

Kol Rina
An Independent Minyan
Parashat Shemot
January 14, 2023 *** 21 Tevet, 5783

Shemot in a Nutshell

https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/3233/jewish/Shemot-in-a-Nutshell.htm

The name of the Parshah, "Shemot," means "Names" and it is found in Exodus 1:1 - 6:1.

The children of Israel multiply in Egypt. Threatened by their growing numbers, Pharaoh enslaves them and orders the Hebrew midwives, Shifrah and Puah, to kill all male babies at birth. When they do not comply, he commands his people to cast the Hebrew babies into the Nile.

A child is born to Yocheved, the daughter of Levi, and her husband, Amram, and placed in a basket on the river, while the baby's sister, Miriam, stands watch from afar. Pharaoh's daughter discovers the boy, raises him as her son, and names him Moses.

As a young man, Moses leaves the palace and discovers the hardship of his brethren. He sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, and kills the Egyptian. The next day he sees two Jews fighting; when he admonishes them, they reveal his deed of the previous day, and Moses is forced to flee to Midian. There he rescues Jethro's daughters, marries one of them (Tzipporah), and becomes a shepherd of his father-in-law's flocks.

G-d appears to Moses in a burning bush at the foot of Mount Sinai, and instructs him to go to Pharaoh and demand: "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me." Moses' brother, Aaron, is appointed to serve as his spokesman. In Egypt, Moses and Aaron assemble the elders of Israel to tell them that the time of their redemption has come. The people believe; but Pharaoh refuses to let them go, and even intensifies the suffering of Israel.

Moses returns to G-d to protest: "Why have You done evil to this people?" G-d promises that the redemption is close at hand.

Haftarah in a Nutshell: *Isaiah 27:6-28:13; 29:22-23.*

https://www.chabad.org/parshah/article_cdo/aid/615789/jewish/Haftarah-in-a-Nutshell.htm

This week's *haftarah* parallels the week's Torah reading on many levels. One of the parallels is the message of redemption conveyed by Isaiah—"and you shall be gathered one by one, O children of Israel"—that is reminiscent of the message of redemption that G-d spoke to Moses at the burning bush, a message that Moses then communicated to Pharaoh.

The *haftarah* vacillates between Isaiah's prophecies concerning the future redemption, and his admonitions concerning the Jews' drunken and G-dless

behavior. Isaiah starts on a positive note: "In the coming days, Jacob will take root, Israel will bud and blossom, filling the face of the earth . . ." He mentions G-d's mercy for His nation, and the measure-for-measure punishment He meted out upon the Egyptians who persecuted them. And regarding the future redemption: "You shall be gathered one by one, O children of Israel. And it will come to pass on that day that a great *shofar* will be sounded, and those lost in the land of Assyria and those exiled in the land of Egypt will come, and they will prostrate themselves before the L-rd on the holy mount in Jerusalem." The prophet then proceeds to berate the drunkenness of the Ten Tribes, warning them of the punishment that awaits them. "With the feet they shall be trampled, the crown of the pride of the drunkards of Ephraim . . ." The *haftorah* ends on a positive note: "Now Jacob will no longer be ashamed, and now his face will not pale. For when he sees his children, the work of My hands, in his midst, who shall sanctify My name . . . and the G-d of Israel they will revere."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Turning Curses Into Blessings by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l

<https://www.rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation/shemot/turning-curses-into-blessings/>

Genesis ends on an almost serene note. Jacob has found his long lost son. The family has been reunited. Joseph has forgiven his brothers. Under his protection and influence the family has settled in Goshen, one of the most prosperous regions of Egypt. They now have homes, property, food, the protection of Joseph and the favour of Pharaoh. It must have seemed one of the golden moments of Abraham's family's history.

Then, as has happened so often since, "There arose a new Pharaoh who did not know Joseph." There was a political climate change. The family fell out of favour. Pharaoh told his advisers: "Look, the Israelite people are becoming too numerous and strong for us"^[1] – the first time the word "people" is used in the Torah with reference to the children of Israel. "Let us deal shrewdly with them, so that they may not increase." And so the whole mechanism of oppression moves into operation: forced labour that turns into slavery that becomes attempted genocide. The story is engraved in our memory. We tell it every year, and in summary-form in our prayers, every day. It is part of what it is to be a Jew. Yet there is one phrase that shines out from the narrative: "But the more they were oppressed, the more they increased and the more they spread." That, no less than oppression itself, is part of what it means to be a Jew.

The worse things get, the stronger we become. Jews are the people who not only survive but thrive in adversity.

Jewish history is not merely a story of Jews enduring catastrophes that might have spelled the end to less tenacious groups. It is that after every disaster, Jews renewed themselves. They discovered some hitherto hidden reservoir of spirit that fuelled new forms of collective self-expression as the carriers of God's message to the world.

Every tragedy begat new creativity. After the division of the kingdom following the death of Solomon came the great literary prophets, Amos and Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Out of the destruction of the First Temple and the Babylonian exile came the renewal of Torah in the life of the nation, beginning with Ezekiel and culminating in the vast educational programme brought back to Israel by Ezra and Nehemiah. From the destruction of the Second Temple came the immense literature of rabbinic Judaism, until then preserved mostly in the form of an oral tradition: Mishnah, Midrash and Gemara.

From the Crusades came the Hassidei Ashkenaz, the North European school of piety and spirituality. Following the Spanish expulsion came the mystic circle of Tzefat: Lurianic Kabbalah and all it inspired by way of poetry and prayer. From East European persecution and poverty came the Hassidic movement and its revival of grass-roots Judaism through a seemingly endless flow of story and song. And from the worst tragedy of all in human terms, the Holocaust, came the rebirth of the state of Israel, the greatest collective Jewish affirmation of life in more than two thousand years.

It is well known that the Chinese ideogram for "crisis" also means "opportunity". Any civilisation that can see the blessing within the curse, the fragment of light within the heart of darkness, has within it the capacity to endure. Hebrew goes one better. The word for crisis, *mashber*, also means "a child-birth chair." Written into the semantics of Jewish consciousness is the idea that the pain of hard times is a collective form of the contractions of a woman giving birth. Something new is being born. That is the mindset of a people of whom it can be said that "the more they were oppressed, the more they increased and the more they spread."

Where did it come from, this Jewish ability to turn weakness into strength, adversity into advantage, darkness into light? It goes back to the moment in which our people received its name, Israel. It was then, as Jacob wrestled alone at night with an angel, that as dawn broke his adversary begged him to let him go. "I will not let you go until you bless me", said Jacob. ([Bereishit 32:27](#)) That is the source of our peculiar, distinctive obstinacy. We may have fought all night. We may be tired and on the brink of exhaustion. We may find ourselves limping, as did Jacob. Yet we will not let our adversary go until we have extracted a blessing from the

encounter. This turned out to be not a minor and temporary concession. It became the basis of his new name and our identity. Israel, the people who “wrestled with God and man and prevailed”, is the nation that grows stronger with each conflict and catastrophe.

I was reminded of this unusual national characteristic by an article that appeared in the British press in October 2015. Israel at the time was suffering from a wave of terrorist attacks that saw Palestinians murdering innocent civilians in streets and bus stations throughout the country. It began with these words: “Israel is an astonishing country, buzzing with energy and confidence, a magnet for talent and investment – a cauldron of innovation.” It spoke of its world-class excellence in aerospace, clean-tech, irrigation systems, software, cyber-security, pharmaceuticals and defence systems. [2]

“All this”, the writer went on to say, “derives from brainpower, for Israel has no natural resources and is surrounded by hostile neighbours.” The country is living proof of “the power of technical education, immigration and the benefits of the right sort of military service.” Yet this cannot be all, since Jews have consistently overachieved, wherever they were and whenever they were given the chance. He goes through the various suggested explanations: the strength of Jewish families, their passion for education, a desire for self-employment, risk-taking as a way of life, and even ancient history. The Levant was home to the world’s first agricultural societies and earliest traders. Perhaps, then, the disposition to enterprise was written, thousands of years ago, into Jewish DNA. Ultimately, though, he concludes that it has to do with “culture and communities”.

A key element of that culture has to do with the Jewish response to crisis. To every adverse circumstance, those who have inherited Jacob’s sensibilities insist: “I will not let you go until you bless me.” (Bereishit 32:27) That is how Jews, encountering the Negev, found ways of making the desert bloom. Seeing a barren, neglected landscape elsewhere, they planted trees and forests. Faced with hostile armies on all their borders, they developed military technologies they then turned to peaceful use. War and terror forced them to develop medical expertise and world-leading skills in dealing with the aftermath of trauma. They found ways of turning every curse into a blessing. The historian Paul Johnson, as always, put it eloquently:

Over 4,000 years the Jews proved themselves not only great survivors but extraordinarily skilful in adapting to the societies among which fate had thrust them, and in gathering whatever human comforts they had to offer. No people has been more fertile in enriching poverty or humanising wealth, or in turning misfortune to creative account.[3]

There is something profoundly spiritual as well as robustly practical about this ability to transform the bad moments of life into a spur to creativity. It is as if, deep within us were a voice saying, "You are in this situation, bad though it is, because there is a task to perform, a skill to acquire, a strength to develop, a lesson to learn, an evil to redeem, a shard of light to be rescued, a blessing to be uncovered, for I have chosen you to give testimony to humankind that out of suffering can come great blessings if you wrestle with it for long enough and with unshakeable faith."

In an age in which people of violence are committing acts of brutality in the name of the God of compassion, the people of Israel are proving daily that this is not the way of the God of Abraham, the God of life and the sanctity of life. And whenever we who are a part of that people lose heart, and wonder when it will ever end, we should recall the words: "The more they were oppressed, the more they increased and the more they spread." A people of whom that can be said can be injured, but can never be defeated. God's way is the way of life. [1] Ex. 1:9. This is the first intimation in history of what in modern times took the form of the Russian forgery, The Protocols of the Elders of Zion. In the Diaspora, Jews – powerless – were often seen as all-powerful. What this usually means, when translated, is: How is it that Jews manage to evade the pariah status we have assigned to them? [2] Luke Johnson, 'Animal Spirits: Israel and its tribe of risk-taking entrepreneurs,' Sunday Times, 4 October 2015. [3] Paul Johnson, The History of the Jews, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987, p. 58

[God's Human Partner by Ismar Schorsch](https://www.jtsa.edu/torah/gods-human-partner-2/)
<https://www.jtsa.edu/torah/gods-human-partner-2/>

At the end of their gripping biography of Abraham Joshua Heschel (unfortunately chronicling only the European phase of his life), Edward Kaplan and Samuel Dresner report that he arrived in New York on March 21, 1940 aboard the *Lancastria*. For a moment, after reading that tidbit, I wondered if uncannily the Schorsch family had come on the same ship. I dimly knew that the month of our arrival had been March 1940. A check of my family files, however, turned up an immigration ID card for my sister that recorded the fact that we disembarked on March 27, 1940 from the *Georgic*. What I remember on my own of that fateful voyage is that we were all felled by seasickness.

Soon thereafter my father came to the offices of the Rabbinical Assembly at The Jewish Theological Seminary to apply for a job as a Conservative rabbi. He had been ordained in 1928 by the Seminary's German forerunner, the Breslau Seminary. He had distinguished himself as a rabbi in Hanover during the next decade and learned English as we waited in England for fifteen months for an American visa. At that time, a small congregation in Pottstown, Pennsylvania had also approached the Rabbinical Assembly for a new rabbi and invited my father to

fill the post, where he would stay until his retirement twenty-four years later. In 1957 his son returned to JTS as a rabbinical student and in 1986 became its sixth chancellor.

In retrospect, early events in our lives often seem to foreshadow things to come. Ever in need of order, we scan patterns for meaning. This week's parashah offers a striking example of this. Moses's encounter with God at the burning bush does not occur at a nameless, nondescript site. The Torah goes out of its way to mention that in seeking pasture for his flock in the wilderness Moses had arrived at "Horeb, the mountain of God" ([Exod. 3:1](#)). It will be at this selfsame site in the Sinai wilderness after the Exodus that the Israelites will receive God's law in a public revelation ([Deut. 1:6](#); 4:10, 15; 5:2). Long venerated as a holy mountain, Horeb is the place where Moses was first drafted and ultimately vindicated. His personal experience of God's compassion for an enslaved Israel anticipates God's covenant with the nation once emancipated. The shared site signals that the culmination is implicit in the commission.

In both instances, God takes the initiative to find a human partner, and this is why I began with a reference to Heschel. In 1951, some six years after moving to JTS from Hebrew Union College, which had secured with great effort the indispensable visa that enabled Heschel to come to the United States ("a brand plucked from the fire of an altar to Satan on which my people was burned to death," in his own bittersweet words), Heschel published one of the bravest theological books of the twentieth century. *Man is Not Alone* dared to affirm his deepest conviction that "God is not silent. He has been silenced" (p. 152).

"Man was the first to hide himself from God, after having eaten of the forbidden fruit, and is still hiding. . . 'Where art thou?' Where is Man? Is the first question that occurs in the Bible. It is man's alibi that is our problem. . . God is less rare than we think; when we long for Him, His distance crumbles away".

Man is Not Alone, 152-3

For Heschel "the Bible is not man's theology but God's anthropology" (p. 129), a compendium of religious experience that deals with the wayward nature of humanity from a divine perspective. In contrast to the abstract, immutable and disengaged God of the philosophers, Heschel argued for a God of pathos. The Bible reveals a God full of angst and anguish forever reaching out to an unreceptive humanity. "Philosophy begins with man's question; religion begins with God's question and man's answer" (p. 76).

Thus Moses at the burning bush is a paradigmatic scene of "God In Search of Man," as Heschel called his most encompassing philosophical treatment of Judaism in 1956. Unsettled by human defiance and depravity, God is driven to intercede, cajole, and admonish. The prophet exhibits a unique sympathetic

capacity that sensitizes him or her to the turmoil of God's inner state. Specifically, a series of four verbs in the prelude to the encounter underscores the degree to which God is stirred by Israel's suffering (2:24-25). God turns to Moses because he has already acquitted himself courageously as a man who cannot bear to witness acts of injustice. Indeed, Moses may have been brought to Horeb by his own disquietude, triggered by news that the pharaoh who sought his life had died (2:23).

According to a wonderfully perceptive midrash, the absence of a single diacritical mark in the text points to the urgency of God's appeal. Once the attention of Moses is arrested by the sight of a bush aflame but unconsumed, God intrudes to address him, "Moses! Moses!" (3:4). Elsewhere in the Bible, when God calls out to Abraham ([Gen. 22:11](#)), Jacob ([Gen. 46:2](#)) or Samuel ([I Sam. 3:10](#)) by doubling their names, a small vertical line separates the two words. In our case that line is missing, which suggests to the midrash a moment of greater intensity, akin to someone staggering beneath a load too heavy for him and beseeching his friend to take it ([Exodus Rabbah 2:6](#)). Literally, a radical analogy hanging by a thread! The torment of Israel is a burden God can no longer bear alone. Moses must come to God's aid.

In short, God pervades the world, to be discovered by us in a common shrub as easily as atop a majestic mountain. In the spirit of Heschel, another midrash speaks of the significance of God's confronting Moses via a bush as if to say that the choice means that no place is devoid of God's presence ([Exodus Rabbah 2:5](#)). If we fail to sense that presence or to hear God's voice, it is because we have allowed our lives to be overwhelmed by distractions. In the years after 1945 when others wrote of God's eclipse or death, Heschel reaffirmed the possibility of a living faith with unmatched conviction and eloquence. Even the flames of the Holocaust could not consume the bush or obliterate God's presence.

[Getting to Know You by Rabbi Brian Immerman](#)

<https://truah.org/resources/parshat-shemot-brian-immersion-moraltorah2023/>

In a Chasidic tale, attributed to Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sasov, we find two men sitting in an inn drinking. One was silent for a long time while his drunk companion talked and talked and talked. Finally, the quiet one spoke up, "Tell me, do you love me or don't you love me?" His friend replied, "Of course I love you." The other retorted, "You say that you love me, but you don't know what I need, or what causes me pain. If you loved me, you would know."

As we white Jews work to become antiracist, one of the most important steps is to build meaningful relationships with others — both within and across racial

lines. Not superficial relationships, but those in which we truly know someone, both their pain and their joy. It takes effort to know more than just facts and details about people's lives and then to make them feel seen. The less we know about someone, the easier it is to disregard their needs, marginalize or exploit them, or to enslave and oppress them. As we begin the book of Exodus, our text ominously states, "A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph." (Exodus 1:8) Even if Pharaoh was familiar with the story of Joseph, his lack of relationship and empathy allowed Pharaoh to make Joseph the other. He quickly moved to marginalize, exploit, and oppress Joseph's people.

The word "to know," *lada'at* in Hebrew, occurs frequently throughout our Torah and forms the basis for our partnership with God in perfecting our world. The tree of knowledge, in Hebrew *etz hada'at*, imbued us with the ability to know creation and our impact. As the serpent warns Eve, "God knows that as soon as you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like divine beings who know good and bad." (Genesis. 3:5) Later in Exodus 23:9, God commands us to love the *ger* [foreigner or immigrant] because we know [*yadatem*] their feelings from our time as slaves under Pharaoh. The greater our empathy with other people, the more we feel compelled to fight for them.

Our ability to really know each other has been eroding for some time. We have become physically separated by race and socioeconomic class through Jim Crow separation, the red-lining of historically Black neighborhoods, suburban zoning laws requiring single-family homes, and our single-occupancy car culture. Online news sources and social media exacerbate the physical separation by isolating our sources and commentary about life outside of our walls. We might feel connected to our communities as we scroll through Instagram, and yet we don't actually know what is behind the pictures we see. Like a new king in Egypt, we have come to know each other less and less.

This weekend, many of us will honor the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who implored us to accept that coming to know the other requires courage and conviction. In the Letter from a Birmingham Jail, Dr. King writes:

All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. Segregation, to use the terminology of the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, substitutes an 'I it' relationship for an 'I thou' relationship and ends up relegating persons to the status of things.

Almost 60 years later, continued segregation and separation means that few Americans know those who are different from them and can more easily separate them in their minds. Later in his letter, King writes with despair:

I suppose I should have realized that few members of the oppressor race can understand the deep groans and passionate yearnings of the oppressed race, and still fewer have the vision to see that injustice must be rooted out by strong, persistent and determined action.

True relationships, born out of love and respect, take time to develop. These relationships require intimacy and occasionally discomfort in order to truly know each other. After so many decades of intentional racial and economic segregation, and now segregated by our online communities, breaking out of our smaller circles might prove more difficult than ever. Yet if we want to heal the divisions in our country, we must reduce the abundant divisions. While we can do this by choosing to participate in activities, in person and online, that allow us to encounter people different than us, we do not have to go far. Like the men in the Chasidic tale, we seldom engage in deep conversations with our own family and friends. We can demonstrate our love for them by creating a safe space for them to share their pain and their joy, their fears and hopes. If we do the hard work of preparing the soil, creating the conditions for those real relationships to grow, then we can hope that they will take root and start to blossom. By knowing each other, our family, friends, neighbors, and strangers, we can begin to transform the world. *(Rabbi Immerman joined Congregation Mishkan Israel in Hamden, Connecticut in 2018, after serving as the Associate Rabbi at Temple Emanuel in Denver, CO. Rabbi Immerman brings a passion for the outdoors and social justice and strives to help people create more meaning in their lives through Jewish tradition and values.)*

Parashat Shemot: The Power of Names by Udi Hammerman

<https://www.growtorah.org/shemot/2021/12/22-parshat-shemot-the-power-of-names>

I always find it a bit funny, a curiosity of naming conventions perhaps, that Sefer Shemot, referred to so much more respectably in English as “Exodus,” simply means “names.” As funny as it is, it rightfully draws attention to the significance of names in the unfolding saga of Jewish slavery, redemption and revelation. Shemot opens with a list of the names of B’nei Yisrael as they came down to Mitzrayim, counting each individual within those families. These names highlight the value of each individual: “Now all those descended from Yaakov were seventy souls, and Yosef, who was in Mitzrayim.”^[1] The book of Shemot does not just start with a list of names or of people, but of “souls”.

Following this list, we learn of the harm that comes from Paroh’s ignorance of names and of individuals. The text tells us that the new Paroh did not know Yoseph, and without knowledge of him, Paroh views B’nei Yisrael as a threatening, unnamed mass. As if anticipating Paroh’s next move, the Torah sets the stage by describing B’nei Yisrael as if it were a colony of insects: “B’nei Yisrael were

fruitful and swarmed and increased and became very strong, and the land became filled with them.”[2] This ignorance and fear is what lies behind his multi-staged plan of isolation and oppression in order to estrange them from Egyptian society, and ultimately what lies behind the command for his people to drown all male babies in the Nile.[3]

The significance of names is apparent from the beginning of the Torah. Seeking a helpmate for the first man, Hashem brings all of the animals of the world before him, “To see what the man would call them.” [4] The process of naming, then, is the first sign of recognition and connection between man and animal, between humans and the world around us. It is a core expression of human kind’s role in the world: as a part of tending to Gan Eden and the world, we must be cognizant and appreciative of each creature that we are responsible for.

When woman is created, Adam says “This is bone from my bones, flesh from my flesh, therefore let her be called Ishah (woman) for she was taken out of Ish (man).”[5] Later, the first woman is given an even more specific name—Chava (Eve)—because of her universal role: “the mother of all the living.”[6] Both acts of naming open the potential for relationship: first between Ish and Isha, and subsequently between Chava and the generations of the world that are connected to her.

Names are fundamental to our individuality, our souls, and ultimately our ability to live together in the world. The loss of names would be devastating; if we had to call each other “Hey you: tall guy, smart guy, guy with red hair...,” there could be no real relationship.

But if the removal of names can lead to the destruction of a people, then Shemot also shows that the appropriate use of names can bring redemption. Hashem’s desire to liberate the slaves is aroused, in part, by the names with which Shemot opens.[7] By keeping their Hebrew names during the period of enslavement, B’nei Yisrael prevented total assimilation into Egyptian culture, and retained their connections to each other and Hashem.[8]

The interpersonal and environmental takeaway here is one in the same: the knowledge and acknowledgement of names is the foundation to fully relating to each other and with each element of the natural world. When we do this, we truly fulfill our Divine purpose. When we do not, we risk destroying Hashem’s world. In the modern industrial supply chain, we have systematically obscured the names of so many people, places, and plants. The people who sell us the finished product frequently go unnamed; the people who grow or make it are almost always nameless; those who package and transport it invariably are. Usually you can know where the product is first made, but the names of countless places

along the way are lost. Even the natural elements put into the products we buy, from food to furniture, are often obscure: just think of “natural flavors.”

Though we are linked to all these people, places, and parts of nature through our consumption, our ignorance of their names makes it hard to be in relation with them. How do I relate to the world beyond my immediate surroundings if I do not know where they are? To the cows at an unknown dairy farm whose milk I drink every morning? To the chickens at the industrial poultry shed? When I buy brand new sneakers, do I consider who made them? How was that individual human being treated while he or she made my shoes?

If we deny the names—the unique identity—of other people, of the creatures and plants and places of the earth, we risk becoming like Paroh. Threatened by the complexity and variety of the world, they choose to see others as nameless resources, as nothing more than a means towards their own personal goals. Such a path, while often seeming to increase comfort and efficiency in the present, ultimately leads to relegation and oblivion. This namelessness is an important dimension of our environmental crisis: from farms to landfills, we frequently outsource harm, remove ourselves from being in relationship with it, and in doing so enable our further contributions towards it. [9]

But through naming: through the acknowledgement of the uniqueness of every part of Hashem’s world, we can begin to find redemption, coming into full relationship with each other and our world. *(Udi Hammerman studies psychology and Jewish philosophy at the Hebrew University. He also works extensively in outdoor Jewish education with teens and young adults, guiding trips and as part of the Program and Curriculum Development team for Derech Hateva, an association connected with the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.)*

[1] Shemot 1:5 [2] Shemot 1:7 [3] Shemot 1:22. Rashi notes that the verse says “every son who is born,” not “every son who is born to the Israelites.” Pharaoh’s mania to destroy Israel was so great that he decreed against his own people as well. [4] Bereishit 2:19 [5] Bereshit 2:23 [6] Bereshit 3:20. The Hebrew for Eve, Chava, is connected to the word for living, chai. It is interesting to note that the first man is not referred to by a proper name, Adam, until after Chava is named. Until then, he is called haAdam- “the man.”

[7] Shemot Rabbah 1:5: These are the names of the Children of Israel– for the sake of the redemption are they mentioned here. Reuven, as it says-I have surely seen the affliction of my people in Mitzrayim. Shimon, as it says- And God heard their cries, etc (quoting Exodus 3:7). [8] Vayikra Rabbah 32:5 [9] To read about the experiences of farmworkers in America, see here. For research on the impacts of living near a landfill, see here.

Yahrtzeits

Treasure Cohen, Rachel Rose-Siwoff, and Rebecca Lubetkin remember their father Abraham I. Levin on Sat. Jan. 14

Rabbi Lisa Vernon remembers her grandmother Sadye Vernon Hammer on Sun.

Jan. 15.

Rebecca Greene remembers her father David Schwartz on Wed. Jan. 18.