

Whitestone Hebrew Centre Bulletin

12-45 Clintonville St. Whitestone, NY 11357



שלום

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Volume XXXI No. 2

October 2021

Tishrei — Cheshvan 5782

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

As we enter the month of Marcheshvan on the Jewish calendar, in a year in which none of the Jewish holidays fall in October, I want to say that I am proud that for the second year in a row under the reality and restrictions of Covid, we at the WHC have held in-person services that were well attended and with great energy.

As there are no holidays or special days in October, I thought I would attempt to synthesize what I believe may be the more salient thoughts that I endeavored to convey in my High Holiday sermons.

The ever-present but not often verbalized tension between the alone-ness of man and being part of a community came home strongly to me as my mother entered home hospice care, with me as her health care surrogate. The bottom line is that I and I alone, even if in consult with others, have the potential responsibility of deciding if someone else lives or dies. I pointed out that most of our liturgy during the year and even when making individual confession on Yom Kippur is in the plural, as we approach God as a member of a community. Yet in the prayer of Unesaneh Tokef, recited only on the High Holidays, we compare our judgment before God as a shepherd inspecting his flock, passing each lamb, one at a time under his staff, so that each one can be seen and inspected as an individual. For those of us whose belief is in an omniscient and omnipotent God, who, as alleged in our liturgy is judging our actions, this is how God looks at us, one at a time, because in the final analysis we are all alone.

The existential loneliness with the weight of

such a decision potentially to be made drove home the awe from the days of awe. In the end, whether on Yom Kippur or after 120, we will stand all alone.

I spoke about the two ways we refer to some of the horrible weather incidents of the past year, among which were the recent horrific rain that devastated many homes and cars in our immediate neighborhood. We call them natural disasters, yet we call them "acts of God". Terms used interchangeably yet with such different meaning. Is God in charge, even with the difficult question of "why do bad things happen to good people?" or is everything random, and if so, why do we pray anyway?

I asked how many of us thank God for the disasters that don't affect us negatively? Those of us lucky enough to have escaped any damage from the recent floods, did we give the amount we could have lost to charity, or at least some percentage of it?

I mentioned the dual roles with which we describe and address God, as in Avinu Malkeinu and many other prayers. How differently we look at the shortcomings of our own children, how forgiving we are to them compared to strangers over whom we may rule in some capacity. This is a choice that we ask God to make when judging us as individuals.

On Yom Kippur, I mentioned how visiting my mother and seeing her old and frail drove home to me the idea mentioned many times in the High Holiday liturgy, "man's foundation is from dust, his end is to return to dust and in

(Continued on page 2)



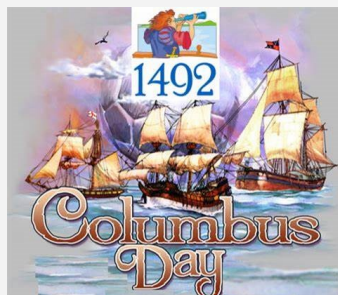
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Monday, October 11

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FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

(Continued from page 2)

between he is merely comparable to withering grass, a passing shadow, a fleeting dream. Not only is this important for our personal humility and perspective on God and our fellow human beings, but it should remind us how in reality our fear of tyrants is exaggerated because we ascribe to them power they do not really have, if they too are from dust, return to dust and are like passing shadows. This is the reason we say in the Hallel that we recite on Rosh Chodesh, Chanuka and holidays, "God is with me, I shall not fear, what can man do to me?".

I also spoke about a thought I often speak of at our Monday evening Judaism 101 class: our whole perspectives on lives, on others, on everything, are bound up within time. Yom Kippur is the one day a year when we come close to or are invited to come close to timelessness. We are stripped of what makes our bodies survive; by custom, we dress in white for untainted purity and to remind us of death; we recite liturgy to remind ourselves of our fleeting nature, all, in a sense, to internalize the message that the only reason we delude ourselves into even existing, is the presence or measurement of the passing of time. I also elaborated just a bit on a theme we speak of

when reciting Aleinu, "He is our God, there is nothing else. Our King is true, all else is insignificant, as it is written in His Torah: And You shall know this day and take into Your heart that Ado-nai is God in the heavens above and upon the earth below; there is nothing else." Scientists have posited that were the entire universe to be sucked into a black hole, all that would remain would be information. The information in our human, mortal minds can only exist as combinations of letters or numbers. In reality even they are corporeal. The idea that in reality only information exists, before and after all of existence, all of time and space, is the closest we will ever understand of God, his Torah and his oneness, the source of all information and hence of all mass, energy and existence. We touch on this theme not only in Aleinu but in Adon Olam and Yigdal as well. They are not songs—they are professions of very deep, even esoteric faith.

I hope that more of our congregants will avail themselves of the opportunity to discuss (or challenge) any of these thoughts at our weekly Judaism 101 classes, especially as we are still holding them on zoom and no one even has to leave their homes to participate.

SISTERHOOD

Sisterhood President's Message

Last month was filled with Jewish holidays. I hope everyone celebrated and enjoyed the holidays. As stated last month, once again a Happy and Healthy New Year to all. Please do a mitzvah and call our senior members to ask if they need anything or just to chat for a while. Hearing a friendly voice will lift their spirits.

Naomi Gukowsky
Sisterhood President

Making Contributions

For many years Sisterhood has offered the service of sending cards from all those who wish to acknowledge both Simchas and Condolences. The response from the recipients is most heart warming. The following funds are available:

Simcha Fund..... \$10
Chai Fund \$18
Prayer Book Fund..... \$10
Inscribed Prayer Books \$25

The recipient receives an acknowledgement of the contribution and it is printed in the monthly Bulletin, so all can share the feelings expressed. To place orders, call Patricia Smolker at (718) 746-7068.

Checks for the above funds should be made payable to "Sisterhood of WHC".

Prayer Book Fund - September 2021

Inscribed Prayer Book in memory of Lola Markowitz
- Sisterhood WHC
- Evelyn Apter

Inscribed Prayer Book in memory of Lola Markowitz
- Adele Rothman
- Patricia Smolker

In memory of Esther Cohen
- Linda Pereira

In memory of Rhoda Weinstein
- Linda Pereira

Chai Fund - September 2021

Thank you to Rabbi and Rebbetzin Axelman and Bruce Berenson, who put together another successful New Year's prayer service both in house and on zoom.

- Frank and Shirley Smith

Simcha Fund - September 2021

Happy Birthday to Shirley Smith who is learning to count backwards.

- the Smith Family



October Happy Birthdays

Bruce Berenson Sharon Samet
Meryl Hoffmann Shirley Smith
Aaron Safran

*Editor's note: If your birthday should be listed on this page and is not, please call the office at (718) 767-1500 and give us your date of birth. Thank you.



Recent positive news generated by Israel, of which we can all be proud.
(Articles below are excerpts of originals only)



Israeli Scientists Discover How to Reverse Cell Aging

Maayan Jaffe-Hoffman August 30, 2021

[Jpost.com](https://jpost.com)



Scientists from the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology say they have found a way to rejuvenate the aging process of the body's immune system. Prof. Doron

Melamed and doctoral student Reem Dowery sought to understand why the elderly population is more susceptible to severe cases of COVID-19 and why the vaccines seem to be less effective and wane faster among this population.

The secret begins with B cells, also known as B lymphocytes. These are the cells that produce antibodies against any pathogen that enters the body. They play a key role in protecting people from viruses and diseases. B cells are produced in bone marrow and then travel through the blood to lymph nodes and the spleen, where they wait for pathogens to enter and then attack them. "When you are young, you have young cells, and young cells have a very diverse ability to recognize anything [pathogenic] that comes into your body," Melamed told The Jerusalem Post. B cells do not live long, but they are constantly being replenished by new ones sent from the bone marrow. However, B cells do not just disappear. They turn into "memory" B cells so that if the body is exposed to a

previous pathogen, the individual will not get sick. That is because the immune response will be fast and robust, and it will eliminate the pathogen, often without the individual knowing he or she had been exposed to it. Unlike B cells, memory cells are long-lived. "Imagine you are growing into adulthood, and you become an adult and then an older person," Melamed said. "You accumulate in your body many memory cells. You are exposed all the time to pathogens, and hence you make more and more memory cells. Because these are so long-lived, there is no room left for new B cells." What happens when a new pathogen, such as the coronavirus, comes along? There are no young B cells that can recognize it. But this year, they took the discovery another step and figured out a mechanism to override the system. "We found specific hormonal signals produced by the old B cells, the memory cells, that inhibit the bone marrow from producing new B cells," Melamed said. "This is a huge discovery. It is like finding a needle in a haystack." It also means that, over time, specific drugs or treatments can be found to inhibit one of the hormones in the signaling pathway and get the bone marrow to produce new B cells.

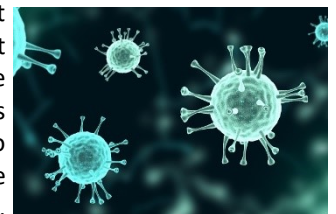
Israeli Scientists Offer Innovative Approach to Battle COVID

August 18, 2021

worldisraelnews.com

A new therapeutic approach developed by Weizmann Institute scientists could spell new hope in the battle against the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Though vaccines may be steering the world toward a post-pandemic normal, a constantly mutating SARS-CoV-2 necessitates the development of effective drugs. In a new study published in Nature Microbiology, Weizmann Institute of Science researchers, together with collaborators from the Pasteur Institute, France, and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the US, offer a novel therapeutic approach to combating the notorious virus. Rather than targeting the viral protein responsible for the virus entering the cell, the team of researchers addressed the protein on the human cells' membrane that enables this entry. Using an advanced artificial evolution method that they developed, the researchers generated a molecular "super cork" that physically jams this "entry port," thus preventing the virus from attaching itself to the cell and entering it. Most

potential therapies and present vaccines for SARS-CoV-2 target the "spike protein" found on the virus's outer envelope. This protein, however, is prone to mutations that erode the efficacy of these treatments.



"Since the virus is constantly evolving we have, instead, focused on the non-evolving human receptor called ACE2 that acts as the entry site for the virus," said Prof. Gideon Schreiber, of Weizmann's Biomolecular Sciences Department, who supervised the new study. This approach is not susceptible to new emerging virus variants, which is one of the main challenges in fighting the pandemic.



Recent positive news generated by Israel, of which we can all be proud.
(Articles below are excerpts of originals only)



TAU Technology Restores Sense of Touch in Damaged Nerves After Amputation

July 12, 2021

jewishpress.com



The Israeli mask company Sonovia has released a report from a leading Italian textile-testing laboratory showing that its fabric eliminates the COVID-19 Delta variant particles with over 99.95% effectiveness. At the announcement of the results, the company's stock spiked by nearly 30%, company founder Shuki Herscovich told The Jerusalem Post on Sunday during a meeting at his headquarters in Ramat Gan. Specifically, the masks were tested by VisMederi Textyle, the same lab that reported earlier that the unique fabric, which is coated in zinc nanoparticles, also protects against the British variant of COVID-19 and H1N1, otherwise known as swine flu. The lab is next expected to test the fabric against the Mu strain, which

carries several mutations to the spike gene and is labeled a "variant of interest" by the World Health Organization, said Sonovia chief technology officer Liat Goldhammer-Steinberg. The Mu strain has not yet entered Israel, according to any official reports, but Health Ministry officials have warned of its potential negative impact. The Delta variant is currently the dominant coronavirus variant worldwide. It has been circulating for several months in Israel. These latest results make the company the producer of the sole known textile proven to eliminate both the Alpha and the Delta COVID-19 strains and further proves the role that masks – and these masks specifically – could play in preventing the spread of the virus.

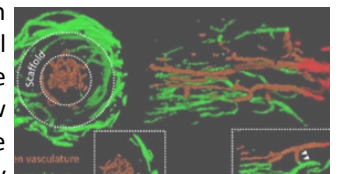
Israeli app makes communication easy for those with speech difficulties

By Abigail Klein Leichman , Jul 25, 2021

worldisraelnews.com

Skin flaps, bone grafts, implanted tissue - recent advancements in medicine have changed the face of surgery in terms of autologous - meaning self - transplantations. While extensive damage to organs once meant a nearly sure amputation or need for an external transplant, today's science focuses on harvesting cells and tissue from a person's own body to complete the injured pieces of the puzzle, using grafts and flaps to repair skin, vessels, tubes and bones. Yet, ask any surgeon attempting to insert a flap and they would tell you that the most important - and restrictive - component of a graft's success is ample blood supply. A team of researchers at the Technion recently found a way to meet this need. For the first time, these scientists succeeded in 3D printing a network of big and small blood vessels that could provide blood to implanted tissues just like the human body. Up until now, medicine hasn't been able to mimic the body's ability to create a suitable hierarchy in the blood vessel tree. In our bodies, the heart pumps blood into a large tube called the aorta, which measures roughly 2-3 cm in diameter. The blood vessels then branch off into smaller and smaller tubes that are appropriate to each organ's need and capacity, until they reach minuscule arterioles of only 5 to 10 micrometers. Dr. Ariel Alejandro Szklanny of the Technion team, led by Professor Shulamit Levenberg, a specialist in tissue engineering, found a way to

use 3D printing to form a system containing a functional combination of both the large and small vessels. The new breakthrough may allow a tissue flap to be created in a lab already



connected to a blood network suited to its size and function. Currently, transplanted grafts need to be implanted into a healthy part of the body so that the patient can generate new blood vessels to support it; then, the graft is relocated to an affected area as healthy tissue. The new technique could potentially eradicate this intermediate step, drastically improving recovery times and cutting down on the number of procedures a patient would need to undergo.

While previous studies in this field used animal-borne collagen, the Technion team used engineered tobacco plants created by the Israeli company CollPlant. The mesh was transplanted into a study rat and attached to the main artery in its leg. The blood through the artery spread through the network exactly as it would within the body, carrying oxygen and nutrients to the distant parts of the implanted tissue, and without any leaks. This achievement is an important tool in the world of personalized medicine and could be a huge leap forward in tissue engineering and treatment.



Thank you for Donations -- September 2021

Yahrzeit

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General Donations

**For the many honors she has received
for readings on the High Holidays**

Anna Fussteig

**In honor of Bruce and Ron
blowing shofar at her house**

Doris Shankman

Wishing everyone a Happy New Year

Sidney Rothstein

**For participation in WHC's
High Holiday Services on zoom**
Phyllis Oppenheim



WHC BULLETIN BY EMAIL!



If you would like to receive a copy of the bulletin by email, in addition to the printed version, please send your email address to RabbiAxelman@outlook.com and let us know. The email version appears in color, has hyperlinks and will reach you several days before the hard copy. Thank you!

Thank you!

To Joseph Wolkin for his hard work in dismantling and storing our beautiful Sukkah following the holidays.



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Condolences

To the family of Lola Markowitz on their loss

**המקום ינחם אתכם
בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים**

May her memory be a blessing

SCHEDULE OF WHC CLASSES

(led by Rabbi Axelman)

Sundays @ Time TBA -- Talmud Class

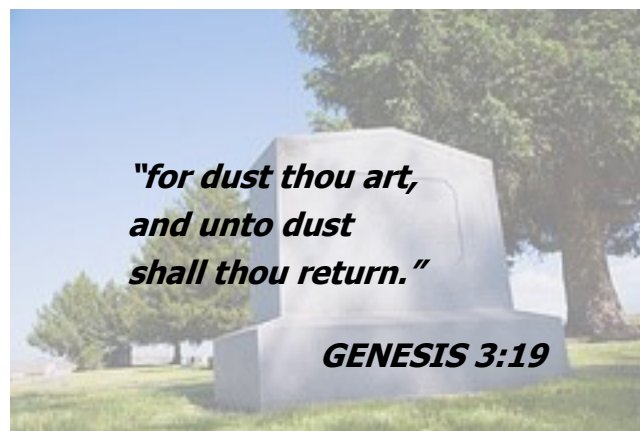
Mondays @ 7:00 PM -- Judaism 101

Explore Your Questions

Please check our website
for updated days and times of classes.
Currently classes are being streamed
on zoom and not being held in person.

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*"for dust thou art,
and unto dust
shall thou return."*

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