity of the members of the Kiddush Club and the Shalosh Seudos clubs that the costs are covered.

The following families have pledged \$18 per month to the Kiddush Club to cover these costs:

Robert & Darcy Bloch  
Jeff & Amy Brooke  
Aaron & Ruth Cohen  
Drs. Stephen & Lynn Deutsch  
Robert & Audrey Gutterman  
Kevin & Amy Lefcoe  
Rabbi Gershon & Sara Litt  
Jason & Dr. Alison Ohana

Dr. Earl & Andie Pollock  
Ruth Rothman  
Dr. Gedalia & Jodi Schwartz  
Dr. Gary Siegel & Dr. Laurie Goldsticker  
Jordan & Laurie Slone  
Dr. Michael & Brina Weissman  
Mike & Naomi Zelikovich  
Herb & Bina Zukerman

Each of the following families have pledged \$10 per month to the Shalosh Seudos Club cover these costs:

Robert & Darcy Bloch  
Jeff & Amy Brooke  
Aaron & Ruth Cohen  
Drs. Stephen & Lynn Deutsch  
Rabbi Sender & Chamie Haber  
Shmuel & Shira Itzhak  
Rabbi Aharon & Sarah Lipman  
Rabbi Gershon & Sara Litt

Harold & Susan Loiterman  
Joey & Carol Miller  
Dr. Earl & Andie Pollock  
Bern Schloss  
Dr. Gedalia & Jodi Schwartz  
Jordan & Laurie Slone  
Dr. Michael & Brina Weissman  
Herb & Bina Zukerman

Won't you consider joining these special clubs? Additional sponsors will help us cover our cost and expand our menus. You can be billed each month, or once a year - it's up to you. If you are interested, please contact Amy Brooke or Michele Aronoff.

## Thank you to our contributors

### **Bnai Israel General Fund**

- ✧ Norman Soroko and Arlene Soroko Kessel: in memory of Louis Schlain's brother, Leonard Schlain
- ✧ Norman Soroko and Arlene Soroko Kessel: in memory of Joel Mazel, son of Irene Mazel
- ✧ Eileen Berman: In memory of Joel Mazel, son of Irene Mazel
- ✧ Dr. Earl & Andie Pollock: In memory of Joel Mazel, son of Irene Mazel
- ✧ Ilene Putterman: In memory of Joel Mazel, son of Irene Mazel
- ✧ Yehudah Leib & Helen Griffin: In memory of Joel Mazel, son of Irene Mazel
- ✧ Dotty Slone: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel Mazel
- ✧ Frieda Igdal: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel Mazel
- ✧ Frieda Igdal: To Arnie Belkov in memory of his mother, Mona
- ✧ Frieda Igdal: To Edie & Louis Schlain in memory of Louis's brother, Leonard
- ✧ Irene Becker Ullman: To Edie & Louis Schlain in memory of Louis's brother, Leonard
- ✧ Rabbi Sender & Chamie Haber: To Edie & Louis Schlain in memory of Louis's brother, Leonard
- ✧ Susan Wilson: To Edie & Louis Schlain in memory of Louis's brother, Leonard
- ✧ Susan Wilson: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel Mazel
- ✧ Frances Berger: To Irene Mazel in honor of the birth of a great-grandson (grandparents: Rabbi Moshe & Hindi Mazel)
- ✧ Aaron & Ruth Cohen: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel Mazel
- ✧ Marian Ticatch: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel Mazel
- ✧ Jeanene Anker: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel Mazel
- ✧ Barney & Bette Lou Siegel: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel Mazel
- ✧ Barney & Bette Lou Siegel: To David & Ingrid Ederly in memory of Ingrid's mother, Vicki Kalfus
- ✧ Aaron & Ruth Cohen: To David & Ingrid Ederly in memory of Ingrid's mother, Vicki Kalfus
- ✧ Gershon Yosef & Chana Leah Rothman: To David & Ingrid Ederly in memory of Ingrid's mother, Vicki Kalfus
- ✧ Aaron & Ruth Cohen: To Edie & Louis Schlain in memory of Louis's brother, Leonard
- ✧ Gershon Yosef & Chana Leah Rothman: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel.
- ✧ Leonard & Diana Ruchelman: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel.
- ✧ Leonard & Diana Ruchelman: To David & Ingrid Ederly in memory of Ingrid's mother, Vicki Kalfus
- ✧ Sandy Karlin: To Irene Mazel & David Mazel in memory of Joel Mazel
- ✧ Allan S. Zeno, DDS: To Irene Mazel & David Mazel in memory of Joel Mazel
- ✧ Eileen Berman: To David & Ingrid Ederly in memory of Ingrid's mother, Vicki Kalfus
- ✧ Suzie Herzberg: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel

### **Yahrtzeit Fund**

- ✧ Frieda Igdal: In memory of her father, Irving Igdal
- ✧ Rabbi Gershon & Sara Litt: In memory of Sara's grandfather, Leo Weissman
- ✧ Rabbi Gershon & Sara Litt: In memory of Sara's grandfather, Sidney Salt
- ✧ Sandy Karlin: In memory of his mother, Katie Karlin
- ✧ Samuel N. Schatz: In memory of his aunt, Judith Schatz.

## Thank you to our contributors—continued

<b>Kitchen Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Silverman Solutions, Inc.</li> </ul>
<b>Matching Fund / Beautification Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Shmuel &amp; Shira Itzhak: In memory of Vicki Kalfus, mother of David &amp; Ingrid Edery</li> </ul>
<b>Cemetery Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Alan Kurzer: In memory of Minnie Kurzer</li> <li>✧ Alan Kurzer: In memory of Sharon Kurzer Sabbagh</li> </ul>
<b>Sisterhood Flower Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Benn &amp; Jackie Richels: In memory of Joel Mazel, son of Irene Mazel</li> </ul>
<b>Siddurim</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Benn &amp; Jackie Richels: In memory of Bluma Mann, mother of Shira Blackstein and grandmother of Zecharia Blackstein (Richels's grandson-in-law)</li> </ul>
<b>Eruv Fund</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✧ Irene Becker Ullman: In memory of Joel Mazel, son of Irene Mazel</li> <li>✧ Ruth Rothman: To Irene Mazel in memory of her son, Joel.</li> <li>✧ Ruth Rothman: To David &amp; Ingrid Edery in memory of Ingrid's mother, Vicki Kalfus</li> <li>✧ Ruth Rothman: To Edie &amp; Louis Schlain in memory of Louis's brother, Leonard</li> <li>✧ Drs. Gary &amp; Laurie Goldsticker Siegel: To Irene Mazel &amp; David Mazel in memory of Joel Mazel</li> <li>✧ Drs. Gary &amp; Laurie Goldsticker Siegel: To David &amp; Ingrid Edery in memory of Ingrid's mother, Vicki Kalfus</li> <li>✧ Drs. Gary &amp; Laurie Goldsticker Siegel: To Jon &amp; Susan Becker in memory of Susan's mother, Cis Posner</li> </ul>

## For the Week of Shabbos, July 7th through Friday, July 13th

### BIRTHDAYS

Lawrence H. Coleman		7/9
Shira Itzhak		7/10
Yisroel Meir Harpaz	7th	7/12
Corey Reid Siegel		7/12
Mordechai Tessler	9th	7/12

### ANNIVERSARIES

Mr. & Mrs. Seth Schoenfeld	15th	7/13
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### YAHRTZEITS

Ben Juren	7/7	Florence Goldin	7/11
Gershon Zelikovich	7/7	Joel Stephen Bernhard	7/12
Shirley Fox	7/8	Paul Cohen	7/12
Sarah Katz	7/8	Abraham Kaplan	7/12
Rose Brandt Tonelson	7/8	Abraham Green	7/13
Gertrude Engel	7/9	Michael Rudetsky	7/13
Andrew Fekete	7/9	Jennie B. Siegel	7/13
Horace Miller	7/9		

### REFUAH SHELAIMA

Women		Men	
Shoshana bas Miriam	Adi Bat Miriam	Shalom Boruch ben Masha	Rachmiel Leib ben Mordechai HaLevi
Vittel Zilke bas Leah	Sheva bas Rivka	Yehuda ben Chasha Ruchel	Chaim Rafael Yoel ben Shayna Golda
Leah Adina bas Chaya Esther	Chaya Ruchel bas Zelda	Moshe Yechezkel Halevi ben Sara Malka	Daniel Yosef ben Miriam
Yochana bas Chana	Shira bas Sarah	Reuven Simcha ben Naomi Rus	Moshe Yosef ben Esther
Nava bas Fruma Leah	Nechama Getzel bas Rachel	Yonah Michael Alter ben Esther Sarah	Reuven HaCohen ben Sarah
Basha Leiba bas Baila Fruma	Ruchama Malka Briendel bas Shaina Shifra	Aryeh Nachman HaCohen ben Ita	Eitan Shmuel bas Chana Leah
Simcha bas Tzipporah	Rivka bas Chaya Ruchel	David Shlomo ben Rivka Tehilla	Eliezer Yehuda ben Chana Shaindel
Malka Esther bas Devorah	Rivka bas Yocheved	Koppel ben Bayla	Yisroel Shmuel ben Sarah
Devorah bas Ruchel	Raizel Shoshana bas Faiga Leah	Abraham ben Iza	Chaim Shmuel ben Rivka
Tzippora Aviva bas Rivka	Orly Rachel Bat Yehudit Rus	Yehudah Ben Batya	Eliyahu Aron ben Hudel
Sara Bas Sara	Tye Miriam bas Zehavit	Rafael Messod ben Naomi Sarah	Sholom Yehuda ben Fayga
Miriam Rochel bas Chava Elisheva	Chana Rochel bas Sara	Eliezer ben Sara	Tinok ben Rochel
Kayla Dodie bas Rochel Bracha	Arielle Mazal Tov bas Eliane	Avraham Beryl HaLevi ben Miriam	Shlomo Yoel ben Chaya Leah
Rochel Bracha bas Baila	Devora Faiga bas Malka	Yissachar ben Rachel	Chanina Getzl ben Chana Fradel
Tirtze Sorah bas Rochel Bracha	Shoshana Aliza bas Aviva Michal	Binyamin Leib ben Rachel Chana	Meyer Yisroel Hirsch ben Zahava Zippora
Rivka Tehillah bas Sarah	Miriam Chava Chana Devora bas Shaindel Chaya Rivka	Nosson Yitzhak Ben Leah	Shlomo ben Na'ami
Hinda bas Dena	Batya Pia bas Chaya Ruchel	Moshe ben Raizel	Eliyahu Yaakov ben Sarah Roiza
Shula bas Carmela	Esther bas Ruth	Eliezer ben Penina Kaila	Yitzhak Mordechai ben Yehudis Sima
Eliana Chaya bas Nacha	Rachel Chana bas Shulamet Itel	Meir Yehoshua ben Penina Kaila	Chaim bas Shifra
Adi Simcha bas Penina Leah	Feiga Elka bas Yehudis	Beryl ben Chava	Dovid Avraham HaCohen ben Libby Yeshia
Aida Batya bas Etta	Aydel bas Chaya	Shmuel Yeruchem ben Baila	Yehudah Leib ben Lenora Daniella
Chaya Tova Gittel bas Shulamis Sima	Sarah Duba bas Miriam	Yehoshua ben Nechama Aliza	Yosef Tzvi ben Rochel Pessil
Bayla Mishka bas Devora	Batya Yehudis bas Masha Sarah	Avraham ben Chana	Chaim Yaakov ben Avigail Dovid
Malka Chana bas Ruchel	Nechama bat Esther Mere	Asher Eliyahu ben Leah	Moshe Yosef ben Esther
Sarah bas Tzipora		Akiva Hillel Ben Cooki Tziporah Feige Gittel	Yonasan Yisroel ben Devorah Rivka
Chaya Raizel bas Dena		Yehuda Herschel ben Chaya Leah	David Shlomo ben Gittel
Chana bas Sarah		Dovid Leshem ben Esther	Ezra Chaim ben Rivka
		Abba ben Tzipora	Mordechai Dovid ben Leah
		Pesach ben Baila	



## THE B'NAI ISRAEL CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

### **Week of July 8th through July 14th**

**Friday, July 13th:** Rosh Chodesh Av

### **Week of July 15th through July 21st**

**Friday, July 20th:** Last day of Camp Ruach / Camp SEED

### **Week of July 22nd through July 28th**

**Sunday, July 22nd:** Tisha b'Av (nidche) - end of the Three Weeks

**Shabbos, July 28th:** Shalosh Seudos in memory of Allen S. Bridge, DDS by his family

### **Week of July 29th through August 4th**

### **Week of July 5th through August 11th**

**Shabbos, August 11th:** Bar Mitzva of Coby Schwartz

### **Week of August 12th through August 18th**

**Shabbos, August 18th:** Bar Mitzva of Mordechai Schoenfeld

### **Week of August 19th through August 25th**

**Shabbos, August 25th:** Kiddush in honor of the 50th Wedding anniversary of Harold & Susan Loiterman

**Shabbos, August 25th:** Bar Mitzva of Sholom Brashevitzky (Chabad)

### **Week of August 26th through September 2nd**

**Shabbos, September 2nd:** The 2nd Annual Ann Zukerman Scholar in Residence with Rabbi Yitzchok Adlerstein

### **Week of September 3rd through September 8th**

**Monday, September 4th:** Labor Day

### **Week of September 9th through September 15th**

**Sunday, September 9th:** Erev Rosh Hashana

**Monday, September 10th:** First day of Rosh Hashana 5779

**Tuesday, September 11th:** Second day of Rosh Hashana

**Tuesday, September 11th:** Tashlich at the Hague

**Wednesday, September 12th:** Tzom Gedalia

### **Week of September 16th through September 22nd**

**Tuesday, September 18th:** Erev Yom Kippur / Kol Nidre

**Wednesday, September 19th:** Yom Kippur

### **Week of September 23rd through September 29th**

**Sunday, September 23rd:** Erev Sukkos

**Monday, September 24th:** First day of Sukkos

**Tuesday, September 25th:** Second day of Sukkos

**Wednesday, September 26th:** Chol Hamoed Sukkos

**Thursday, September 27:** Chol Hamoed Sukkos

**Friday, September 28th:** Chol Hamoed Sukkos

**Shabbos, September 29th:** Chol Hamoed Sukkos

### **Week of September 30th through October 6th**

**Sunday, September 30th:** Hoshana Raba

**Sunday, September 30th:** Erev Shmini Atzeres

**Monday, October 1st:** Shmini Atzeres

**Tuesday, October 2nd:** Simchas Torah

## The Focus Factor (Parshas Pinchas)

By Rabbi Sender Haber

All of Israel stood by without acting as Zimri sinned with Kazbi. Only Pinchas had the presence of mind to take action and kill them. On the surface it was an act of violence, but ultimately it was a step toward peace and, for Pinchas, a moment that qualified him to become a Kohein and eventually the Kohein Gadol.

It is important to understand that Pinchas was not just a zealot with an uncontrollable temper. The Talmud tells us that he consulted with Moshe and Aharon before he acted. He was prepared to leave things in the hands of the elders. He acted as he did only because he was given the "Go-ahead". Pinchas had no previous history of violence and, as a point of fact, many years later, when he was approached by 400,000 warriors and asked to lead the battle against the tribes of Reuvein and Gad he didn't jump to wage war. He spoke with the tribes and came to an understanding.

Pinchas knew that in every situation a person needs to focus on the will of Hashem and act accordingly. Pinchas's bond with Hashem was not because he shishkebated people; his bond was formed because he was able to maintain focus and carry out Hashem's will.

Rav Shimon Schwab explains that this is the role of a Kohein. He needs to be entirely devoted to G-d. Non-kohanim and even regular Kohanim have the luxury of a few mishegasim and distractions. The Kohein Gadol in the Holy of Holies needs to be totally focused on G-d.

When Pinchas showed that he was driven by Hashem's desire to the exclusion of everything else he merited to become a Kohein. He achieved an unbreakable connection with Hashem and a covenant that would last forever.

It is interesting that the Shulchan Aruch does not quote the laws that motivated Pinchas to act. When Pinchas killed Kazbi he was backed by halacha, yet it is not the type of halacha that we can emulate easily and wantonly. We cannot go around killing people who are evil, but we can emulate Pinchas in other ways.

The name of the Midianite woman who Pinchas killed was Kazbi. The Baal Shem Tov point out that Kazbi is actually the Hebrew word for falsehood. Like Pinchas, we need to kill the falsehood in our lives by taking time to identify and focus on what is important. If we can do that, we will remain attached to Hashem forever. Pinchas did it and achieved a relationship with HaShem that lasted far beyond his actions.

We live in a world full of Falsehood, Mishegasim, Shtusim, and Narishkeit. The only way for us to survive is by identifying G-d's desire and making it our own. By doing so for even a moment we can, like Pinchas, form an everlasting and priceless bond with Hashem.

The Talmud tells us that this world is like a wedding. Sometimes we go to a wedding and there are so many people running the show. There are parents, musicians, photographers, party planners, and caterers who are making themselves heard and telling people what to do.

We need to recognize that the centerpieces of the wedding are the bride and the groom and that we were gathered, not for the music or the food or the flowers, but to celebrate the eternal bonding of two special neshamos.

This week is the first of a set of three Haftaros foreshadowing the impending destruction that we will mourn on Tisha B'av. We read from the beginning of the book of Yirmiyahu how Hashem tells Yirmiyahu to warn the Jews that times will rough. They will be punished for straying from the path set by the Torah. At the same time Yirmiyahu is told to remind the Jewish people that all is not lost. G-d will never leave them: "I remember the kindness and closeness of your youth, the love from the days when we were bride and groom. I remember how you followed me into to the desert, a land where there was no vegetation or source of life."

As terribly as we behave and as firmly as Hashem punishes us, we will never lose the bond, the connection, and the covenant that we formed in our early days.

It is particularly inspiring to note that when G-d describes our faithful leap into the wilderness he speaks in the singular. Every one of us has the ability to form a lasting bond with Hashem. Even if we show just one moment of sacrifice, Hashem will remember that moment and maintain His personal bond and covenant with us forever.

(Based in part on a talk by Rabbi Nota Koslowitz, ZTL, of Lakewood, NJ)