

Kol Rina
An Independent Minyan
Parashat Chukat
July 9, 2022 *** Tamuz 10, 5782

Kol Rina – An Independent Minyan, is a traditional egalitarian community. We are haimish (homey/folksy), friendly, participatory, warm and welcoming. We hold weekly services in South Orange as well as holiday services and celebrations which are completely lay led. We welcome all to our services and programs from non-Hebrew readers to Jewish communal and education professionals.

[Chukat in a Nutshell](https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/2959/jewish/Chukat-in-a-Nutshell.htm)

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Moses is taught the laws of the red heifer, whose ashes purify a person who has been contaminated by contact with a dead body.
After forty years of journeying through the desert, the people of Israel arrive in the wilderness of Zin. Miriam dies, and the people thirst for water. G-d tells Moses to speak to a rock and command it to give water. Moses gets angry at the rebellious Israelites and strikes the stone. Water issues forth, but Moses is told by G-d that neither he nor Aaron will enter the Promised Land.
Aaron dies at Hor Hahar and is succeeded in the high priesthood by his son Elazar. Venomous snakes attack the Israelite camp after yet another eruption of discontent in which the people “speak against G-d and Moses”; G-d tells Moses to place a brass serpent upon a high pole, and all who will gaze heavenward will be healed. The people sing a song in honor of the miraculous well that provided them water in the desert.
Moses leads the people in battles against the Emorite kings Sichon and Og (who seek to prevent Israel’s passage through their territory) and conquers their lands, which lie east of the Jordan.

[Haftarah in a Nutshell: Judges 11:1-33.](https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/696127/jewish/Haftarah-in-a-Nutshell.htm)

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This week's haftarah describes how the people of Israel were attacked by the nation of Ammon. The Israelites engaged Jephthah to lead them in battle against this military threat. Jephthah first sent a missive to Ammon, declaring his peaceful intentions. In his message, he also discussed the Israelites' conquest of the lands of Sichon and Og, victories which are related in this week's Torah reading.
Jephthah the Gileadite was the son of a harlot. He was sent away from his home by his half-siblings, and settled in the land of Tob where he became a great warrior. When the nation of Ammon attacked the people of Israel, Jephthah was called upon to lead the Israelites in battle. Jephthah agreed, on one condition: "If you bring me back to fight with the children of Ammon, and G-d delivers them before me, I will become your head." The Israelites accepted his terms.
Jephthah tried to bring a peaceful resolution to the conflict by sending messengers to reason with the king of Ammon; but the latter remained inflexible. Jephthah then successfully led his countrymen in battle, and they trounced and eliminated the Ammonite threat.

Anger Management: Chukat by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z'l

<https://www.rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/chukat/anger-management/>

There are some, say the Talmud, who acquire their world in an hour and others who lose it in an hour. No example of the latter is more arresting and bewildering than the famous episode in this week's parsha. The people have asked for water. God tells Moses to take a staff and speak to the rock and water will appear. This then follows:

He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, 'Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?' Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank.

But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'Because you did not trust in Me enough to honour Me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.

Num. 20:10-12

"Is this the Torah and this its reward?" we are tempted to say. What was Moses' sin that it merited such punishment? In previous years I have expressed my view that Moses did not sin, nor was he punished. It was simply that each generation needs its own leaders. Moses was the right, indeed the only, leader capable of taking the Israelites out of Egypt. They needed another kind of leader, and a different style of leadership, to take the next generation into the Promised Land.

Within the framework of this year's series, though, as we discuss the ethics of the Bible, it seems more appropriate to look at a different explanation, the one given by Maimonides in Shemoneh Perakim, the "Eight Chapters" that form the preface to his commentary to the Mishnah, Tractate Avot, the Ethics of the Fathers.

In the course of these chapters Maimonides sets out a surprisingly contemporary account of Judaism as a training in emotional intelligence.[1] Healthy emotions are essential to a good and happy life, but temperament is not something we choose. Some people just happen to be more patient or calm or generous-spirited or optimistic than others. Emotions were at one stage called the "passions," a word that comes from the same root as "passive," implying that they are feelings that happen to us rather than reactions we choose. Despite this, Maimonides believed that with sufficient training it is possible for us to overcome our destructive emotions and reconfigure our affective life.

In general, Maimonides, like Aristotle, believed that emotional intelligence exists in striking a balance between excess and deficiency, too much and too little. Too much fear makes me a coward, too little makes me rash and foolhardy, taking unnecessary risks. The middle way is courage. There are, however, two

exceptions, says Maimonides: pride and anger. Even a little pride (some Sages suggested “an eighth of an eighth”) is too much. Likewise even a little anger is wrong.

That, says Maimonides, is why Moses was punished: because he lost his temper with the people when he said, “Listen, you rebels.” To be sure, there were other occasions on which he lost his temper – or at least appeared to lose it. His reaction to the sin of the Golden Calf, which included smashing the Two Tablets, was hardly eirenic or relaxed. But that case was different. The Israelites had committed a sin. God Himself was threatening to destroy the people. Moses had to act decisively and with sufficient force to restore order to a people wildly out of control.

Here, though, the people had not sinned. They were thirsty. They needed water. God was not angry with them. Moses’ intemperate reaction was therefore wrong, says Maimonides. To be sure, anger is something to which we are all prone. But Moses was a leader, and a leader must be a role model. That is why Moses was punished so heavily for a failure that might have been more lightly punished in someone less exalted.

In addition, says Maimonides, by losing his temper Moses failed to respect the people and might have demoralised them. Knowing that Moses was God’s emissary, the people might have concluded that if Moses was angry with them, so too was God. Yet they had done no more than ask for water. Giving the people the impression that God was angry with them was a failure to sanctify God’s Name. Thus one moment’s anger was sufficient to deprive Moses of the reward surely most precious to him, of seeing the culmination of his work by leading the people across the Jordan and into the Promised Land.

The Sages were outspoken in their critique of anger. They would have thoroughly approved of the modern concept of anger management. They did not like anger at all, and reserved some of their sharpest language to describe it.

“The life of those who can’t control their anger is not a life,” they said. (Pesachim 113b)

Reish Lakish said, “When a person becomes angry, if he is a sage his wisdom departs from him; if he is a prophet his prophecy departs from him.” (Pesachim 66b)

Maimonides said that when someone becomes angry it is as if he has become an idolater. (Hilchot Deot 2:3)

What is dangerous about anger is that it causes us to lose control. It activates the most primitive part of the human brain that bypasses the neural circuitry we use when we reflect and choose on rational grounds. While in the grip of a hot temper, we lose the ability to step back and judge the possible consequences of our actions. The result is that in a moment of irascibility we can do or say things we may regret for the rest of our lives.

For that reason, rules Maimonides, there is no “middle way” when it comes to

anger (Hilchot Deot 2:3). Instead we must avoid it under any circumstance. We must go to the opposite extreme. Even when anger is justified, we must avoid it. There may be times when it is necessary to look as if we are angry. That is what Moses did when he saw the Israelites worshipping the Golden Calf, and broke the Tablets of stone. Yet even when we outwardly display anger, says Maimonides, inwardly we should be calm.

The Orchot Tzaddikim (a 15th century commentator) notes that anger destroys personal relationships.[2] Short-tempered people scare others, who therefore avoid coming close to them. Anger drives out the positive emotions – forgiveness, compassion, empathy, and sensitivity. The result is that irascible people end up lonely, shunned, and disappointed. Bad tempered people achieve nothing but their bad temper (Kiddushin 40b). They lose all else.

The classic role model of patience in the face of provocation was Hillel. The Talmud says that two people once made a wager with each other, saying, “He who makes Hillel angry shall receive four hundred zuz.” One said, “I will go and provoke him.” It was Erev Shabbat and Hillel was washing his hair. The man stood by the door of his house and called, “Is Hillel here? Is Hillel here?” Hillel robed himself and came out, saying, “My son, what do you seek?”

“I have a question to ask,” he said.

“Ask, my son,” replied Hillel.

He said, “Why are the heads of the Babylonians round?”

“My son, you ask a good question,” said Hillel. “The reason is that they have no skilled midwives.”

The man left, paused, then returned, crying out, “Is Hillel here? Is Hillel here?”

Again, Hillel abandoned his bathing, robed, and came out, saying, “My son, what do you seek?”

“I have another question.”

“Ask, my son.”

“Why are the eyes of the Palmyreans bleared?”

Hillel replied, “My son, you ask a good question. The reason is that they live in sandy places.”

He left, waited, then came back a third time, calling, “Is Hillel here? Is Hillel here?”

Again, Hillel dressed and came out, saying, “My son, what do you seek?”

“I have another question.”

“Ask, my son.”

“Why are the feet of Africans wide?”

“My son, you ask a good question. The reason is that they live in watery marshes.”

“I have many questions to ask,” said the man, “but I am worried that you might become angry.”

Hillel then sat and said, “Ask all the questions you have to ask.”

“Are you the Hillel who is called the nasi [leader, prince] of Israel?”

“Yes,” said Hillel.

“In that case, said the man, “may there not be many like you in Israel.”

“Why so, my son?” he asked.

“Because I have just lost four hundred zuz because of you!”

“Be careful of your moods,” said Hillel. “You may lose four hundred zuz, and yet another four hundred zuz through Hillel, yet Hillel will not lose his temper.”

Shabbat 30b-31a.

It was this quality of patience under provocation that was one of the factors, according to the Talmud (Eruvin 13b), that led the Sages to rule almost entirely according to the School of Hillel rather than of Shammai.

The best way of defeating anger is to pause, stop, reflect, refrain, count to ten, and breathe deeply. If necessary, leave the room, go for a walk, meditate, or vent your toxic feelings alone. It is said that about one of the Rebbes of Lubavitch that whenever he felt angry, he would take down the Shulchan Aruch to see whether anger was permitted under the circumstances. By the time he had finished studying, his anger had disappeared.

The moral life is one in which we grapple with anger but never let it win. The verdict of Judaism is simple: either we defeat anger or anger will defeat us.

[1] The term was introduced by Peter Salovey and John Mayer. See Peter Salovey, Marc A. Brackett, and John D. Mayer, *Emotional Intelligence: Key Readings on the Mayer and Salovey Model* (Port Chester, NY: Dude Pub., 2004), subsequently popularised by Daniel Goleman in, for instance, his book *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam, 1995). [2] Orchof Tzaddikim, Shaar Kaas, “The Gate of Anger.”

[What if Moses Was Supposed to Hit the Rock?: Hukkat by Rabbi Ilana Zietman](https://www.jtsa.edu/torah/what-if-moses-was-supposed-to-hit-the-rock/)
<https://www.jtsa.edu/torah/what-if-moses-was-supposed-to-hit-the-rock/>

In trying to make sense of the infamous “Moses-hitting-the-rock” episode in this week’s parashah, one can find an overwhelming number of attempts to explain why Moses (and Aaron) are punished with the Divine decree that they will die before entering the Promised Land. It is a perfect example of “Turn it and turn it for all is in it” ([Pirkei Avot 5:22](#)). The catalyst for so much interpretive work is that here, God’s reason for punishing Moses and Aaron appears particularly unclear and therefore, unfair.

In chapter 20 of the book of Numbers, the Israelites have just reached the wilderness of Zin. Miriam dies, and the people find themselves without any water. They then “quarrel” with Moses, bitterly complaining that he brought them out of Egypt just to die in the wilderness ([Num. 20:2–5](#)).

Moses and Aaron then turn to God, who tells them to take up the rod, speak to a rock, and order it to provide water. Moses takes the rod and, together with Aaron, assembles the people and says, “Listen, you rebels, shall we get water for you out of this rock?” ([Num. 20:10](#)). After Moses hits the rock twice, water gushes forth. But God is unhappy with Moses and Aaron both, and says, “Because you did not trust Me enough to affirm My sanctity in the sight of the Israelite people, therefore you shall not lead this congregation into the land that I have given them” ([Num. 20:12](#)).

What has confused and troubled readers here is God’s vague explanation for what Moses and Aaron did wrong. In what ways did Moses and Aaron not trust God? What would it have meant to affirm God’s sanctity in front of the people?

The most direct answer is that in hitting the rock, Moses and Aaron disobeyed God’s instruction to speak to it. This makes sense and can teach us a lot about the importance of using our words to effect change rather than physical force. But several details complicate this otherwise important explanation.

First, although Moses seems to stray from God’s exact instructions, the incorrect action still works. Water comes forth in abundance. Couldn’t God have shown Moses and Aaron (by association) the error of their ways by not bringing forth water? Second, God tells Moses to pick up his rod before speaking to the rock. This is the same rod that Moses took up in the book of Exodus, and with which God brought about supernatural “signs and wonders” in Egypt. Why would Moses need the rod now if he were just supposed to be speaking? Third, and most perplexing, is that there is an almost word-for-word parallel story in Exodus, where God explicitly orders Moses to strike a rock in order to get water for a complaining people ([Exod. 17:1–7](#)). Why wouldn’t God instruct Moses and Aaron to do the same again?

I’m going to focus on what I see as the most complicated point, the double-telling of how Moses hits a rock for water.

For some commentators, the parallel stories are understood as separate chronological events, the differences of which are explained through the passage of time. According to Rashi, forty years have passed between the rock episodes of Exodus and Numbers. By the time we get to Numbers, Moses and Aaron are dealing with the next generation of Israelites (see [Rashi on Numbers 20:1](#)). The intervention that was necessary for their parents was detrimental to this new generation who needed to be shown a different way to achieve their goals. On this, Aviva Zornberg writes, “What was once an effective teaching tool is now to be replaced by the use of language . . . [W]hat God wants is to educate the people to their new post-wilderness lives in the Land, and to the practices that will enable them to live organically in a new place and time.”^[1]

Perhaps Moses and Aaron weren’t the right leaders to bring the people into the land because they couldn’t understand how to meet the needs of a new

generation, a challenge I myself face as a rabbi serving millennials and, very soon, Gen Z. Maybe in failing to change their ways, they failed to sanctify God.

This explanation, however, still requires us to guess what God means by “trust” and “sanctify,” and can still make us wonder if Moses’s action was such an egregious transgression as to merit retirement by death.

Long before there were source critical readings of the Torah (which often explain multiple versions of the same episode as a result of several human authors and/or redactors), medieval commentator Bekhor Shor (Joseph ben Isaac Bekhor Shor, France, 12th century) suggested that the two rock-hitting episodes are one and the same. Given that he saw redundancies in the text as purposeful rather than accidental, he suggested that the story actually takes place in Numbers but is mentioned earlier in Exodus to anticipate the reader’s questions about how the Israelites were able to find water in the desert.^[2]

The daring implication of the two stories being different versions of the same event is that Moses (and Aaron) aren’t really punished for hitting the rock because God had actually told them to do so! Moses was always supposed to hit the rock! Instead, they are punished for not acknowledging the Divine as the true source of water. Commenting on Deuteronomy, which recounts God’s explanation for punishing Moses and Aaron, Bekhor Shor writes, “ ‘For you broke faith with Me’ (Deut. 32:51)—for you did not explain to the Israelites that I was giving them the water, but instead you said ‘shall we get water for you (out of) this rock?’” (Num. 20:10). Where the two leaders strayed, then, was in the words they spoke as they hit the rock, not in the act of hitting itself.

When it comes to considering who should lead the people into the next crucial phase of their journey, God decides that it can no longer be Moses and Aaron. When they failed to remind the people, or worse, themselves, that their power comes from something greater than themselves, they were acting more like pharaohs than God’s prophets.

This fascinating telling and retelling of the rock episode can teach us to be wary of even beloved leaders who—intentionally or not—take credit for everything they accomplish while failing to acknowledge the seemingly invisible sources of support to achieve their goals. Every great leader requires guidance, inspiration, and helping hands. In a world where it is acceptable, even highly regarded, to appear to act totally independently, we do a disservice to ourselves and our communities when we fail to trust, uplift, and sanctify the human and Divine sources behind our work. If this were true for great leaders like Moses and Aaron, how much more so should it be for us. (*Rabbi Ilana Zeitman is Community Rabbi, GatherDC*)

^[1] Aviva Zornberg, *Bewilderments: Reflections on the Book of Numbers*, p.226-227

^[2] Jonathan Jacobs, “Moses Strikes the Rock in Exodus and Numbers: One Story or Two?”
thetorah.com

This week's parsha, Chukat, is yet another piece in the narrative of the Jewish people and water. The word *mayim* (water) is mentioned twenty-two times. The portion begins with the *para aduma*, Hashem's command to mix water with the ashes of a red cow for purification. Miriam then dies, and the well that provided B'nei Yisra'el with water (based on Miriam's merit), disappears.[1] The Jewish people quarrel with Moshe, complaining, "There is no water to drink!"[2] Moshe and Aharon then strike the rock and Hashem brings forth water. Additionally, Moshe asks the Edomites to pass through their land, with a promise not to drink their water,[3] or alternately, to buy it from them.[4] The Jewish people travel by way of the Sea of Reeds (where Hashem had split the sea for them) and, on their desert journey, complain again about lacking water. They finally arrive near the East Bank of the Jordan and sing an exultant song about their appreciation to Hashem for water.[5]

B'nei Yisra'el's experiences with water in the desert can be understood as a spiritual training to cultivate appreciation for Hashem's goodness. Hashem takes the essential, tangible resource of water (without which we cannot live for more than a few days) and gives it to us in an environment where we do not have it. We learn to appreciate water and to know who really provides it through taking it for granted, losing it, and then having it granted once again by Hashem; the see-saw experience of having water and then losing it, develops the spiritual muscles of appreciating Hashem.

While there is a lesson to be learned from this cycle, it is easy to feel frustrated with B'nei Yisra'el when reading about their ingratitude during their constant struggles with water. We can understand Moshe's anger, expressed as he strikes the rock, an action for which he is punished harshly.[6] How, after water was miraculously provided for them so many times, could B'nei Yisra'el take it for granted?

Considering our own experience with water, perhaps it should be easier to sympathize with B'nei Yisra'el. Today, indoor plumbing is incredibly convenient; it frees us from gathering and lugging our water from streams and cisterns to our homes. A significant portion of America is dealing with severe drought, but our water system remains strong—many could not tell you where the water that comes out of their taps actually comes from.[7]

We also lose sight of how much energy goes into bringing every gallon to our faucet. In many areas of the United States and around the world, electricity-producing generators supply power to pumps that raise water hundreds or even one thousand feet. Elevating the water from underground aquifers to tanks at the top of local mountain ranges, eventually making its way to our homes.[8] It is

estimated that the energy used in the water supply accounts for almost 5% of America's total energy use, and likewise 5% of the total carbon emissions. This shows that misusing water is also wasting energy and can contribute unnecessarily to climate change.[9]

Climate change is causing sea levels to rise, projected to impact sandbars like Long Beach Island and New Jersey, and islands like Manhattan, as well as causing more intense storms and floods. [10] Even though all water is part of the same global cycle, as long as water continues to flow from our faucets at the desired rate, we are not forced to look to its source. Like B'nei Yisra'el, when we have water, it is easy for us to take it for granted, and therefore when it disappears, it is easy to consider this necessity as something that is owed to us, something to be demanded.

It is perhaps this sympathy that underlies Hashem's response to B'nei Yisra'el. Hashem instructs Moshe to coax water from the rock by speaking to it, a patient demonstration of Hashem's dominion and the miracle of water. Hashem wants to work in harmony with nature to teach B'nei Yisra'el to be appreciative, even though Moshe's performance of His instructions is much less harmonious. While B'nei Yisra'el do not learn the lesson immediately, complaining once more and being punished with fiery snakes, their song towards the end of the parsha finally reflects this message: "Spring up O well – sing to it –"[11]

The Torah is a blueprint for spiritual living in a physical world. It enables us to transform our daily, mundane behaviors into holy acts. If we can preserve our connection to Hashem's sustaining power in our world of great abundance, we can transform our lives and the world in holy ways. This is our challenge. And in light of mounting global environmental issues, what might also be called, a revolutionary moment in our history. The great sage, Rabbi Tarfon, teaches that "The day is short, the work is much, the workers are lazy, the reward is great and the Master is pressing." [12] Perhaps our issue of water is quite parallel - the climate is changing, the seas are rising, and the glaciers are melting, but the reward is great. Every tenth of a degree of warming we can mitigate, every community that we can provide water for, and every moment of appreciation we can find in nature is a reward in and of itself, paving the way for a better future and better world.

[1] Rashi on Bamidbar 20:2, Ta'anit 9a [2] Bamidbar 20:3 [3] As per Targum Onkeles (Israel, 2nd century) to 20:17 [4] As per Rashi (France, 11th century) to 20:17 [5] Bamidbar 21:17-18 [6] Bamidbar 20:12 [7] For information on the current state of drought in America, see here <https://www.drought.gov/current-conditions>. [8] To understand where household water in America comes from, start here. https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/water-qa-where-does-our-household-water-come?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects [9] See this report. <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/R43200.pdf> [10] Read the IPCC report on sea level rise, and this explanation of a Rutgers report for a look into what Sea Level rise might mean for New Jersey. https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/climate_change_101/sea-level-rise-in-new-jersey-projections-and-impacts/ [11] Bamidbar 20:12 [12] Pirkei Avot 2:15, translation

[“And the community was without water...”: Chukat by Rabbi Miriyam Glazer](https://truah.org/resources/miriyam-glazer-parshat-chukat-moraltorah/)
<https://truah.org/resources/miriyam-glazer-parshat-chukat-moraltorah/>

Isaiah prophecies:

For waters will burst forth in the desert

Streams in the wilderness.

...earth shall become a pool,

Parched land, fountains of water;

The home of jackals, a pasture...

And a highway shall appear there

...called the Sacred Way.

(Isaiah 35:5 and following)

Water flows through our ancient tradition both for death and for life. While the story of Noah relates how the primeval flood drowns most of the world, Genesis also describes Abraham and Isaac digging wells and how Rebecca's kindness and generosity at a well shaped the rest of her life and the whole Jewish story. Later in Torah, the same Nile in which Pharaoh sought to drown all Hebrew babies becomes the one in which baby Moses is floating when, guarded by Miriam, he is rescued by the daughter of Pharaoh. Midrash, our story-telling tradition, teaches us that wherever the Israelites camped after the Liberation, a well sprung up to provide them with water, in honor of Miriam's holy act.

For death and for life... In our portion, Chukat, the terse description of the death of Miriam is immediately followed by a depiction of the desperate thirst and rage of the people, for no sooner does Miriam die than the water disappears.

To be trapped in a world without water... To be driven by an unquenchable thirst...

That terror is at the core of our ancient story. In a fearsome way that story is prescient: The year 2021 was one of the two most parched in 300 years. Those of us in the western U.S. are face-to-face with the worst megadrought in 1,200 years. More than one billion people on our planet are enduring water scarcity; in another three years, half of our planet's population will have to endure water-stressed lives. Up to 700 million people today are at the risk of displacement because of water scarcity. What does that suggest for the future of life on Planet Earth?

Our Torah depicts what can happen to us in a world without water. Faced with the people's desperate thirst, Moses and Aaron fall on their faces to pray for a revelation. God responds by telling Moses to assemble the people before a rock and to command the rock to yield its water. Overcome by the quarrelsomeness of the thirsting people, however, Moses — out of frustration? Out of rage? Out of grief over the sudden death of his sister Miriam? — strikes the rock — twice! — instead of speaking to it. The response of God is harsh and swift: “But for this sin

alone,” says the medieval biblical commentator Rashi, Moses “would have entered” the Promised Land. Instead, he dies in the desert.

Moses striking the rock to yield water is a vivid metaphor for the water-related violence that is breaking out all over our world — particularly in the Middle East, as well as in South Asia and Africa. But that violence, along with the devastating impact of global warming, as well as the massive migrations driven by desertification, need not be inevitable.

Years before the episode in this parshah, when the newly freed Hebrew slaves had cried out with thirst, God told Moses to *strike a rock* in the desert to bring forth water (Exodus 17:6). But decades passed. The miraculous parting of the Red Sea was long past. “Mannah” from heaven was an old story, just as the wonders of the Industrial Age are passé for us. *Speak to the rock*, God instructed Moses.

Today, more than ever before, we must speak to — we must *direct our attention to* — the causes of water scarcity in our age. It is not yet too late for future generations to be born on a planet that flows again with “milk and honey.” If we act *now*, it is not too late. (*Rabbi Miriyam Glazer is Emerita Professor of Literature at American Jewish University. Her books include Dreaming the Actual: Contemporary Fiction and Poetry by Israeli Women Writers and Psalms of the Jewish Liturgy: A Guide to their Beauty, Power and Meaning.*)

YAHRTZEITS

Lenny Levin remembers his father Emanuel Levin on Thursday July 14 (Tamuz 15)

Barry Ostrowsky remembers his father Abe Ostrowsky on Friday July 15 (Tamuz 16).

Roni Klein remembers her mother Bette Liebowitz on Friday July 15 (Tamuz 16).