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# Korach 5785

## THE ULTIMATE PRICE

RABBI LABEL LAM (Torah.org)

And Korach took... (Bamidbar 16:1)

What knocked Korach out of this world? He had so much working in his favor! He was very learned, and extremely wealthy, and as a Levi, he had a highly prestigious position amongst the Chosen People. Where could he have gone so wrong? Moshe spells out the answer in his response to Korach, "Rav L'chem Bnei Levi" – "You have plenty, son of Levi". What is the meaning of Moshe's lifesaving message?

The Mishne in Avos at the very end of Chapter 4 makes a declaration about the human condition that might just open the door to an obvious complaint. It states, "Against your will you are formed, and against your will you are born, and against your will you live, and against your will you die, and against your will you will give a detailed accounting before the King of kings, the Holy One Blessed is He!"

Now someone can easily say, "Hey! I never asked for this! Why should I have to give an accounting? If something was delivered to my house against my will, then why should I be made to pay for it? It's not fair!"

Most everyone, I would assume, has struggled with some version of this question at some time. I didn't ask for this family, these siblings, or to be born. The Mishne spells out that all the stages of coming into existence and remaining alive are against our will. That itself prompts the complaint, "NO FAIR!"

The Dubner Maggid offers an amazing parable that helps explain the riddle of this Mishne. There was a couple that lived far away from city life. This was surely a match made in heaven. They had mutually complementary handicaps that made their relationship work. He was extremely ugly. She, however, was blind. She lived with total unawareness of his dreadful appearance. Now, he was also deaf, like a stone, and unable to hear the slightest sound. That was good because she was a shrill, and often could be heard making wild noises. He was completely oblivious to this. What a perfect match!

One day a doctor from the big city came to town and he took a look at this couple and having mercy upon them informed them that with the advance of modern medicine their individual maladies can be cured.

They checked into the hospital and now you can imagine the tender and magical moment when they removed the patches from her new eyes and they unplugged his newly functional ears. She got a look at him and gave a scream. She covered her eyes and he covered his ears. They went home to constant misery. It was seemingly a disaster!

Then they discover that they are being billed by the Doctor one hundred thousand dollars. They are outraged. This is an insult to injury. First, he ruins our life and then they charge us for it! The only thing they can agree upon and collaborate together on is to go to the hospital and visit the doctor to register their common complaint and tell him, "We are not paying!" The doctor listens carefully and agrees that they do not have to pay, but only under one condition.

He pulled out two consent forms and asked each of them to sign and then, he will readmit them and reverse the procedures. The man begins to express how much he enjoys the sound of rain against the window and the children playing, and the men singing in Shul, and pleads, "Please don't send me back into that world of silence! She also chimes in that when the sun comes into the window in the morning and everything is lit up, she excitedly studies the pageantry of colors of the flora and the fauna and the faces of little children and she pleads, "Please do not plunge me again into

that world of darkness." The doctor looked at both of them incredulously and said that I see that it did benefit you and so you must pay.

Explains the Dubner Maggid, yes everything about coming into being is against our person, but when it comes to dying a person puts up a fight, "against your will you die and that reveals, even if we have legitimate gripes, we benefited and therefore we must pay with gratitude and service to HASHEM and give an ultimate accounting.

Korach had one minor complaint! Why am I not the Kohain Gadol? Moshe told him, "Look at all that you have!" You should be so happy!" Korach took! When one refuses to acknowledge the endless debt of gratitude, he owes HASHEM for all the gift of life, then he may be plunged back into darkness, and pay the ultimate price.

## INSIDE/OUTSIDE

RABBI YOSSY GOLDMAN (Chabad.org)

Some arguments are petty affairs between small people who feel a little bigger need to stand up for their perceived honor or status. Other arguments are honest differences of opinion between people of stature, where each has an opinion worthy of consideration. We need to be able to discern the subtleties beneath the surface of any debate before we can know what sort of argument it is.

The sixteenth chapter of Bamidbar tells the story of the mutiny led by Korach, a cousin of Moshe who challenged Moshe's authority. In the end, Korach and his henchmen were swallowed by the earth in a divine display of rather unearthly justice.

The Midrash reveals some of the behind-the-scenes dialogue between these men. Remember, Korach was no pushover. Besides being of noble lineage, he was clever, wealthy and quite charismatic. One of the questions Korach put to Moshe was this: does a house full of holy books still require a mezuzah? Moshe answered that it did. Korach scoffed at the idea, ridiculing Moshe. The little mezuzah contains the Shema—but two chapters of Torah. A whole houseful of books with the entire Torah won't do the trick, and a little mezuzah will? It doesn't make any sense, argued Korach.

Why was Moshe's answer correct? What indeed is the significance of a small parchment on the doorpost in relation to a library inside? The Lubavitcher Rebbe explained that it all depends on location. The books are inside. The mezuzah is outside. When there are Jewish texts inside our study and living rooms, this indicates that the home is a Jewish home. This is good, and as it should be. But what happens when we leave the comfortable confines of our home? Do we cease to be Jewish?

The mezuzah is at the threshold of our homes, at the juncture and crossover between our inner lives and outer lives. As we make the transition from private person to public citizen, we need to be reminded of whom we are, and that we take our identity with us wherever we may go. There is only One G-d, says the little scroll, whether in our private domain or in the big, wide world.

One of the many works by well-known author Herman Wouk is an autobiographical novel called Inside, Outside, in which he portrays his own inner struggles straddling these two worlds. His pious Talmudist grandfather had a profound influence on him, but so did Hollywood and Broadway. It took him a long time to find his way and settle into an observant Jewish lifestyle while still writing bestsellers.

Being Jewish "Inside" is relatively easy. It's when we hit the "Outside" that we encounter temptation and turmoil. The challenge every Jew must face is to remain proudly Jewish even in the face of conflicting cultures, curious looks, and often, hostile attitudes.

In the German-Jewish community of old there was a slogan which has long been discredited. Yehudi b'veitecha v'adam b'tzeitecha. "Be a Jew in your home and a human being outside." The Nazis did not distinguish between

Jews who looked Jewish or those who had removed any visible identifying marks.

Today, traditional dress reflecting a national character is common, accepted and respected—from Scottish kilts to Arab kaffiyehs. The outlandish hairstyles of sportsmen and celebrities are not only accepted—they are mimicked mindlessly by millions of wannabes. Is it too much to expect a Jew to assert his Jewishness in unfamiliar corporate territory, or to keep the kippah on his head even when he walks out of shul?

Moshe rejected Korach's argument, with good reason. The mezuzah does not replace the need for Jewish libraries, but it serves as a perennial reminder on our doorways. As we step out of our home to enter the outside world, it beckons us to take our G-d and our Torah, our values and our traditions, along with us.

### 300 MULES

RABBI SHRAGA SIMMONS (Aish.com)

Parshat Korach tells how Korach instigated a rebellion against the leadership of Moshe. This act involved a surprising amount ofchutzpah, given the fact that Moshe had just delivered the Jews from slavery in Egypt, led them through the Red Sea, and brought them to Mount Sinai.

Yet Korach still thought he could instigate a public rebellion against Moshe. What was the source of his astounding brazenness?

The Midrash says that a few hundred years earlier, when the entire wealth of the civilized world was amassed by Egypt, a large portion of treasure was eventually funneled to Korach. It is said that Korach's wealth was so great that he required a caravan of 300 mules just to transport the keys to his treasure house!

It was this great wealth, explain the commentators, that prompted Korach to challenge Moshe's leadership. Wealth is a wonderful resource. But like anything, it can be abused. A wealthy person might sometimes feel a sense of power and entitlement - which then manifests in inappropriate ways. I recall one time seeing a popular entertainer wantonly destroying property, then smirking with glee over the thought that his fame somehow made him immune to normal standards of behavior.

The Sages say that wealth is a tremendous test in life, perhaps even greater than the test of poverty. The challenge of wealth is to use it for the betterment of mankind, and to avoid using it as a prop for one's ego. That was Korach's fatal mistake.

### THE ROAD TO HEAVEN

RABBI YANKI TAUBER (Chabad.org)

The Talmud doesn't believe in "equal time." According to this ancient repository of Jewish wisdom, if a good guy and a bad guy are running for office, you should give the good guy all the publicity and ignore the bad guy. Don't even mention his name.

The Talmud has a source for its bias — the even more ancient Book of Proverbs by King Solomon, which states, "The mention of the righteous should be for blessing, and the name of the wicked shall rot" (Proverbs 10:7). Quoting this verse, the Talmud rules that "it is forbidden to name one's child after a wicked person."

Which begs the question: Why, then, is this week's Torah reading (Bamidbar 16-18) named "Korach", after the man who led a mutiny against Moshe and Aaron? If the Torah doesn't want us naming our kids Pharaoh, Joseph Vissarionovich or Captain Hook, why does it name one of its own sections after an unrepentant sinner, a person whose actions so endangered the very existence of the people of Israel that G-d made the earth swallow him up so that he "descended alive into the abyss"?

"THE ROAD TO HELL," says the saying, "is paved with good intentions." Korach, the only man reported to have reached that unsavory place alive, was also propelled there by positive desires and motives. As the Torah tells it, Korach was motivated by a lofty spiritual yearning — the desire to become a Kohen Gadol ("High Priest"), which is the highest level in the service of G-d a person can attain.

How do we know that this was a positive desire? Firstly, because our Sages tell us that in the future perfect world of Moshiach each and every one of us will attain the level of intimacy with G-d which Korach desired. Secondly, because we know of another person who, like Korach, was forbidden by Divine decree to act as a Kohen Gadol and who nevertheless was driven by an insatiable desire to do so. That other person? Moshe himself.

Here is Moshe speaking to Korach: "We have but one G-d, one Torah, one law, one Kohen Gadol and one Sanctuary. Yet you... desire the High Priesthood. I, too, desire it!" (Midrash Tanchuma; cited by Rashi on 16:10).

"I, too, desire it!" Is Moshe being facetious? Playing devil's advocate? Or are we being accorded a glimpse into Moshe's soul, a soul driven by an all-consuming desire for something so exalted and G-dly that it is beyond the reach even of a Moshe, a soul that finds its deepest yearnings frustrated by a divine command barring its path, commanding: "Stop. No. Not Yet."

Both Korach and Moshe desired the forbidden. In Korach, the desire brought destruction upon himself and his followers. In Moshe, the same desire fueled a life of greatness.

The road to hell is paved with holy desires. So is the the road to heaven. The difference is subtle, yet crucial: the difference between acting on a holy desire contrary to G-d's command, and feeding the desire, wrestling with it, living a life passionately devoted to attaining it—yet refraining from any action that the object of the desire has forbidden.

This is why, the Rebbe explains, there is a section in Torah named Korach. The Torah is telling us that there are two Korachs: Korach the human being, and Korach the Torah portion. Or, if you will, the body of Korach and the spirit of Korach. Korach the human being, who crossed the line that separates good from evil, the line demarcated by G-d's commands, is to be spurned. Korach the Torah portion — the holy yearning that storms the barricades which G-d throws up to thwart our soul's rush to heaven, that strives and strains yet dares not cross in violation of the divine will — is to be embraced.

### INTERNAL COMBUSTION

RABBI MORDECHAI KAMENETZKY (Torah.org)

"Any quarrel," says the Mishnah in Pirkei Avos (5:20) "that is made for the sake of heaven shall, in conclusion, last. However, if the argument has selfish motivation it shall not last." The Mishnah offers Hillel and Shamai as an example of heavenly opponents. Their arguments will last forever.

On the other hand, Korach and his congregation are the examples given for those whose debate stemmed from egotistical motivations. "Those types of disputes," says the Mishnah, "are doomed to fail."

The Mishnah, is of course referring to the episode in this week's portion. Korach, a first cousin of Moshe, contested the priesthood. He gathered 250 followers, formed a congregation, and openly rebelled against Moshe and Ahron, claiming that Moshe and his brother underhandedly seized both temporal and spiritual leadership. Moshe, in his great humility, offered a solution in which divine intercession would point to the true leader. Korach and his followers were swallowed alive by a miraculous variation of an earthquake.

Yet two questions occur on the Mishnah. By using the expression that, "an argument for the sake of heaven will last," it seems to show that an ongoing argument is a proof of its sanctity. Shouldn't it be the opposite?

The other anomaly is that in referring to the kosher argument, the Mishnah refers to the combatants, Hillel and Shamai. Each was on one side of the debate. Yet, in reference to the argument that is labeled as egotistical, it defines the combatants as Korach and his congregation.

Weren't the combatants Korach and Moshe? Why is the latter part of the Mishnah inconsistent with the former?

On the week following Passover 1985, I began my first pulpit in an old small shul in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The scent of herring juice permeated the building, and the benches did not creak as they swayed, they krechtsed. As old as the furnishings were, the membership was older. But the Congregation's spirit of tradition of was feistier than its physical appearance.

My first week, I was asked to bless the new month of Iyar, Mevarchim HaChodesh. Then the trouble began. Every Shabbos, a somber prayer, Av HaRachamim, which memorializes Jewish martyrs during the era of the crusades is recited. On holidays or other festive occasions such as Shabbos Mevarchim, in deference to the spirit of celebration, the prayer is omitted. However, the month of Iyar is considered a sad time for Jews. 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva perished in that period. Many congregations recite Av HaRachamim on Shabbos Mevarchim for the month of Iyar. I assumed my new congregation did the same and began reciting, "Av HaRachamim." Immediately I heard a shout, and an uproar began.

"We don't say Av HaRachamim today. We just blessed the new month," announced the President.

"We say it this month! It's sefirah, a period of mourning," yelled back the Vice-President.

"You know nothin'. We never ever say it when we bench (bless) Rosh Chodesh," yelled the Treasurer.

"We always did!" asserted the Gabbai.

The argument was brewing for five minutes when they all began to smile and instructed me to say the prayer as I had planned. Before I continued the service I sauntered over to the old Shammash who was sitting quietly through the tumult and asked, "what is the minhag (custom) of this shul?" He surveyed the scene and beamed. "This shul is 100 years old. This is our minhag."

The Mishnah gives us a litmus test. How does one know when there is validity to an argument? Only when it is an argument that envelops eternity. The arguments of Shamai and Hillel last until today, in the halls and classrooms of Yeshivos and synagogues across the world. Each one's view was not given for his own personal gain, it was argued for the sake of heaven. However, Korach's battle with Moshe was one of personal gain. Moshe had no issue with them. It was a battle of Korach and his cohorts. Each with a completely different motivation — himself. It did not last. A battle with divine intent remains eternal. In a healthy environment there is room for healthy differences. And those differences will wax eternal.

## THE KORACH CONUNDRUM

AVROHOM YAAKOV

The central theme of this week's parsha is arguing, though it really was more of a rebellion.

Moshe's cousin, Korach, decided to challenge his leadership and rallied some two hundred and fifty members of the tribe of Reuven to his cause.

The Mishneh in Pirkei Avos (5:17) comments on arguments:

"Every dispute that is for the sake of Heaven, will in the end endure; But one that is not for the sake of Heaven, will not endure. Which is the controversy that is for the sake of Heaven? Such was the controversy of Hillel and Shammai. And which is the controversy that is not for the sake of Heaven? Such was the controversy of Korach and all his congregation."

What exactly is the difference between a good and bad dispute?

The Bartenura explains that Hillel and Shammai sought the truth. Their argument was designed to find the correct conclusion. The argument had a positive purpose. (In fact, Hillel and Shammai only disagreed in three halachic situations.)

Korach and his group sought to tear down the leadership. They were after power and would not stop until that was achieved, or the community would be destroyed in the process.

WE ALL FIND ourselves at some time in a dispute or argument, be it with a family member, friends, work colleague or customer. If we can take a moment to objectively look at the basis of the conflict and try to see the outcome, we can judge whether the dispute is worth pursuing and will there be a net benefit.

More often than not, we are involved in Korach-like argument rather than a Hillel-Shammai scenario.

## BRASS PANS

RABBI LAZER GURKOW (Chabad.org)

As recounted in this week's Torah portion, Korach led a rebellion against Moshe and Aaron. Two hundred and fifty of Korach's followers brazenly performed the rite of incense offering—a rite reserved only for the high priest. They were punished, but the brass pans they used in their misguided offering were salvaged. G-d instructed that they be utilized as a covering for the altar. Why would a sinner's pan be incorporated into the altar of atonement?

The simple reason given is that this would serve as a reminder to the nation never to engage in rebellion again. Yet there must be a deeper dimension, a positive aspect, to this remarkable twist in the tale.

THE CHASSIDIC MASTERS (Shem Mishmuel, Korach) point out that every metal used in the building of the Tabernacle represented a human character trait. Gold is indicative of awe, silver of love, and brass of conviction and strength of character. Korach and his men were indeed made of brass, prepared as they were to sacrifice their life on the altar of conviction.<sup>2</sup>

They backed the wrong horse, but they sure knew how to run. Their conviction was laudable though their choice was tragic. So G-d instructed that the brass pans be incorporated into the altar itself, but the hot coals within it—also used to perform the incense rite—be discarded. This demonstrates that G-d did not approve of the nature of their sacrifice, but appreciated the sacrifice itself.

THE MESSAGE TO THE NATION was simple. Do not repeat Korach's mistake, but do take a lesson from the manner in which he pursued it. Find that strength within yourself, but harness it to the service of G-d.

Korach was given a gift, but he abused it. We need to utilize that very gift in a positive sense. Strength of character is handy when, for example, skeptics and detractors beset us and question our values.

When doubts cross our mind, when questions plague us, conviction sustains us till such time as we discover the answers. When our strength is eroded by temptations and craven delights, we rely on our inner reserves till our moment of weakness passes.

In short, when the ego, heart or mind loses enthusiasm, an unshakable faith will carry the day.

THIS TORAH PORTION comes on the heels of the story we read last week, in which the nation was handed a forty-year sentence to wander the desert. It would take patience and long-term commitment to overcome this long and trying period. This strength of character was born out of the ashes of Korach's tragedy.

Though Korach's rebellion was ill-fated, it sparked a fire deep within the Jewish soul. If Korach could feel such conviction, then so could we. Buoyed by this conviction, the nation resolved to overcome the forty-year sentence and enter the promised land.

WE TOO WOULD do well to tear a page out our ancestors' playbook. We too have been wandering for many years, and we too await the promise of return. With the conviction of a faith unshaken, let us resolve to anticipate the coming redemption speedily in our days, Amen.

## A HOLY KICK-BACK?

RABBI YAAKOV ASHER SINCLAIR (Ohr.edu)

"It shall be yours and your sons..." (18:9)

One of Judaism's great gifts to the world is the concept that the physical is not the sworn enemy of the spiritual. The physical is capable of elevation, and like a donkey that transports its rider, so too does the physical 'transport' the spiritual to its ultimate destination.

Indeed, that word in Hebrew for a donkey is chamor, which has the root meaning of physicality.

"...It shall be yours and your sons"

The kohanim, the priests, receive part of the holiest offerings in the Temple. There is no contradiction between their physical eating and the elevation that offering brings spiritually.

This is a seemingly difficult concept. The idea that "the kohen eats parts of the sin-offering and the supplicant receives atonement" might look like a 'kick-back.' And, it is for this reason that the only offering a Gentile was allowed to bring in the Holy Temple was a korban olah, an 'elevation' offering. An Olah goes 'up in smoke,' meaning that the kohen receives nothing from it. This sits well with the mindset of the general world-view.

Even though we know longer have a Holy Temple, and the kohanim are, at least regarding sacrificial offerings, temporarily out of a job, we still have the holy Shabbat. It is a day of physical pleasure which, nevertheless, brings holiness into time itself..

# News & Views

## AND OUR FLAG WILL STILL BE THERE

ANONYMOUS EMAIL

They beat us. They discriminated against us in professions and academia. They forced our daughters to marry their sons. They pillaged our villages in their lands with their pogroms. They burned us wholesale in Auschwitz, Treblinka, Bergen Belsen, etc. They put us in ghettos and starved us. And more and more.

Yet, every day the stubborn Jew in Europe faced east and prayed for the day his People would be able to return to the Land. The Jew in the East faced west each day facing Zion.

The promise as is written "And I will fetch you from the 4 corners of the earth." It began in the latter part of the 1800s with a trickle of Jews coming to settle the land. It increased in greater numbers in the beginning of the 1900s. The rise of Nazism brought many more Jews to Israel in spite of the hypocritical British occupiers who tried to block us. They tried to stop the inevitable. They tried in vain to stop the children from coming home to their mother.

Six million died but during the disaster signs of hope sprouted. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising inspired Jews to stand up and fight like the Maccabees of yesteryear. In the beginning of the uprising they raised the flag. The flag with the blue star of David and the 2 blue stripes, very much similar to the tzitzit (fringes) with the techelit that is mentioned in the Shema. They went down fighting with a few survivors who mostly escaped to the Land of Israel.

In the meantime the Irgun and the Lehi fighters chased the British imperialists out of our land while fighting against local Arab Jew haters. By 1948 our independence was declared and 7 Arab armies attacked us, but we were not going to be denied. More wars initiated by the Arabs in 1956, 1967, and on Holy Yom Kippur in 1973, failed. The Israelis took the blows but gave better than they received. Intifadas and fake peace agreements came and went. Saddam Hussein launched rockets. Hezbollah learned and launched thousands more. Hamas murdered several of our brothers and sisters with lust of inhumanity as once again the world stood by.

Iran, the biggest initiator and supporter of terror in the world armed Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis while they developed the weaponry to annihilate the tiny but always growing Jewish State.

The world stood by while the lunatic theocracy of Tehran became bolder and bolder. The world once again didn't realize that if it's bad for the Jews, ultimately it will be bad for the world.

Finally, with little time to spare, Israel surprised the Mullahs. Yes, before they disappear into the dustbin of history they will attempt to send their dwindling supply of ballistic missiles to Israel. To win a war? Of course not. However, their hatred of Jews is what motivates them. In their sick minds, no matter the outcome, they must kill as many Jews as possible. This is Amalek. They hate us with a passion that can't be remedied with logic, education, persuasion.

The haters will fall because Israel isn't a tiny Jewish community without weapons to defend itself. Now we have the weaponry, the technology, and most importantly, the knowledge that not for nothing did we come back and succeed after almost 2,000 years in Exile. We have a mission and a purpose and not fake friends in England, France, etc, and openly hostile killers in Iran will derail our mission.

After all is said and done, with G-d's help, we'll prevail and show the world how to take out the garbage. After all the threats and all the rockets, you better believe it, our flag will still be there flying proud.

This is our Land and our mission, and Hashem is keeping his promise. His children have returned to their home, permanently.  
Am Yisrael Chai.

## TRUMP CHANGES HISTORY

JOHN PODHORETZ (Commentary.org 22-6-25)

On October 7, 2023, an Iranian client called Hamas invaded Israel, killed 1,200 people, injured 3,500 more, and took 251 hostages. On October 8, 2023, an Iranian front group called Hezbollah began firing rockets at Northern Israel on Iran's direction. On October 19, 2023, an Iranian proxy called the Houthis fired three drones at Israel. In April 2024, Iran launched 300 drones and other projectiles at Israel in the first direct attack from Persia in the Jewish state's 77-year history. On October 1, 2024, Iran launched 200 ballistic missiles at Israel.

Iran's determination to inflict the worst kinds of injury—both psychic and physical—on the nation it has dubbed the “little Satan” has been relentless. Why these were the moments the mullahs chose to move and move hard we'll learn as time goes on. Could have been that the weakness of the Biden administration (pulling out of Afghanistan and failing to provide Ukraine with the means to beat the Russians) suggested Iran had an unparalleled opportunity to strike a country they viewed as a puppet vassal state of the “Great Satan” and could not afford to pass it up. Could have been the image of an Israel divided against itself with nine months of gigantic weekly protests against the duly elected government there. Could have been internal needs. Whatever explains it, it happened. October 7 and its aftermath is Iran's war. The purpose was to reverse what seemed like an inexorable march to a new Middle East in which Arab countries were seeking friendlier relations with the Jewish state. Iran wanted to make Israel suffer, and look like a loser, and separate it not only from potentially new friends but from old friends as well.

Then something else happened—a change in the United States. Biden stepped down as Democratic nominee, the bungling Kamala Harris stepped in, and Donald Trump won an easy election. Iran had much to fear from Trump. It had sought to assassinate him and one of his national security advisers. Trump had said repeatedly he would not allow Iran to get a nuclear weapon and that he stood with Israel. On the other hand, Trump also said he didn't start wars, he ended wars—and showed he was willing to twist an American ally like Ukraine into a pretzel to show he could do just that.

Also, even though he had been president before, Iran needed to test this newly returned leader's resolve. So it did not seek to lower the temperature with the United States by, say, insisting that Hamas return the hostages, or getting the Houthis to stand down with their drone attacks. Instead, the Houthis intensified. Meanwhile, the Iranian drive toward a nuke intensified as well. And Trump's response to these tests was unclear. He supported Israel, he told Iran and Hamas to stop, and he kept saying “no nuke.” On the other, he seemed determined to find a negotiated end to hostilities and deployed his friend Steve Witkoff to negotiate.

Trump gave Iran a chance to stand down and stand back. And another. And another. He had only a single non-negotiable point on his term sheet—Iran giving up all ability to enrich uranium to make a bomb. But it turned out this was something the Iranian regime could never accept, perhaps because going nuclear had become the key to its holding on to power. Again, we'll find out sometime. Iran tested him, and Trump was so desirous of avoiding a direct confrontation that he was willing to overlook the provocations to prevent or forestall major military hostilities between Israel and Iran to “get a deal.”

There was no deal. Trump couldn't get one. And so he went all-in with Israel. He struck Iran with weaponry never before used, the most powerful and yet the most precise non-nuclear bombs ever constructed. After 10 days of war from Israel did astonishing pinpoint damage in activating an attack inside Iran that was literally 20 years in the making came a single night of American mega-assault. In his short and pungent no-nonsense remarks last night, the president made clear he was willing to be one-and-done if Iran would come to the table and accept terms that would bring this barbarous 20-month jihad to a close. But, he said, he is willing to continue to rain down justice upon Iran if it persists—through a continued series of attacks that would be far easier to plan and execute for the United States than the one our amazing armed forces succeeded at upon this summer solstice.

It's a dangerous moment; the Iranian regime has terrorist assets we might not know about and work to hurt us and the Israelis still more. On the other hand, Iran is a thousand times weaker today than it was just 11 days ago, and so many of its strategic assets and strategic thinkers have been destroyed in that time it's not clear what capability the regime still might possess. So vigilance is called for, and we shouldn't celebrate just yet, but neither should we panic.

It turns out that in the case of the Middle East what Trump said about himself is true. He said he doesn't start wars. Trump said he ends wars. And what happened last night was Trump ending this evil war of Iran's, either right now or after more pain causes the mullahs to cry uncle. For Israel didn't start this war either. It was launched, by Iran and its catamites, on

October 7.

As I write, it's only a few hours since the U.S. strike. Its impact is potentially so enormous, and so world-historic, we needn't rush into interpreting its larger meaning. But consider the words he spoke in concluding his short speech to the nation: “I want to just thank everybody. And, in particular, G-d. I want to just say, we love you, G-d, and we love our great military. Protect them. G-d bless the Middle East. G-d bless Israel and G-d bless America.”

Trump has said since the assassination attempt in Butler, Pa., that he believes G-d spared him for a reason.

And now, so do I.

This was—is—the reason.

## UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL LEADERS ‘PROTECT’ IRAN

MIKE WAGENHEIM (JNS.org 19-6-25)

Jürg Lauber, the Swiss ambassador to the United Nations, used his privilege as president, for 2025, of the U.N. Human Rights Council to repeatedly chide experts addressing the council and tell them to maintain “necessary dignity and respect.”

He opted to do so only when pro-Israel speakers referred to the Iranian regime's documented offenses and not when critics of the Jewish state accused it of crimes.

David Michaels, director of U.N. and intercommunal affairs at B'nai B'rith International, told JNS that he wasn't surprised to be berated as he addressed the council, given its “track record.”

“The council has a long history of chiding and interrupting speakers, particularly from the pro-Israel side, whether that's member states or the chair,” Michaels told JNS.

Michaels, whose pre-recorded video message was played before the council on Tuesday, told JNS he followed Lauber's responses in real time.

He told the body that the U.N. Commission of Inquiry's latest report about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—which claims that Israel is conducting a Gazan “extermination” campaign—“accuses Israel and Israel alone of undermining another people's identity, survival and ties to a land.”

“It accuses Israel and Israel alone of the crime of ‘extermination,’” he said in the recorded message, “and it accuses Israel and Israel alone of possible ‘genocidal intent.’” He added that the council had yet to discuss explicit Iranian regime threats to destroy Israel.

The U.N. Human Rights Council created the so-called Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and Israel, which several U.N. member states have denounced. The commission is assigned to probe the “root causes” of the conflict, and critics have said it has an oversized budget and staffing compared to other U.N. commissions. JNS has reported that all three of the commission's members have been credibly accused of Jew-hatred.

With Navi Pillay, chair of the Commission of Inquiry, present on Tuesday, Michaels urged those reading its reports to compare the ideology, rhetoric and peace overtures emanating from Jerusalem and Tehran.

“If this COI were interested in the root causes of conflict, it would show some interest in the open intentions of those who chant, ‘death to America, death to Israel,’” Michaels said in his pre-recorded remarks, of chants by Iranian regime officials and terror proxies.

After the 90-second message, Lauber said, “I would like to request all participants to deal with the issues we are dealing with in this council with the necessary dignity and respect.”

“I call upon all participants to ask questions or make comments in relation to the scope of the current dialogue,” he added, sitting next to Pillay. He didn't say which part or parts of the recorded message were disrespectful or beyond the scope.

As other speakers accused Israel of a wide range of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and called for sanctions and embargoes against the Jewish state, he said only “thank you” at the end of their remarks.

Michaels said such actions hurt the council's standing and “any perception of seriousness” the council might try to convey, “even more than it has been already.”

“There's something illuminating about that type of moment,” he told JNS. “To suggest that Iran's role in the region—including Iran's role in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, its sponsorship of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, among other pieces of the puzzle—is irrelevant and beyond the scope of a discussion on the root causes of conflict, it just shows how detached from reality this most important of human rights bodies is.”

ANNE HERZBERG, legal adviser and U.N. representative at NGO Monitor, told JNS she had a similar experience.

In a recorded statement she submitted from Israel, Herzberg told the U.N. Human Rights Council that the Commission of Inquiry “is now presenting its eighth report to the council, but in the hundreds of pages it has produced, this commission has yet to say anything about Iran and its role in driving the Palestinian conflict with Israel.”

She called the omission “glaring” and added that the commission “claims it investigates all underlying root causes of instability and protraction of the

conflict, yet it is silent as to how Iran is a root cause, with its genocidal agenda to destroy Israel and the terror armies it deploys to drive the conflict.”

Lauber jumped in after the remarks concluded.

“I would like to request, again, all participants to deal with human rights issues before this council with the necessary dignity and respect,” he said. “While speakers may refer to specific situations by way of example, for illustration, I call upon all participants to ask questions or make comments in relation to the scope of the current dialogue.”

Herzberg told JNS that while watching Lauber’s comments, she wasn’t “surprised at all, because from day one, it’s a total farce that this commission purports to be even-handed in any way.”

She described Iran’s role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict “as the second main cause, after Palestinian rejectionism.” Lauber’s attempt to “silence me and denigrate what I said just shows they have no interest in being fair.”

“It’s a sham,” she said.

There is no established mechanism through which Herzberg could clarify with Lauber or with the council what she said that he considered out of bounds, but she intends to keep appearing before the council, she told JNS. “I think it’s important, because you have to be there in the room,” she said. “They did show my video. So even though he tried to denigrate it after the fact, people still saw it.”

Similar incidents have occurred when Israel supporters have criticized the council, U.N. staff or their output.

In March, Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch, was interrupted multiple times while addressing the council, as Ibrahim Khraishi, the Palestinian “observer” to the global body in Geneva, accused him of being “affiliated with the Mossad.” The Palestinian representative said that Neuer should be barred from speaking.

After a second interruption, Paul Empole Efambe, a vice president of the U.N. Human Rights Council who was presiding over the meeting, did not yield back to Neuer. Instead, Efambe, the Congolese ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, called for “tolerance” and avoiding “disrespectful” comments.

Michaels told JNS that the system is fundamentally flawed. Civil society organizations must go through a rigorous accreditation process to even have the opportunity to submit a 90-second pre-recorded message in what is billed as an “interactive dialogue.”

“To be bombarded week after week, month after month, year after year, with thousands of pages of resolutions, so-called reports and other documents that all feed off of each other, and to be given 90 seconds, if you’re lucky, to say anything meaningful,” he said.

“Then to be berated and to see the chairperson and other members sitting through these proceedings and clearly not engaging in any constructive reflection, it really is a farce,” Michaels told JNS. “But it’s a farce with real-world ramifications.”

## 'JEWS NOT ALLOWED'

NILS A. HAUG (GateStoneInstitute.org 20-6-25)

Pro-Palestinian activists at Sydney University, Australia, a recent investigative report revealed, have been freely disrupting university lectures, shouting antisemitic slogans and carrying banners declaring "Jews not allowed." According to the report:

"Jewish workers and students experienced antisemitism daily whilst on campus, creating a workplace of fear, anxiousness and a fear of retribution towards Jewish workers and students because they were Jewish people."

As has become typical in the West, the report's recommendations were ignored and a full investigation of the university not undertaken.

For those Jewish scholars and experts from abroad, often invited by the local community in Australia to visit and share their views and expertise, there is news: you might not be permitted to enter Australia. Your visa, even if approved at some earlier stage, could be revoked and you might be silenced. The governing leftist Labor Party may not want you there.

If, however, you are a dedicated Palestinian from Gaza, you are most likely welcome in Australia – little vetting required. So, come join the many thousands who are there already. Come create your very own "private Idaho," just as many of your fellow Islamists have already done in Europe.

Scheduled to speak to thousands of people at a fundraising event in June for Australian Friends of Magen David Adom (the official Israeli ambulance and medical emergency service devoted to saving lives of all people), Hillel Fuld had his visa revoked at the last minute. Fuld, an American-Israeli who describes himself as "a proud Zionist, a tech columnist, advisor to Google and Microsoft, and a father of five," has over the past 20 months posted on his X and LinkedIn accounts commentary about Hamas's war on Israel.

Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke, "responsible for importing thousands of Gazans to Australia without adequate security checks," gave as his reason for revoking Fuld's visa a false accusation of "'islamophobia rhetoric' which risked inciting discord against Australia's Muslim population."

Fuld, therefore, was supposedly a "threat to the 'health, safety or good order' of Australians."

Over the past few weeks in Australia, the following incidents against Jews were reported without much consequence:

- Ringleader of anti-Israel protest receives slap on wrist for assault - WATCH
- Gaza comes to the City to Surf
- Club bans 'fatophobia' and Zionists
- Local Labor Party branch calls for antisemitic measures
- Jews targeted at Newcastle surf event
- Extremist 'anti-racist' to speak at NSW Government-sponsored organization's event

● Western Sydney couple get slap on the wrist over antisemitic graffiti

In the overall scheme of things, these events might seem trivial. Jews, regrettably, are often the "canary in the coalmine" – meaning, how Jews as a defenseless minority in the diaspora are treated, portends escalating future actions not only against them but other minorities, and eventually all citizens.

With Fuld, the issue is the curtailment of freedom of speech. Facts are denied a platform, in order to make space for alternative narratives that suit the prevailing political trend. This issue should be of concern to all citizens.

More than a decade back, Charles Small noted about the US:

"Anti-Semitism is a deep, deep hatred, and once we permit this hatred to exist or target one group, it'll only be a matter of time before other groups are targeted."

Small was the director of the Yale University Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Antisemitism until it was closed down by the university after only a few years. Small's words in 2012 were far-sighted. A decade or so later, we see widely-supported, violent anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist events at Harvard, Yale and University of Pennsylvania, among others institutions. Columbia University, Northwestern University, Portland State University, UC Berkeley, and the University of Minnesota are currently under federal investigation.

In France, Jew-hatred is on the rise again. In early June, French dockworkers prevented a shipment of military goods destined for Israel, intended to assist it surviving an onslaught of jihadists from Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iran and its own West Bank. French President Emmanuel Macron, possibly to please his growing Muslim constituency, intended to recognize "steps toward" a borderless, atrociously governed, terrorist State of Palestine – contrary to the interests of Israelis, the Middle East, and especially the Palestinians. To justify his actions, and Macron has been lobbying other European nations to follow suit.

Meanwhile, Macron intimated that he would shortly make a decision "whether to implement 'concrete measures' against Israel because of the war against Hamas" – never mind that the war was initiated by Hamas, not Israel.

Coming from the famed land of "liberty, equality and fraternity," these things can only be seen as an example of unapologetic Jew-hatred from a major EU power, itself infiltrated by jihadists. Macron apparently decided that now would be the perfect time for a re-run of the anti-Semitic Dreyfus Affair 130 years ago, in which a loyal Jewish officer, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, was unjustly charged with treason and sentenced to life imprisonment on Devil's Island, a decision overturned only years later.

Even though the Dreyfus Affair was considered "a watershed event in the history of European anti-Semitism," and France during World War II was occupied for years by Nazi Germany and partly governed by the collaborators of the Vichy government, nothing, it seems, has been learned. The French Vichy government, under Marshall Philippe Pétain and Pierre Laval, was responsible for the deportation of over 76,000 Jews from France to German death camps. Only 2,500 survived.

US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee immediately responded to Macron's proposal:

"If France is really so determined to see a Palestinian state, I've got a suggestion for them: Carve out a piece of the French Riviera and create a Palestinian state. They're welcome to do that... but they're not welcome to impose that kind of pressure on a sovereign nation."

Are Macron's government and others not only denying Israel, and its majority Jewish population, the necessary arms to defend itself, but also seeking to recognize a hostile Islamist state inside another country's borders? What is the word for "chutzpah" in French?

European leaders like Macron, from nations such as Norway, Ireland, and Great Britain, who consider a "two-state solution" a pathway to peace, evidently wish to reward Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and Iran for the massacres of October 7, 2023 – the worst crime against Jews since the Holocaust. A two-state "solution" is a certain way to revive Hitler's "final solution" to the existence of Jews – as well as erasing Israel and its Jewish inhabitants.

Assimilation in other countries will not help the Jews, as they discovered to their horror during Europe's fascist era, when they lost more than six million



of their people and would have lost more were it not for the heroic actions of Raoul Wallenberg, Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Oskar Schindler, Denmark's King Christian X and many others less known. They risked, and some even sacrificed, their lives rather than to submit to a massive injustice – which other politicians and leaders seem all too willing to impose on Jews now.

The harsh reality is that much of the world thinks the worst of Jews – for no rational reason whatsoever. This psychopathology seems to conclude that it is actually morally and spiritually superior to eradicate a people and their religion in a genocide.

Why else would millions continue to be murdered, raped, and tortured in Sudan and Nigeria, for instance, without much comment from the mainstream media, and the dedicated Western pro-Palestinian demonstrators? Why is only Gaza, and by implication Israel's supposed culpability, the world's main focus?

Beth Kuhel comments:

"While civil wars have displaced over 10 million in Sudan, where mass rape, ethnic cleansing, and child slavery have returned to Darfur — Western students chant that Israel is the world's greatest evil."

The battle over Israel's survival and that of the Jewish people, appears to be a spiritual battle fought, as always, in the physical realm. The Israelis of today, like the Israelites of antiquity, probably need to be prepared to fight continually for their land, their people and the acceptance of their holy book, the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament. The shocking failures of October 7, 2023, however, cannot be allowed ever to happen again – and Israel's putative allies cannot be relied on.

Israel, despite the odds, will prevail. "No weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed," proclaimed Isaiah, "and you shall refute every tongue that rises against you in judgment. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their vindication from me, declares the Lord."

Believe it.

## THANK YOU MR. PRESIDENT, THANK YOU AMERICA, THANK YOU ISRAEL

MAJID RAFIZADEH (GateStoneliInstitute.org 21-6-25)

What the world witnessed this past week was not merely a military operation. It was the courageous act of a free nation — Israel — taking one of the bravest and most humane steps in recent memory to stop evil in its tracks. This tiny country, by itself, has begun putting an end to a "forever war" that the Islamic Republic of Iran has been waging on the West for 46 years. The potential success of such a David-vs-Goliath endeavor would not be possible without the strength, determination, and leadership of US President Donald J. Trump.

While many global leaders have stood by passively, hedging their words and calling for "restraint," Trump showed what true leadership looks like. He did not waver. He did not equivocate. He supported Israel in its fight on behalf of all of us in the Free World – not just in words, but in action, strategy, and unwavering moral clarity.

Israel's bold, precise strikes on Iran's military and nuclear infrastructure were not acts of aggression – they were acts of self-defense needed to protect the country's existence after hearing from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that, contrary to the claims – twice – of US Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard that Iran was not working on a bomb. If you are not working in a bomb, you do not need a Fordow uranium enrichment site.

Either Gabbard's information was worthless or she was lying to the public to promote a pacifist ideology. Either reason does not exactly inspire confidence. Israel had suffered the unspeakable horror of October 7, when Hamas terrorists, funded and armed by Iran and Qatar, invaded Israel and massacred civilians in cold blood. What other nation on earth would be told to "show restraint" after such a barbaric attack? Did the United States advocate "showing restraint" after 9/11? Yet, that is what most so-called Western leaders have done — telling Israel to have a cease-fire, hold back, limit its response, avoid "escalation." As if the original atrocity was not escalation enough.

Trump, to his immense credit, and contrary to the Biden administration, did not join that cowardly chorus. Instead, he did what only a true friend and a great leader would do: he stood by Israel – a country the size of New Jersey being attacked on seven fronts – with conviction and clarity.

While others tried to soften their language, Trump said after Israel's initial air strikes, said that the Israeli operation was "excellent." He reminded the world that he had given Iran 60 days – a generous chance – to stop advancing toward nuclear weapons. Iran refused the opportunity. Instead of pretending otherwise or hiding behind bureaucratic platitudes, Trump spoke plainly and powerfully: "They got hit hard... More to come."

Contrast this to the usual diplomatic playbook. How many world leaders immediately ran to the podium after the Hamas invasion in 2023 to pressure Israel to de-escalate and pretended that peace can be achieved by pacifying terrorists and tyrants? Whether such an approach is bad or good is immaterial: it does not work. How many of these politicians care more

about being praised by the New York Times than about the future of their countries and the free world? These politicians probably imagine they are projecting virtue; in reality, they are simply projecting cowardice, while enabling violence and tyranny.

Those politicians seem concerned only with appearing "balanced," even when one side is clearly the aggressor and the other, the victim. Trump never fell into that trap. He made it clear that supporting Israel's right to defend itself is not just a strategic choice — it is a moral obligation.

Even in his first term, Trump showed backbone that must have maddened his detractors. He charted a course of unapologetic strength and moral clarity. He pulled the US out of the disastrous 2015 JCPOA Iran "nuclear deal," which was set to legitimize Iran's acquiring nuclear weapons in October 2025. He ordered the killing of Iran's leading terrorist, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Major General Qasem Soleimani. Trump defeated Islamic State in Syria in a matter of weeks, moved the U.S. Embassy in to Jerusalem, Israel's rightful capital; then he brokered the Abraham Accords, which normalized relations between Israel and several Arab nations.

Now, once again, when Israel needs a true ally — not just someone to offer sympathetic words then threaten to withhold weapons — Trump has offered consistent support. "Israel has to do what they have to do," he said. When Iran, in its predictable fury, launched hundreds of ballistic missiles and drones at Israel, the United States military — under Trump's leadership — has helped to intercept some of them. This is what real partnership looks like. Not lectures, not empty statements, but coordinated defense and mutual trust. Iran's hegemonic threats are failing because of the strength and cooperation between Israel and a United States, led by Trump. America finally has a president willing to act against terrorism.

This moment also makes clear that Trump's actions are not provoking World War III, they are preventing World War III – which Iran has been threatening for almost half a century. All that time, Iran has been on a path of escalation — arming terrorist proxies, developing for nuclear weapons, targeting U.S. troops in the Middle East more than 350 times just in the last five years and promising "Death to America" and genocide for Israel.

If the world had remained paralyzed by fear and indecision, if Israel had been pressured into backing down, the consequences could have been catastrophic: a green light for terrorists and aggressors to keep on going. Instead, Trump drew a red line — and when Iran's leadership crossed it, they paid the price.

This kind of Churchillian clarity does not cause chaos — it stops it, as the WWII allies did in the last century in Germany and Japan. Trump and Netanyahu deserve the Nobel Peace Prize for taking one of the world's greatest terrorist states off the table.

Strength does not invite war—it deters it. "When people see a strong horse and a weak horse," observed the late esteemed psychologist, Osama bin Laden, "they will naturally want to side with the strong horse." The Middle East is safer today not because of handshakes and summits and signed pieces of paper that usually one side disregards.

Russia disregarded the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, under which Russia, the United States and Ukraine agreed that Ukraine's borders would be respected in exchange for giving up the nuclear weapons it had at the time. And half a ton of documents showed that Iran had been cheating on its JCPOA "deal."

The Middle East is safer today because Israel struck after the IAEA admitted that Iran had been in breach of its nuclear non-proliferation obligations and because Israeli intelligence determined that Iran was on the brink of assembling a bomb – and because the United States stood behind Israel.

To those who still criticize, who still think diplomacy alone can solve everything, the answer is simple. As the great Secretary of State George Shultz noted, "Negotiations are a euphemism for capitulation if the shadow of power is not cast across the bargaining table" – in short, diplomacy works best when the enemy knows that it is backed up by force. Iran's leaders did not take Trump's 60-day warning seriously, probably because they did not believe he and Netanyahu had the courage to act. They also may be assuming that they can absorb a few blows and build back their nuclear weapons program after that – and precisely why it is crucial to destroy Fordow: to make sure no one can resuscitate it later..

The time for appeasement is over. For this, we owe our gratitude to three pillars: Trump, the USA under his leadership, and the brave people of Israel who refuse to be victims.

In a world increasingly dominated by appeasers, enablers and cowards, thank heaven for those who still have the courage to stand tall and fight evil. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, America. And thank you, Israel. May G-d bless you in this just and noble fight.

## WHY THE WORLD BELIEVES LIES ABOUT ISRAEL

RABBI EPHRAIM SHORE (Aish.com 15-6-25)

Genocide, apartheid, colonialism—these words represent some of the greatest evils of modern history. And not only is Israel being accused of them, many people are actually believing these horrific charges, despite the

clear evidence to the contrary.

The following should be self-evident: ISRAEL IS NOT COMMITTING GENOCIDE.

Genocide is defined by the UN as “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.” If Israel intended to eliminate Palestinians, it could have done so long ago. Gaza is a small, heavily surveilled territory—only 140 square miles. Instead, Israel takes unprecedented measures to avoid civilian casualties: warning civilians through leaflets, phone calls, and “roof-knocking” before strikes. Its efforts in urban warfare to protect noncombatants outpace those of any other modern army.

ISRAEL IS NOT AN APARTHEID STATE.

“Apartheid” describes South Africa’s former system of legally enshrined racial segregation. In contrast, Israel’s 20% Arab minority has full citizenship and equal rights. Arabs serve in the Knesset, on the Supreme Court, and in the military. Yes, there are societal challenges and inequalities—as in all democracies—but to call this apartheid is a gross distortion.

And in a painful twist of irony, the opposite is true in Gaza.

Hamas openly calls for and attempts genocide against Jews. On October 7, 2023, Hamas launched a barbaric assault: murdering 1,200 Israelis, wounding over 3,000, raping women, burning families alive, and kidnapping 251 innocent people. The world barely blinked before accusing Israel of wrongdoing for responding. Since then, Hamas has fired thousands of rockets aimed at Jewish civilians.

Meanwhile, Hamas’s Gaza is an actual apartheid state. Jews and Christians are persecuted. Gays are executed. Political dissidents are murdered. Women are killed for being raped.

These facts are not hard to discover, yet the lies spread—relentlessly, globally—from elite universities to mass protests in the streets.

HOW CAN THOUGHTFUL, educated people—professors, journalists, UN officials, human rights activists—believe and propagate such blatant distortions?

How did Hamas know that the world would back them, rather than demand their surrender and support Israel’s right to self-defense?

Sadly, none of this is new. For centuries, antisemitism has cloaked itself in the language of justice, virtue, and moral outrage.

- During the Black Plague (1348–1351), Jews were blamed for poisoning wells—despite zero evidence—and entire communities were massacred.
- For centuries, both Christians and Muslims spread the blood libel, accusing Jews of murdering Christian children for ritual purposes. This led to mass killings from Norwich (1144) to Damascus (1840).
- In Nazi Germany, one of the world’s most educated societies embraced the lie that Jews were a parasitic race plotting global domination. The result: six million murdered, including 1.5 million children—often by neighbors they had lived beside for decades.
- Following the crucifixion of Jesus, Jews were collectively blamed for his death in perpetuity—a charge that led to pogroms, forced conversions, and expulsions for nearly two millennia.

The pattern is clear: Antisemitic lies don’t need to be true, they just need to sound good. Rationality has never been enough to stop the hate.

TODAY, THE LIES WEAR the mask of “human rights.”

People claim to care about Palestinian lives. So does Israel. Every innocent life matters. But where is the moral clarity that this war is Hamas’s responsibility?

Hamas started the war. It embeds itself in civilian areas, builds tunnels under homes and hospitals, fires rockets from schoolyards, and uses its own people as human shields—all war crimes.

Hamas’s charter (1988, reaffirmed in 2017) explicitly calls for Israel’s destruction and frames its campaign as an Islamic holy war. They don’t attempt to hide this fact. This is not a movement for coexistence. It is a jihadist death cult, fueled by billions in foreign aid, determined to sacrifice its own people for propaganda wins. And they vow to do it again until Israel is destroyed.

Why do liberal pundits whitewash this and pretend they just want a state in the West Bank and Gaza?

Has there ever been a mass terror attack anywhere else that was openly justified by the liberal West?

So why is it that liberal pundits, human rights groups, and elite institutions rush to justify Hamas’s actions and give credibility to blatant lies, while portraying Israel as the villain?

The answer: This is classic antisemitism.

It’s not confusion about the facts that creates antisemitism, it’s antisemitism which blinds people to the facts.

It’s Jew-hatred dressed in new clothes. No longer shouted with swastikas and SS uniforms, antisemitism now appears in:

Human rights slogans.

Academic lectures.

Anti-Zionist protest signs.

But the essence remains the same:

It dehumanizes Jews.

It distorts reality to justify hate.

It dismisses Jewish suffering and brands Jewish self-defense as aggression.

It makes violence against Jews feel righteous—whether in Sderot, Paris, London, or Colorado.

Philosophers, psychologists, and historians have all tried to explain the persistence of antisemitism.

But the reasons never matter as much as the results.

History shows: no matter how absurd the accusation, no matter how educated the audience, the outcome is the same.

We comfort ourselves with the belief that people are reasonable. That the truth will win out. That this can’t happen again.

But it can.

And when it does—it kills.

And we must stop believing that irrational hatred will somehow spare us. Because history teaches, again and again: it won’t.

This frightening realization causes a kind of cognitive dissonance. We want to believe in the goodness of humanity, but hasn’t our history taught us otherwise?

JEWS ARE ONE OF the oldest peoples on earth. We’ve given the world more than our numbers could ever justify—monotheism, ethics, prophets, literature, science, medicine, and law. We’ve survived exiles, slavery, pogroms, and genocide.

And still, we are hated.

Not for what we do. But for who we are.

We must continue to speak the truth—even if only for ourselves.

We must protect our people.

And we must stop believing that the irrationality of hatred will somehow spare us. Because history teaches, again and again: it won’t.

We can’t allow the world’s distortion of who we are to weaken our pride in who we truly are. Instead, we need to deepen our connection to Jewish life, wisdom, and community.

Our history is not only one of persecution, but of purpose. Let us respond not with fear, but with faith and strength—by living openly, proudly, and fully as Jews.

## TOP ISRAELI RABBIS CALL FOR HALLEL AFTER DIVINE BLOW TO IRAN

FERN SIDMAN (TheJewishVoice.com 22-6-25)

In the wake of the United States’ bold and unprecedented strikes on Iranian nuclear installations, including the fortified Fordow enrichment facility, two of Israel’s most prominent rabbis have issued spiritual directives that reframe the geopolitical development as not only a military event—but a divine intervention. As reported by VIN News on Sunday, the rabbinic voices have galvanized Jewish communities across Israel and beyond, calling for specific changes to daily liturgy to mark what they described as a moment of national and spiritual deliverance.

Chief Rabbi of Safed, Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu, and acclaimed mystic Rabbi Nir Ben Artzi have both framed the American operation as an expression of divine will, and urged Jews to respond with gratitude, joy, and renewed faith.

According to the information provided in the VIN News report, Rabbi Shmuel Eliyahu—widely respected as a halachic authority and spiritual leader—issued a public statement instructing that the tachanun prayer, traditionally recited as a supplication for mercy, should be suspended. In its place, Rabbi Eliyahu encouraged the daily recitation of mizmor letodah (Psalm 100), a prayer of thanksgiving, along with the special communal blessing Hatov u’Metiv—“He who is good and bestows good”—reserved in Jewish law for shared miracles and moments of communal joy.

“We are living through a time of revealed miracles,” Rabbi Eliyahu declared in remarks carried by VIN News, drawing a parallel to the Purim story. He cited the Book of Esther: “And they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordechai” (Esther 7:10), suggesting that those who plot against the Jewish people may find themselves victims of their own schemes.

His message, noted in the VIN News report, was not merely symbolic. The omission of tachanun—a prayer that beseeches forgiveness and divine compassion—is halachically significant, traditionally set aside only on days of joy, redemption, or communal celebration. Rabbi Eliyahu’s call therefore serves as both a theological declaration and a public spiritual recalibration in the wake of military success.

In parallel, VIN News reported that Rabbi Nir Ben Artzi—a prominent kabbalist known for his weekly prophetic sermons and vast national following—called on Jews to elevate their prayers further. In response to what he characterized as a “miracle,” Rabbi Ben Artzi instructed the recitation of Hallel, a series of Psalms (113–118) traditionally reserved for joyous festivals, Rosh Chodesh, and moments of divine salvation.

“The hand of G-d is evident,” Rabbi Ben Artzi stated, as quoted in VIN News,

referring to the targeting and successful damaging of the Fordow nuclear facility—long considered impregnable by Israeli analysts. The rabbi noted that the very sites untouched by previous operations had now suffered substantial setbacks, and that such precision and timing could only be attributed to divine orchestration.

Notably, the report at VIN News recalled that earlier this year, Rabbi Ben Artzi had issued a public prophecy predicting that Israel and its allies would soon strike at the heart of Iran’s nuclear capabilities. His recent commentary suggests that the U.S. strikes—which caught much of the international community by surprise—were the fulfillment of that vision.

The U.S. strikes, confirmed by Pentagon sources and regional intelligence channels, reportedly targeted multiple Iranian nuclear facilities, including deep-underground installations such as Fordow, a site previously thought to be shielded from conventional attack. As the VIN News report notes, the operation marks a historic escalation in the ongoing standoff over Iran’s nuclear ambitions—an issue that has haunted Israeli security doctrine for over two decades.

In Israel, public reaction has been a mixture of relief, praise for American resolve, and cautious anticipation of potential Iranian retaliation. Yet the spiritual response, as captured by VIN News, reflects a deeper undercurrent: a belief that Israel’s national security is intimately tied to divine providence. Synagogues across Israel have already begun to adopt the new liturgical practices recommended by Rabbis Eliyahu and Ben Artzi. In cities like Safed, Jerusalem, and Be’er Sheva, VIN News observed worshippers reciting mizmor letodah and Hallel with pronounced fervor. In many yeshivot, the moment has been framed as a modern-day echo of Biblical deliverance, reinforcing the belief that the Jewish people’s destiny continues to be shaped by unseen hands.

The convergence of halachic instruction and mystical pronouncement, as detailed in the VIN News report, is not merely a religious footnote—it is a profound reflection of how Israeli society weaves faith into its national consciousness. While Western commentators often analyze Middle Eastern affairs through political, strategic, or economic lenses, the rabbinic response offers a strikingly different framework: one that views current events as manifestations of eternal truths and divine covenant.

This spiritual framing has the added effect of bolstering national unity in times of tension. As the VIN News report aptly noted, both Rabbi Eliyahu and Rabbi Ben Artzi, despite differing religious backgrounds—one a mainstream rabbinic authority, the other a kabbalistic seer—have found common ground in their call to praise and gratitude.

Whether one sees the recent events as military milestones, political maneuvers, or acts of providence, the response from Israel’s spiritual leadership is unequivocal. This is a time not for supplication, but for thanksgiving. A time not only to strategize for the future, but to acknowledge the present as a divine gift.

One truth remains constant: In Israel, the sacred and the strategic are never far apart. When the world shifts, the prayers of the people follow—and sometimes, lead.

Am Yisrael Chai.

# Kosher & Halacha Korner

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## ELECTRICITY WITHOUT A HEATED FILAMENT

RABBI CHAIM JACHTER (KolTorah.org)

In our previous essay we presented the accepted view that turning on an electric appliance that heats metal until it glows constitutes a Torah level prohibition of Havarah (burning). This week we turn our attention to electric appliances where metal is not heated to a glow, such as a fluorescent bulb. Poskim (Halachic authorities) and the Jewish People have accepted that turning on such appliances is strictly prohibited on Shabbat and Yom Tov. However, it has been challenging to determine precisely why it is prohibited. In this essay we shall survey six approaches as to why it is prohibited and seek to arrive at a conclusion as to whether it constitutes a Torah level prohibition or rabbinic prohibition. We shall frequently refer to the writings of Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, one of the greatest Halachic authorities of the twentieth century (1910-1995), who lived through the introduction of electric appliances into Eretz Yisrael and devoted much attention to mastering both the science and Halachic implications of these new phenomena.

### APPROACH #1 – MOLID

Among the first suggestions as to the basis for prohibiting such appliances was Rav Yitzchak Schmेलkes’ (Teshuvot Beit Yitzchak 2:31 in the addenda) assertion that creating a functioning electric appliance is analogous to the

rabbinic prohibition to create a new fragrance in one’s clothes on Shabbat and Yom Tov, known as Molid Reicha (Beitzah 23a). The Teshuvot Beit Yitzchak argues that Molid Zerem (powering an appliance with an electric current) is analogous to Molid Reicha and thus powering an appliance with electric current constitutes a rabbinic level prohibition.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1: pp.73-74) questions Rav Schmेलkes’ analogy. He notes that one intends the scent to remain in the clothes and the clothing is not made to have scents added and removed. Electric appliances, on the other hand, are made to be turned on and off. Moreover, Rav Auerbach notes that Chazal did not forbid the creation of anything new. For example, they never forbade making juice from fruits that are not normally squeezed for its juice. Thus, one cannot expand the prohibition of Molid Reicha to Molid or to anything else not explicitly prohibited by Chazal since there is no broad categorical prohibition to create something new on Shabbat and Yom Tov.

### APPROACH #2 – BONEH

The second major approach to prohibit powering electric appliances without a heated element was articulated by the Chazon Ish (Orach Chaim 50:9 and in letters to Rav Auerbach printed in Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1: pp. 92-94). He rules that completing an electric circuit most likely constitutes a Torah level prohibition of Boneh (building) and opening a circuit is an act of Soteir (destroying). He argues that completing a circuit is analogous to assembling an appliance consisting of many parts (see Shabbat 57a and Shulchan Aruch O. C. 313:6). He adds that when one completes a circuit he has brought the appliance “from death to life,” which the Chazon Ish asserts constitutes an act of Boneh.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:11) also questions these assertions of the Chazon Ish. His primary argument is that an act which is intended to be done and undone on a regular basis is not defined as Boneh. Rav Shlomo Zalman sees opening and closing an electric circuit as analogous to opening and closing a door which is not Boneh and is undoubtedly permissible on Shabbat (see Mishnah Berurah 313:45). Rav Shlomo Zalman also questions the assertion that bringing something to life constitutes an act of Boneh. He notes that planting a shoot in the earth or grafting a tree is forbidden on Shabbat as planting but never as Boneh, even though doing so transforms the shoot from death to life.

### APPROACH #3 – MAKEH BEPATISH

The Chazon Ish (ad. loc.) also asserts that completing an electric circuit constitutes an act of Makeh BePatish. This literally means the “[final] blow of a hammer” and refers to finishing a product and making it useful (Rambam Hilchot Shabbat 23:4). Just as the final blow transforms a useless item into a functional product so too one who powers an appliance with electric power renders a useless article into something useful. The Chazon Ish cites as a precedent the ruling of the Chayei Adam (44:19) who forbids winding a watch on Shabbat as a Torah level prohibition of Makeh BePatish. Rav Auerbach (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo pp. 69-73 and 101-102) again questions the Chazon Ish. He argues “it is very reasonable to say that something that is done one hundred times a day is impossible to classify as Makeh BePatish.” He also writes that he is inclined to believe that “Makeh BePatish applies specifically when an item is missing something significant that craftsmen generally perform and [afterwards] remains this way permanently.” Since, reasons Rav Shlomo Zalman, completing an electric circuit is a simple process that anyone can perform and is performed constantly it cannot be classified as Makeh BePatish.

In addition, the Encyclopedia Talmudit (18:166) notes that of all the great authorities who preceded the Chazon Ish in discussing turning on electricity on Shabbat never even raise the possibility of completing an electric circuit constituting an act of Boneh or Makeh BePatish. These authorities include Rav Yechiel Michel Epstein (the author of the Aruch HaShulchan who addressed issues of electricity in an essay published in the Torah journal Beit Vaad LaChachamim), Rav Yitzchak Schmेलkes (Teshuvot Beit Yitzchak ad. loc.), Rav David Zvi Hoffman (Teshuvot Melamed Lehoil 1:49), and Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky (Teshuvot Achiezer 3:60). Indeed, in Rav Moshe Feinstein’s writings addressing the prohibition of turning on electricity on Shabbat he never presents the Chazon Ish’s approach (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe O.C. 1:50, 3:42, 4:84 and 4:85). These Poskim seem not to accept the assertion of the Chazon Ish that completing a circuit constitutes an act of Boneh and Makeh BePatish.

### APPROACH #4 – SPARKS

Both Rav David Zvi Hoffman and the Chazon Ish note that it is prohibited to complete circuits due to the sparks that are created when one completes a circuit. They argue that the sparks generated when completing an electric circuit fall into the rabbinic prohibition to create sparks from wood or stones (Mishnah Beitzah 4:7).

Rav Shlomo Zalman (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1: pp. 86-87) strongly questions this assumption. He notes that not only does one not intend to create these sparks, but also one does not want them at all since they wear out the points of contact in a circuit. He also argues that this is considered an unusual manner (KeLeAchar Yad) to create sparks since one never



completes a circuit with the intention of creating sparks. Accordingly, Rav Auerbach argues that there should be no Halachic problem associated with the creation of such sparks.

He draws an analogy to a ruling of the Dagul MeiRevavah (O.C. 340:3) where he permits cutting a cake with letters written on it. This permission is based on the combination of the fact that erasing when not done for the purpose of writing is only a rabbinic prohibition, he has no intention of erasing the letters, it is a destructive act (Mekalkeil), and this is a KeLeAchar Yad manner of erasing. Accordingly, since the creation of sparks in general is only a rabbinic prohibition, and one does not intend to create sparks when completing an electric circuit, it is an unusual manner to create sparks, and it damages the circuit, the creation of sparks when completing an electric circuit does not constitute a prohibited act on Shabbat.

We should note, however, that Rama (ad. loc.) does prohibit breaking a cake with letters on it. Although the Shaarei Teshuvah (340:1) fully accepts the ruling of the Dagul MeiRevavah and the Aruch HaShulchan (O.C. 340:23) essentially supports it, the Mishnah Berurah (340:16) does not fully accept this lenient ruling. Indeed, common practice is to avoid cutting the letters on a cake on Shabbat in harmony with the ruling of Rama.

On the other hand, the fact that Halachah attaches no significance to something that is not visible to the “naked eye” (see Aruch HaShulchan Yoreh Deah 84:36 and Teshuvot Igrot Moshe Y.D. 3:120:5) is another consideration to discount these sparks. The Encyclopedia Talmudit (18:734) states that turning on appliances that operate on a relatively low voltage does not make visible sparks. Moreover, the production of sparks depends to a great extent on humidity. Thus, since it is not inevitable (Pesik Reisha) that these sparks will be produced, it remains an unintended action (Davar ShEino Mitkavein), which is permitted on Shabbat.

#### APPROACH #5 – INCREASED FUEL CONSUMPTION

Some have suggested that it is forbidden to complete an electric circuit on Shabbat since it causes increased fuel consumption in the power station. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (cited in Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchata 1:23 footnote 137) dismisses this concern for two reasons. The connection between one’s action and its impact in the power plant is remote and is classified as G’rama (indirect action). Moreover, in the majority of situations (Rove) one’s actions do not have impact on the fuel consumption in the power station.

#### APPROACH #6 – RAV SHLOMO ZALMAN AUERBACH

Rav Auerbach concludes (Teshuvot Minchat Shlomo 1:pp.74, 84, and 95) that completing an electric circuit and creating a flow of electrons is essentially no different than turning on a faucet and creating a flow of water. He believes that the only technical prohibitions potentially associated with electricity are the actions caused by electricity such as cooking or burning (in an incandescent bulb). Nonetheless, Rav Auerbach rules that it is forbidden to turn on an appliance even if no metal is heated until it glows, since Rav Schmelkes has already ruled on this matter (Kevlar Horeh Zaken) and it has been accepted among the Jewish People. Moreover, since people will become confused between electricity that involves a heated filament and ones that do not, it is forbidden to turn on electric appliances even if no metal is heated until it glows.

#### CONCLUSION

In practice, it is undoubtedly forbidden to complete electric circuits on Shabbat and Yom Tov. The only question that remains is if it constitutes a Torah prohibition following the ruling of the Chazon Ish or rabbinic prohibition in accordance with the view of the Beit Yitzchak. A variety of Poskim have stated that the accepted view is that of the Beit Yitzchak. These authorities include Rav Yehuda Amital (personal communication), Rav David Cohen of Brooklyn (personal communication), Rav Moshe Heinemann (in a lecture to the Council of Young Israel Rabbis), Rav Shlomo Levy (personal communication), and Rav Hershel Schachter (in a lecture to the Rabbinical Council of America). This ruling has many ramifications for a wide variety of situations such as Amirah LeNachri (instructing a Nachri to perform forbidden labor on Shabbat), needs of the sick (Tzorchei Choleh), and Pesik Reisha DeLo Nicha Lei (an intended but inevitable act from which one derives no benefit) where significant distinctions are made between Torah level and rabbinic prohibitions.

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