

DATA of Plano

Parshas Behar | 20 Iyar, 5782 | May 21, 2022

Shabbos

Minchah: **7:00**

Candle lighting: **8:05**

Oneg Shabbos: **9:45**

Early Minyan: **8:30**

Shacharis: **9:15**

Latest time for Shema: **9:53**

Youth Groups / Learners' Service: **10:30**

Kiddush: **11:35**

Shiur for men with Rabbi Hubner: **6:30**

Boys Learning: **7:05**

Mincha: **7:45**

Maariv / Shabbos ends: **9:09**

The Week Ahead

Mincha / Maariv during the week: **8:10**



Remember to count the Omer: Friday night is the 35th day of the Omer, which is five weeks.

On the Seventh Year, Zev Rests

Every seven years, the Torah tells us, the farmers in the Land of Israel are to lay down their farming implements and allow the land to lay fallow. This seventh year is known as a “shemittah (sabbatical) year.”

This year is Zev Steiglitz’s eighth shemittah year.

As in the past, he will take a hiatus from farming, with perfect faith that the blessings he’s seen in his work came to him because he is uncompromisingly careful about keeping the mitzvah of shemittah.

Zev Steiglitz is a youthful 60-something-year-old farmer. His parents, Baila and Yakov, were also farmers. Zev started working in the barn while he was still very young, feeding the cows and chickens, and helping his father with the crops.

“My parents came to Israel from Romania in 1951. My father was a Vizhnitzer Chassid, a disciple of Rabbi Yisroel of Vizhnitz. When he was drafted into the Romanian army, before the Holocaust, he had to leave behind his wife and four



children. When he returned to his hometown after the war, he was horrified to find that his entire family had been murdered by the Nazis,” Zev says. “It was very hard, but my father was a man of faith, with an enormously powerful soul. He married my mother, Baila, and began a new family. They had five children together. Three were born in Romania, and two more were born after they moved to Israel. I’m the youngest.”

When they came to Israel, they spent a few months in a transit camp in Kiryat Shmona. Zev’s father, who had been a farmer in Romania, asked to be resettled in a farming community. The Chassidic family was moved to Beit Hillel, a completely irreligious settlement. They lived there for five years, with no synagogue and no prayer quorum, in a two-bedroom caravan.

“Our father would not deprive his children of an authentic Jewish education. We shared our little caravan with a ritual slaughterer who worked in the area, and who taught us Torah in the mornings. He lived with us all week, only returning to his home and his family for Shabbat. It was very

crowded, but it was worth it. My parents knew the value of giving their children a Jewish education,” Zev recounts emotionally.

In 1957, his parents decided that they needed to relocate to an area that could provide a synagogue, mikvah, and other essentials of Jewish family life. They bought a farm in Kfar Gideon, a religious settlement in the Jezreel Valley, often called “the mezuzah of the valley.”

The Steiglitz home lies on the outskirts of Kfar Gideon. It took five years for them to be connected to the power lines. Those were hard years, in which they lived without a fridge and without an oven, in a house lit by lamplight. “I still remember how happy I was the day we turned on an electric light for the first time. I thought the Messiah had come,” Zev recalls.

Their farm had a barn, a chicken coop and large fields. Even when he was very young, Zev would come home from school with his brothers and go straight to work. Everyone had a job. Zev milked the cows and fed them when he was 10. There was no doubt that he would grow up to be a farmer.

New barn technology became common around the time Zev completed his army service. To make room for the new machines, the barn had to be considerably enlarged. Zev’s father, Yakov, was already old and sick, and he decided they should sell the barn and use the money to buy more fields. For four years, Zev and his brothers worked together on their father’s farm, and then they separated. Zev began to grow onions for export, leafy vegetables, fruit and more, in accordance with the seasons and the profitability.

Forty years later, he’s still working the farm he inherited from his father for 40 years. He also works as a kosher supervisor in the Yachin canning plant in Afula. Zev jokes that what he earns there is just enough to buy gifts for his grandchildren.

“Farming isn’t easy. A farmer has to have a great deal of faith; unexpected problems are always cropping up. He’s completely dependent on the weather and other variables of nature, and there are tremendous risks involved. For example, last winter we had a drought. Unlike a worker who gets a regular salary, or a salesman or a service provider, the farmer has to pray at every stage. He plants and invests in his land, but he doesn’t know if the crops will grow well. If they don’t, there’s nothing he can do about it.

“To succeed in this field, you have to connect with G_od every day,” states Zev. “We pray for the crops to grow well, for the yields to be good, and for the profits to be greater than our expenses.”

This year is Zev Steiglitz’s eighth shemittah. He keeps shemittah uncompromisingly, without playing any games.

He notes that during shemittah years in the 1980s, Rabbi Ya-

kov Landau, of blessed memory, the rabbi of B’nei Brak, would buy fruits and vegetables only from farmers who kept shemittah. Zev would plow and plant before shemittah, and be reimbursed for his expenses by people who used the produce that grew by itself during the shemittah year. “There were a lot of laws and restrictions to be aware of,” he recalls. “I remember that when I would harvest the crops, I’d bring an animal with me to feed as I went because it’s permitted to harvest for the sake of feeding the animals.”

Today’s rabbis prefer not to buy produce that grew during shemittah, even if the crops were planted beforehand, because the fruits and vegetables that grow on the shemittah year have an intrinsic holiness, and the laws about how they can be used and how to dispose of the seeds and peels are complex.

Before Rosh Hashanah, Zev plants wheat and hay just to prevent weeds from taking over his fields. Once the shemittah year starts, on Rosh Hashanah, Zev does absolutely nothing in his fields or his greenhouses.

“What do you do all year?” he was asked.

Zev is a doer not suited for relaxing. Besides his work as a kosher supervisor, he runs a vegetable store for the duration of shemittah where he sells the produce of non-Jewish farmers. People who want to be sure that everything he sells is permitted according to Torah law come from Afula, Migdal HaEmek and the surrounding areas to buy from him.

Zev has a special mitzvah that he performs, both in regular years and during shemittah; he provides goat milk, popular as a cure for mouth sores.

Since an organization that freely loans or gives an item on a regular basis is called a gemach in Hebrew, Zev’s goat is named “Gemachit,” because her milk is used for the gemach. Parents come with their children from all over, even from as far away as Haifa, so that Zev can squirt milk straight from Gemachit’s udder into the afflicted child’s mouth. He refuses payment; this is a service that he provides because he loves children.

“The mitzvah of shemittah is an infrequent and special one. Because it causes such clearly observable financial loss, it’s a hard mitzvah to keep,” Zev says. “As one who is keeping shemittah for the eighth time, I’m convinced that it bears a blessing, as it says in the Torah, ‘I will direct My blessing to you.’” (Leviticus 25:21)

This article originally appeared on Chabad.org.



We are proud to welcome Rabbi Moshe Hubner as our scholar-in-residence for the weekend. Rabbi Hubner is an accomplished talmid chacham, author of numerous seforim and books, and a popular rebbe in New York yeshivos.

Rabbi Hubner will speak at the following times:

- Oneg Shabbos at the Benami home, beginning at 9:45
- Following the early minyan on the topic of "Intriguing Insights About Geirim in Halacha"
- He will give the sermon in the main minyan
- Shiur for men before mincha on the topic of "Ona'as Devarim: The Rule of Disproportionate Response"

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Eliezer Eidenbom

The Week Ahead

- **Final week of Sunday School** - Sunday 10:00 a.m.
- **Kinyan Masechta** - Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday at 9:00 p.m.
- **Parsha with Rabbi Yogi** - Wednesday at 8:00 p.m.
- **Beis Medrash and Cholent** - Thursday at 8:45 p.m.
- **Gemara Avoda Zarah with Rabbi Zakon** - Shabbos at 7:45 a.m.



Did You Know?

The Torah's cycle of seven years culminates in the shemita year. Besides for the prohibition of working the land during that year, it also carries another power in the financial realm. On the eve of Rosh Hashana at the end of the shemita year, all outstanding balances on loans are automatically nullified. Should one collect the loan afterwards, he would be in violation of this mitzvah.

Similar in concept to the laws of refraining from working the land on shemita, the idea behind this mitzvah is to train us that our money, resources and financial success doesn't really come from us, but it is a gift and a responsibility from the Almighty.

The details of this mitzvah are quite complex, and it does not apply to all types of loans. The particulars are all discussed at length in the Talmud.

On a Torah level, this mitzvah applies specifically in the land of Israel and only during a time period when we count the yovel, the fifty year cycle consisting of seven shemita cycles and the extra yovel year. Nowadays, we have lost the count, so this mitzvah of foregoing loans is only rabbinic in nature, although it still applies.

On a practical level, there is a common workaround that the rabbinic courts have enacted. The Torah goes out of its way to state that this rule applies only to personal loans. Public loans, or loans that are to be collected by the court are excluded. For this reason, at the end of the shemita cycle, it has become the custom to sign a document transferring all loans to the power of the court, thus allowing the loan to still be collected.

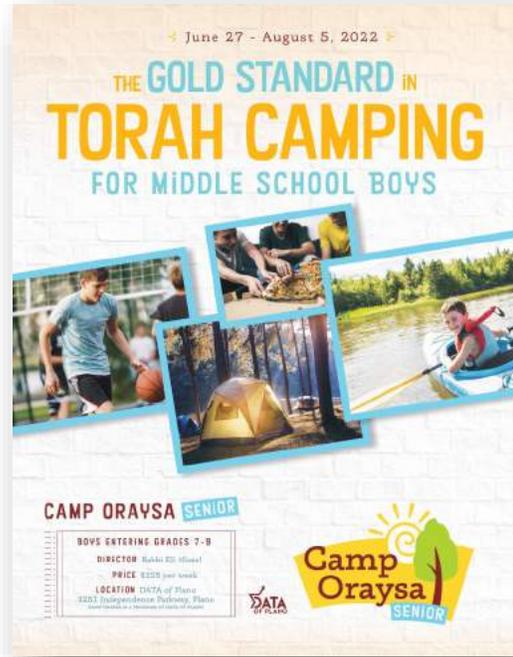
The Shabbos afternoon Pirkei Avos class is canceled this week, due to the guest speaker.

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Camp Oraysa, DATA of Plano's summer camp, offers **three divisions**, all in one place.

Camp Oraysa Junior for toddlers and preschool (coed) | **Camp Oraysa** for elementary school boys | **Camp Oraysa Senior** for middle school boys

Contact Rabbi Nissel or Aimee Wortendyke for details



This Week in Pictures



Community Lag Ba'omer celebration, hosted by the Silbers



Sunday school





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(Camp Kef is not affiliated with DATA of Plano)

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Sophie Benami & Ella Levy
Contact us: campkef2022@gmail.com
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