

HAMEVASER

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The Korban Pesach: Its Symbolic Relevance to the Seder

By RABBI YOSEF BLAU

The laws governing the Pesach sacrifice appear to be similar to all other laws of the Temple service in that they describe those procedures that existed in the time of the Beit HaMikdash and will reappear during the messianic era. Yet, there are aspects of the command to eat the Pesach that can and should relate to our observance of the seder today.

The Mishnaic dictum of Rabban Gamliel that one who fails to mention Pesach, Matzo and Maror during the recital of the Haggadah does not fulfill his obligation requires from us much more than merely saying three words. Rather, it obligates us to link the three mitzvot of eating on the first night of Passover with the verbal description of our ancestors' departure from Egypt.

We are accustomed to focus on the Maror as the symbol of slavery and the Matzo which represents our freedom. However, of all three, Pesach deserves our special attention. In addition to being mentioned first in Rabban Gamliel's formulation, it also represents that religious act by which God differentiated the Israelites from the Egyptians and therefore can be considered the initial step toward redemption. While the physical act of eating the Pesach is no longer possible, an analysis of the many particular laws which relate to the Pesach sacrifice will surely help us relate the Pesach to the retelling of our Exodus from Egypt.

For no other sacrifice is the eating a separate commandment. In fact, the Rav *אשרי* considers the eating of the Pesach the primary act of this sacrifice. Therefore, due to its centrality to the very mitzvah of Korban Pesach, we will concentrate on the laws surrounding the eating of the sacrifice and relate them to a broader conception of the mitzvah.

What restrictions relate to the eating of the Pesach? Despite the fact that all male and female members of Klal Yisroel are obligated to partake in the Pesach, only those who were counted in at the time the Pesach was brought may eat. One must eat the Pesach as a part of a particular group of people. The Pesach is to be eaten along with the Matzo and the Maror. There is only one night during which the Pesach may be eaten and according to some only until midnight. The Pesach must be roasted and not cooked with water, well done and not half finished. No bone may be broken while it is consumed. Finally, and perhaps most remarkably, those who fail to bring and eat the Pesach are given a second chance a month later.

While different interpretations may be given for each detail describing the eating of the Korban Pesach, certain symbolisms are inescapable and through them we can relate and integrate the Pesach more closely to our Seder experience.

Each Jew must choose to declare himself a part of Klal Yisroel in advance of the redemption and must subsequently function as part of a group and not in isolation. He must acknowledge that both slavery and freedom reflect the special relationship between the Almighty and the Jew. There is a limited time to express this commitment yet, it should not be done hastily or incompletely. One eats carefully, not out of hunger but in order to make a religious statement about our relationship to our God and our people. That statement must be made with a fiery dedication and the heat of commitment should not be diluted. And if we fail to accomplish this most important religious act because we are too far away or impure, we are mercifully granted another opportunity.

The following are the
final times for eating and burning
chometz on Erev Pesach, Monday,
April 16th.

According to the Magen Avrohom:

Eating Chometz: 9:18 AM
Burning Chometz: 10:37 AM

According to the Vilna Gaon:

Eating Chometz: 9:42 AM
Burning Chometz: 10:49 AM

Remember

By AVI MOSKOWITZ

A-6349 is impressed indelibly upon my mind. My mother's forearm is branded with these numerals. Sometimes when I gaze at her arm, the numbers blur and in a far off distance I can almost see the irons sizzling her skin. I feel as if I have been transferred into the most gruesome space and time in history.

How often have I heard it told, the story of the invasion of Hungary in April of 1944. It was a clear spring day in a small hamlet called Obover, just on the outskirts of Munkacs in Czechoslovakia. My mother was outside rinsing her clothes and the clothers of her five brothers and three sisters in a stream that flowed beneath the frail wooden structure that was her home. The stream rippled gently about her feet as it flowed past the garden into the woods where the rabbits, birds, and squirrels roamed freely. My mother would sometimes tiptoe on the smooth shiny rocks, making her way across the stream to this serene haven, seeking refuge from her chores. Closing her eyes, she would allow herself to be carried away on free-spirited wings.

Today would not be one of those days. The clothes would have to be washed quickly, so that they could dry and be ready for the trip they would be taking. She prepared with foreboding, for a journey to some unknown destination.

They were herded onto cattle cars for the long journey to Auschwitz. The darkness of the interior made it impossible to distinguish between day and night. Packed together without food, water or facilities, they waited apprehensively.

After what seemed like three days, the train finally halted at Auschwitz. Those who survived the trip disembarked

broken, hungry, thirsty, and bewildered. They were told to form double lines, as the young doctor sorted young from old, healthy from sick. Left to death — right to life.

The Germans proceeded to separate a child from its mother, as the mother violently protested. The German emotionlessly tore the unknowing child from its mother's arms, and threw it against the electrified fence. The mother stared blankly.

Once selected for labor, they were shaved and stripped of their clothes and given thin sheets to wear. They were grouped into barracks and given splintery wooden planks to sleep on.

That night my mother awoke to the tortured howls of a young man, "Today, I burned my own mother. I burned my own mother!"

The daily assignment for the group in my mother's barrack was to lay cobblestones on a new road just outside the camp. On one miserably hot day in July, a young girl strayed off the road in search of something to eat. Just as she reached out for a vegetable from the neighboring field, a German soldier spotted her. With the air of a detached murderer, he shouted, "Here!"; the dogs tore her to pieces.

My mother managed to survive this hell, to tell us the story of her fortitude and struggle back toward faith in God and humanity. This faith is her legacy to us. We, her children, shall never forget. As Isaac Katznelson once said, "Forgetfulness leads to exile, while remembrance is the key for redemption."

Yom HaSho'ah will be commemorated this year on 27 Nisan, April 29th.

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Cause for Concern

Over 400,000 Jews have begun the lengthy and difficult process of applying to emigrate from the Soviet Union. These people continue to endure harassment by the KGB, intimidation by Soviet officials and alienation from their friends and colleagues. Their future can be described as uncertain at the very best as they wait, perhaps years, for permission to emigrate.

Under the government of Soviet leader Yuri Andropov, Soviet Jewish emigration dropped to what was thought to be the lowest possible level. During the entire 1983 only 1314 Jews were granted permission to leave the Soviet Union. That number represents a drop of nearly 99% from the 1979 emigration figures. However, it seems that the present Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko intends to halve the already abysmally low emigration totals. Only 51 Jews were allowed to emigrate in March of 1984. According to the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry, that number represents the fewest Jews allowed to leave the Soviet Union in any given month since the organization began keeping its records over thirteen years ago. The urgency of the current situation makes it clear that we must speak out on behalf of our Soviet brethren.

The Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry has announced that Solidarity Sunday for Soviet

Jewry will be held this year on May 6, 1984. The march and rally is the largest annual human rights event of its kind. Under ordinary circumstances it would be of the utmost importance to show our support for the prisoners of conscience. It is so much more vital now, to demonstrate our concern while emigration is at a virtual halt. Hamevaser urges all of its readers to join in this worthy cause. We must insure that our message of protest is heard in the Kremlin and in Washington D.C., and that our voice of support reaches our courageous brothers and sisters behind the Iron Curtain.

* * *

In recognition of his long and continuing struggle for religious freedom, and the inspiration that he provides to refuseniks and human rights champions the world over, Yeshiva University has announced that it will be awarding an honorary doctorate of humane letters, in absentia, to Anatoly Scharansky at the June 1984 Commencement exercises.

We yet pray that he will be here to accept in person.

Yeshiva University and the Stern College students will assemble at 62nd Street between Madison and Park Avenues at 11:15 A.M.

To the Editor:

As a member of the Beit Midrash Program at Columbia since its inception and a student currently enrolled in the Haver Program at Y.U., I would like to point out an error in Joey Lipner's otherwise well-written article describing the learning at Columbia and Queens College (March 14, 1984, "At Kings and Queens"). The article states that the Beit Midrash Program at Columbia is in its third year, and Rabbi Scheer is quoted as saying that "this is the first year that the program has been successful." In fact, this program has been a success since the spring of 1982, when Yonatan Sachs began giving the Shiur. This is evident from the fact that about fifteen students have been attending the shiur regularly since then.

Stephen Haddad

Hamevaser will begin interviewing applicants for 1984-1985 governing board positions immediately after Pesach. Call 927-1562 or visit M512 for an interview.



March for Soviet Jewry
March begins 12 noon
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Tales of My Zaydee

By YITZIE SOLOMON
(Second of two parts)

The word *Elui* is a very popular term at all yeshivos. It is synonymous with an individual who has a polaroid camera that develops pictures instantly in his head. There are many great Rabbonim, but there are very few *Eluyim*.

While most Rabbonim achieve their knowledge due to the long hours of study, the *Eluyim* are given the Torah on a silver platter. The gates of Torah are wide open to them. We had many outstanding talmidim in Slutzk. Among them were Dovid of Bookie, Rav Kaganoff, who was a Rosh Yeshiva in Chicago, and Moshe Aaron of Timkowitz, Rav Polayef, a Rosh Yeshiva at R.I.E.T.S. Brilliant as they were, however, they were not considered *Eluyim*. Imagine our excitement then, when a young man in his early twenties walked into the yeshiva one day accompanied by Kaganoff and Polayef who introduced him as the *Elui* of Sislowitz. We were told that this slim, young man would treat us to a D'var Torah. The D'var Torah lasted for two and a half hours, and it consisted of an analytical "shiur" dealing with Halacha on the highest level in form and content.

He spoke rapidly and appeared very relaxed. This timid "bochur" because quite well known. His name was Hagoan Aaron Kotler of Lakewood.

It was not long afterward that Hagoan Kotler became the *choson* of Harav Meltzer's daughter and I witnessed one of the most impressive weddings which any Rav or yeshiva boy was ever privileged to see. It was talked about for weeks afterwards. Horav Henkin, the *gaon* and *posek*, once remarked that the "drasha" which Horav Kotler delivered at the *Tnoyim* even he or Rav Isser Zalman could match; but the *drasha* which Rav Aaron gave at the wedding dinner, neither he nor Rav Aaron's father-in-law could duplicate.

After 4 years at the yeshiva of Slutzk I decided to go to another yeshiva to learn. The one I chose was farther from home, a yeshiva in Stuchin near Vilna. A day after Pesach I prepared myself for the long journey. It was the first time in my life that I traveled on a train. I felt very much at home in this town with its quiet streets and friendly people. I felt the atmosphere would be very conducive for study.

There were no "teg"(days) in Stuchin. A committee from the town welcomed every

new student and gave him an address where he would be lodged and an address where he would eat on Shabbos. I noticed that the committee was looking me over

Rav Leib Chasman was a disciple of the famous Rav Israel Salanter, the founder of the "Mussar" movement, so lectures on *mussar* were an important part of the curriculum in Stuchin. Every Shabbos between Mincha and Maariv Rav Leib would set aside time for a short lecture on *mussar* which left a deep impression on me to this day.

Rav Alter was a dynamic person with an angelic face. He was, however, somewhat disorganized. One day he walked into shul with only one shoe on. One of the boys quickly ran to his home to bring him his other shoe. The typical absentminded professor! While Rav Leib was very reserved and spoke slowly like a British diplomat, Rav Alter was very *heimish* and friendly with the boys. His *shiurim* were deep like those of Rav Kotler, and very logical. Here my learning flourished. Unlike Slutzk, where the yeshiva boy was not treated with great respect, the people in Stuchin held the student in high esteem. The pure Torah air of Vilna reached out and permeated the town near it, and we felt a warmth in Stuchin from people the

like of which I have never met elsewhere in my lifetime.

Looking back at the years I spent in those two yeshivos, I am happy that my formative years were molded by such great gaonim as Rav Meltzer, Rav Shmulewitz, and Rav Leib, whose "mussar" sermonettes were my guidelines for a moral and ethical life.

I give thanks to Hashem for the privilege of faithfully serving Him and my fellow Jews for over 50 years. I have been most fortunate to see my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren walking in the path of Torah and Mitzvot. May the words of the Prophet be truly realized in my family: "My spirit which shall be upon you and my words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your children, nor from the mouth of your children's children, says the Lord, henceforth and forever." (Isaiah 59:21)

יְרוּחַ אֱשֶׁר עָלֶיךָ וְדַבְרֵי אֱשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתָּ כִּפְּךָ
לֹא יִמְשָׁךְ מִפִּיךָ וּמִפִּי בְנֵי וּבְנֵי בְנֵי
אִמְרֵי ה' (ישעיהו 59:21)

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Enhancement Through Machshava

(Continued from page 4)

diminishes the struggle and "human input" and growth in learning that is so crucial to development in learning.

More importantly, this change would improve the Rebbe-Talmid relationship. Unfortunately, the Rebbe is presently in danger of being viewed as a mere "Talmudic Instructor." His role has been compartmentalized and departmentalized. It would be healthy and productive if a Talmid could hear his Rebbe discuss both classical and modern problems of Machshava. Occasionally, this discussion could be expanded to include how a "ben Torah" should relate to current Jewish issues and general political issues such as the morality of nuclear arms, relations of Orthodox groups to non-Orthodox ones, and women in Halacha. At the present time there are a few Rebbeim that will occasionally deal with such issues. However, I think we need a more structured and comprehensive system that encompasses all of M.Y.P. The Talmid will thereby develop a sensitivity and awareness to the fact that Judaism is an all-encompassing way of life, touching on all issues—both great and small—that concern man and his world.

Finally, as discussion continues on the new curriculum, I would suggest that in the restructuring of the Jewish Studies requirement, serious consideration be given to adding a survey course on the literature and topics of Classical Jewish Thought.

Last year, as the development of the four-year Semicha Program was being thrashed out, Dr. Lamm introduced a "Machshevet Yisrael" component that would become Part of the required elements of the program. People such as Prof. Twersky from Harvard U. and Bezalel Saffran were supposed to be involved in the program. However, at a certain point this year this component of the four-year Semicha Program was withdrawn and put on hold. While it is true that certain Rebbeim and Jewish studies faculty members voiced opposition to the program (albeit for very different reasons), there were a number of Rebbeim and faculty, such as the Rosh Kollel, Rav Schachter, with whom I spoke, who did support the program and were puzzled as to why it was retracted. To this date, my efforts to find out the reasons behind this development have been unsuccessful (i.e. everyone is "playing it close to the chest"). With the appointment of a student committee that is playing a role in shaping the exact make-up of their fourth-year semicha program, this issue has surfaced again, and there does appear to be an attempt to include a Machshevet Yisrael component in consort with the Rebbeim, administration and students.

Finally, I would like to end with an idea I heard from one of the Rebbeim in the name of the N'tziv, and which I heard in the name of R. Zvi Yehuda Kook z"tl. The Talmud in Berachot 8a states that from "the time of the destruction of the temple, the Holy One Blessed be He

dwells in the four cubits of Halacha." Many interpret this Gemara in a positive light: Thank God we at least have this much. However, these two giants of Torah understood it as implying a negative phenomenon. Unfortunately, since the destruction of the temple, our perception of God's presence has been limited to the four cubits of Halacha. Unfortunately, the width and breadth of the revelation of God in all areas of Torah has been stifled. R. Zvi Yehuda continued, stating that today, in our

generations of the return of Am Yisrael to its land and the dawn of the Redemption, to fully appreciate Judaism and God's presence, we must become conversant in all areas of Torah, especially as I stated at the outset; if we would like to be able to outreach and make a mass impact on *Am Yisrael* which, unfortunately, has in large numbers abandoned Torah living. We must be able to present them with a clean, intelligent, moral and convincing Hashkafat Olam. (See also Rav Kook's essay "Me'at Miztari" in *Eder Hayakar*.)

Dear Editor,
Some of my observations on the recently enacted "Get law" were the only personally attributed ones analyzed in the column that occupied the top of the *Hamevaser's* third page on Jan. 11, 1984.

The communication of mine to which reference was made in the column was actually a *cover letter* suggesting that the *Hamevaser* present at least as many arguments serving the human interests and constitutional rights of Orthodox women as had the *New York Law Journal* when it published, on its second page, my presentation Nov. 22nd, 1983, supplementing the article by the Orthodox former Harvard Law Professor who had drafted the bill that your columnist proclaims is clearly unconstitutional.

I continue to actively advocate upholding the nonsectarian law that is designed to eliminate the viability of a recurring scheme of blackmail by far too many unscrupulous spouses against their innocent better halves, and to help enforce implied bilateral agreements to

consistently follow a clear set of ground rules. Yet, ironically, the columnist wrote that my position would "transcend our obligation as American citizens to preserve the laws of this country." Your columnist wrote that I implied "that rigid adherence to New York laws should be suspended." What I wrote, however, was that the constitutional principle of the separation of church and state, which is interpreted liberally by many—if not most—Orthodox Jewish legal scholars and organizations not to mention the U.S. Supreme Court in a different context only a few weeks ago should not be interpreted in its narrow sense especially in this instance when the main practical result of such a narrow reading would be to ruin the lives of a whole category of Orthodox Jewish women.

Sincerely,

Aaron I. Reichel
71 YC; 74 BRGS; 75 RIETS

Enhancement Through Machshava

By NATI HELFGOT

This past semester, an addition was made to the number of shiurim offered at MYP. Rabbi Blau began to teach a weekly half hour shiur in *Mussar*. Although it is not as well attended as might be expected, it is a step in the right direction. In fact, many students learn *Mussar* independently. Of course, most students in YP attend regular Sedorim and at least one Tanach course per semester at Yeshiva College. Indeed, there is serious study of many areas of Torah at Yeshiva throughout the year.

However, one area of Torah that still seems to be neglected by both Y.P. faculty and students is the formal study of *Machshavat Yisrael*, Jewish Thought. Unfortunately, many, if not most, of the students in Y.P. have never studied basic works of Judaism such as *The Kuzari*, several of the *Igrot HaRambam*, and the *Ramban* on the Torah. The *Viña Gaon* wrote,

הכחיר קדוש וטהור, עיקר אמונת ותרדת הלויין ב"ר ספר

"The Kuzari is holy and pure, fundamentals of belief and Torah are found therein."

In addition to the regular obligation to learn all of Torah, which obligates us to study *Machshava*, one cannot have a full and proper picture of Judaism without understanding the classic *Sifrei Machshava* and their ideas. Especially in our generation, if we want to be able to withstand the onslaught of alien faiths

and reach out to the unaffiliated, we must be well versed in our own sources. [For further treatment of this idea see Rav Kook's classic essays in *Ekvei Haizon* and certain of his letters where he discusses *Machshava* in the modern age.]

In the study of Gemara, one does not become a "lamdan" by occasionally reading summaries of issues, but rather through constantly learning and struggling with the Gemara, and Rishonim. In a similar fashion, albeit on a lower level, one cannot become fluent with the wealth of Jewish thought by reading a book in high school or a small pamphlet.

Therefore, I would like to offer a four point plan which might improve the situation. First of all, the Rebbeim, students, and administration must create an atmosphere that encourages students to schedule at least a 15-30 minutes seder in a basic *Machshava* work every night. Every person could start learning one of the basic *Sifrei Machshava*, either in Hebrew or English (and here a special note should be made of Rabbi Bleich's excellent new book, *With Perfect Faith*, which contains selections from the classic Rishonim relating to each of the Rambam's 13 Statutes of Faith). Over the course of a year, a student could accomplish a great deal.

Though some might argue that this would steal time from othersedarim, I do not think that this is a valid claim. The students would not be "stealing," but instead would deal with another area of

Torah and Yiddishkeit. Furthermore, most students could manage to find an extra fifteen minutes in the day, such as in the early morning or after Maariv. If students are still unable to schedule a nightly *Machshava* Seder, once or twice a week would still be very useful. This general suggestion is basically in the students' domain, and it is up to them to accept or reject it.

The second major area that should be examined is the instituting of optional shiurim in *Machshava*, similar to the optional shiurim that already exist in *Chumash* and *Minchat Chinuch*. The success of the optional shiurim in *Machshava* would depend on the administration, faculty, and students.

This year, after I returned from Israel, I felt the problem in Yeshiva more acutely than when I left here in 1981. I think that there are two reasons for this. One is that Israeli Yeshivot (at least Yeshivot Hesder) place a greater emphasis on *Machshava* than do their American counterparts. I have, therefore, become more sensitive to the issue. There is, however, another reason for this feeling. In 1981, the Rav, Shlita, delivered a *Chumash* shiur every Tuesday night. Although it was generally limited to the textual *Chumash*, the Rav did deal with topics of *Machshava* as they arose. This shiur added much to what I got out of that year.

This brings me to my third point. I think that the Rebbeim should be encouraged to spend one shiur per week teaching a *Sefer Machshava*, or speak on a classical or modern *Machshava* topic.

My suggestion is not novel; at present there is one *semicha* Rebbe who does this for an hour every week, and there is another senior Rabbi who has suggested doing this in his shiur next year. Moreover, I once heard from Rav Lichtenstein that when Rav Aaron Soloveitchik was a *maggid* shiur in Yeshiva, one of his four shiurim during the week would be on a *Machshava*-related topic. Rav Lichtenstein, himself, would devote approximately half a shiur per week to *Machshava* when he taught in Yeshiva. From the standpoint of time, I do not feel that the Gemara would suffer from one hour of *Machshava* per week; it would probably be enhanced.

In fact, relative to other yeshivot, M.Y.P. includes an unusually large amount of shiur. Most Rebbeim deliver two daily shiurim of an hour and a quarter three days a week, as well as an hour and a half shiur twice weekly. This adds up to at least ten hours a week spent in shiur, something unheard of in other yeshivot. Therefore, I do not feel that the added study of *Machshava* would be an impediment to Gemara learning.

(Parenthetically, I would add that some students have mentioned to me that because there is so much shiur, there is simply not enough time to learn the subject in depth on one's own. There simply is not enough time to fully learn through the Gemara with all the basic Rishonim and Aharonim, and learn B'lyun. Since there is so much shiur everyday, people are always moving ahead, afraid of falling behind. This

(Continued on page 3)

מוסד הרב קוק ירושלים MOSAD HARAV KOOK JERUSALEM

Wednesday 7:00 P.M.

כינוס איורי לתורה שבעל פה
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- ב. כפיית גט

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- הרב ד"ר אליעזר ברנשטיין
- הרב משה הרשלר
- הרב ד"ר יהודה דוד בליין
- הרב שמחה קראוט
- הרב מרדכי שרגא הלוי שנפולד

Sunday 1:30 P.M.

הרבנות

הרב ד"ר עמנואל יעקובוביץ
בר ראשי ליהודי בריטניה
"קידוש ה' לעיני הגויים"
הרב שמחה קראוט
"בענין מצות עשה של יחזי בהם"
דבי משה פראגר
(בני ברק)

"אמונה ונבונה בתקופת השואה"
הרב שלמה בראונשטיין
ראש הכולל י"ד אברהם"
ע"י כתיבני עטרת צבי
"גוריו עבודה וזה במצות קידוש ה'"
שאלת השומעת

Monday 6:45 P.M.

הרבנות

הרב משה הרשלר
ראש המכון לתלמוד, מוסד הרב קוק (ירושלים)
"קידוש ה' מצד חיוב האהבה ה'
או מדין איסור חילול ה'?"
הרב גדליה אהרון רבינוביץ
(שיקאגו)
"האם מותר לשנות את שם המשפחה"
כדי שלא יזוהה כיהודי"
הרב ישראל מאיר לאו
הרב הראשי של תנ"ה
"קטנים במצות קידוש ה'"
שאלת השומעת

הכינוס החמישי לתורה שבעל פה
בארצות הברית

יערך בע"ה בימים י"א וי"ב תשד"מ (מאי 13 ו-14)
בהשתתפות אישי תורה נכבדים ומפורסמים
מארץ ישראל ואמריקה
מוקדש לנשאים

"קידוש ה' בהלכה"

כינוס זה מוקדש לעילוי נשמת האשה החשובה
מרת קליא ז"ה אשת ר' מרדכי יאקאבס הי"ד
בא חבר ר' משה מרדכי גמ"י

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 9:30 A.M. & 1:30 P.M.
MONDAY, MAY 14, 6:45 P.M.
at the FIFTH AVENUE SYNAGOGUE
5 East 62nd Street, New York City

Sunday, 9:30 A.M.

הרבנות

הרב יצחק ידידיה פרנקל
ראב"ד ורב ראשי לתל-אביב-יפו
"הגדרות של מסירת נפש"
על קידוש השם"
הרב ד"ר נתן לאם
נשיא, ישיבה אוניברסיטה
"קידוש ה' בחלמת ובהיסטוריה"
הרב ד"ר יהודה דוד בליין
"תנו לנו אחד כמם"
שאלת השומעת