

FROM THE SHALIACH TO YOU



Shalom Le'Kulam!

Our Legacy and Choices

It's the new year! It feels like an opportunity to start something new. For years I was sure that once the year started, I had to have a new resolution for myself. Work out more, eat healthier, call my dad more, and everytime I failed miserably. In January we commemorate the International Holocaust Memorial Day, and I think a lot about my great grandmother, Itta, who survived the terrible Holocaust. When talking about starting something "new", I think about her and the new life she wanted to give her kids when coming to Israel. I never really asked her directly about it. I just remember her sitting in her chair in my grandparents' house, the numbers on her forearm half showing, covered by her sleeves. I remember how my dad asked me to kiss the back of her hand everytime we met, and how she took me in and kissed my forehead. There was something special about it. In a way, me and my brothers are her victory, we are the sign that she did exactly what the Germans wanted her not to do - she made a family.

Unfortunately, she didn't live long enough to meet my cousins, or to see me and my brother join the army, but I'm sure she knows and that she's happy. Thinking back about the new year and my resolutions, I understand that none of that matters. Just like my great grandmother, that chose to come to Israel, that chose to fight, she never waited for new years, she never waited for a sign, she went and did it. If you want to do something, you better start now. The new year is a good excuse, but don't stress if you fail, you have the whole year to make up for it...

"משהו חדש מתחיל אצלי עכשיו..."

With love,
Snir

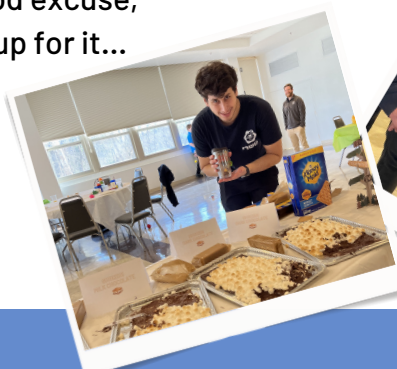
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Israeli Movie Recommendation

When it comes to storytelling about the Holocaust, a lot of the famous movies we know like "The Pianist" or "Schindler's List" are telling horrible stories that happened during the war. Not many of them deal with the implications of the war, and the scars the survivors carry with them, physically and mentally. Avi Nesher, an amazing Israeli filmmaker (that I talked about in a previous issue), tells two incredible stories about Holocaust survivors and life in Israel after the war in these painfully beautiful movies:

The Matchmaker (Pa'am Ha'yiti) - פעם הייתי

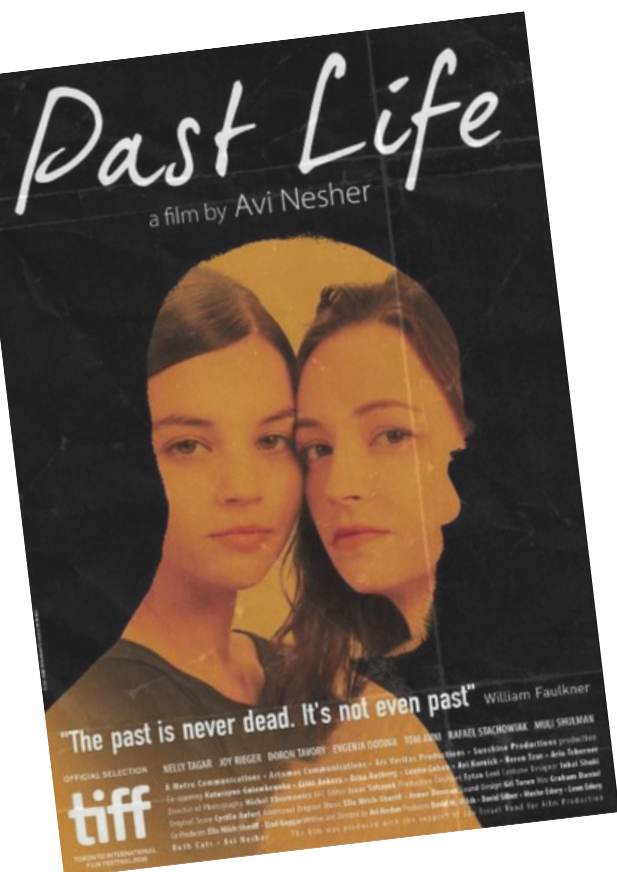
This film, set over one summer in Haifa in 1968, tells the story of Eric, a 16 year old kid that forms a special bond with Yacob, a Holocaust survivor that works as a matchmaker. Yacob offers Eric, who is fascinated by detective literature, a summer job, as his private investigator, getting intel on potential clients. Adding to that, during the summer, Eric experiences his first crush in the form of his friend's cousin who is visiting from the US. The movie puts upfront the Holocaust remembrance as a concept, and how the war and the terrible experiences from that time affected people, personalities and lifestyles.



Past Life (HaHata'im) - החטאים

This film, set in 1977, tells the story of two sisters. One is a sharp, non-apologetic journalist living in Tel-Aviv and one is a musician living in Jerusalem. The sisters discover their father's secrets about his life and actions during World War II. During the movie, the girls sober up and learn the terrible truth about their family and the cost of love and survival in the war. In 1977, there was a great political change in Israel and the same happens in the family's life. This movie gives a lot of focus to the implications of the war on family life and the price the kids "pay" in living in the shadow of sorrow, fear and trauma.

Both movies gained a lot of recognition and won several accolades, including the Israeli "Oscar" - The Ofir Award in multiple categories (Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Film). Avi, as a son of Holocaust survivors, talks about this subject and the implications and life after the war a lot in his films and you can read about it more in an interview he gave before the release of Past Life [here](#). Both movies are available to watch on the free streaming service 'Tubi', Click the posters to watch.



Israeli News

Warm Winter for the Elderly - By the "Snir" Foundation and the Israeli Combat Engineering Corps

Winter can be hard, but it's harder when you don't have people or support around you. Unfortunately, a considerable amount of elderly people, especially Holocaust survivors, are dealing with this horrible reality. Lieutenant Colonel Guy Barkan, Reserves Commander of Battalion 8023 of the Combat Engineering Corps is a volunteer in the "Snir" Foundation. He wanted to do a special activity to increase moral amongst the soldiers. With the help of his friend, Major Uriel Rozen, they reached out to "Snir" and created a volunteer opportunity for the battalion.

The "Snir" Foundation (no, it's not named after me, sad, I know) was created with a mission to assist less fortunate people in Israel in many ways such as equal opportunity in education, financial assistance for rent, utility bills, groceries and more.

According to Guy Barken, "The connection between the reserves and helping the community is obvious. Soldiers on reserves that on top of all of their work make the time to help defend and help with Israel's security and its people, are giving a lot of their time and effort. The "Snir" Foundation takes care of other types of security, not less important than the military one. When you take that and add the community work aspect, helping the less fortunate, it's an experience they will never forget and my hope is that it will be more than a one-time activity."

The battalion was joined by the Foundation's Chairman of the Board Nir Shmol and Israel's MasterChef Season 8 winner, Vanessa Vidan, a member of the Foundation, and they distributed food, groceries, hot and comforting meals and winter gear kits including a blanket, heater and heating lamps for the elderly in more than 100 households! Shmol stated that "This is an amazing initiative, and it gives us strength as a society, to see what we can do. We're also very happy to see the recipients reactions, truly fulfilling".



"Snir" management and MasterChef winner handing the kits to a household



Soldiers in the battalion before handing the kits



Click the picture to learn more about the "Snir" Foundation

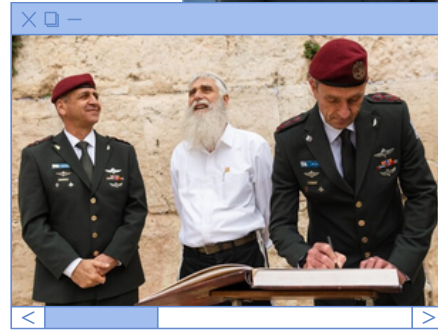
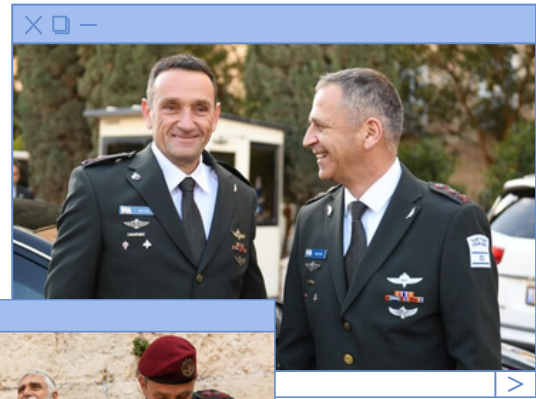
More Israeli News!

Herzi Halevi becomes the 23rd IDF Chief Of Staff

In the past week the IDF welcomed a new Chief of Staff, Herzi Halevi, who is going to be the successor of Aviv Kohavi, who commanded the IDF for the last 4 years.

"It was a good journey in a great army, and serving our country is excellent and crucial. I salute you, my soldiers, and embrace you," concluded Kohavi, in his speech. "You will forever remain my soldiers and from this moment forward I am your soldier." Kohavi served in the IDF for more than 40 years, and now he retires.

"Today, I accept upon myself commandership over the IDF, the defender of the State of Israel and its civilians," stated Herzi Halevi, during his speech. "When I enlisted, like every young man standing at the gates of the 'Bakum' (enlistment base), I wasn't planning on having such a lengthy journey. Looking back, every position I assumed in the 37 years of my service was a contribution to this moment, in which I accept upon myself the privilege to command over the IDF." Good luck to both amazing men and thank you for your service!



The exiting COS, Aviv Kohavi with the new COS, Herzi Halevi, visiting the Western Wall

What's Going On?

Upper School - Dugo Operation and Katya Davidzon

I started teaching Upper School! I'm super excited and I'm also very happy to share with you one of the amazing classes we had! On January 17th, we had Falafel for dinner, why is it special, you might ask? Well, 1/18 in Israel is a very special day, because it is the day we commemorate the Dugo Operation - On a cold January 18, 1945, 14-year-old David "Dugo" Leitner was on a death march from Auschwitz. The only thing that he claims that kept him going forward was his mother's promise that once he'll get to Israel he'll have this amazing dish of warm rounded balls so delicious he won't even believe it. After he survived and got to Israel, while walking in the Machne Yehuda Market, he saw the falafel there and decided this is the dish his mom talked about. Ever since, every 1/18 he eats falafel to keep the promise he will never be hungry again. In collaboration with the Testimony House in Israel, this thing became an Israeli Initiative - you eat falafel and post it on social media with the hashtag [מבצע_דוגו](#), to spread the word. So, in our class, we got to be a part of this incredible initiative and also enjoy some delicious falafel!

In that same class, we had a special guest - Katya Davidzon, a Shlichah in the DMV area that told us her amazing story about her Aliyah from Ukraine and about how she volunteered with refugees from Ukraine in Poland! It was fascinating and so meaningful! Thank you Katya for this amazing opportunity!



More of What's Going On?

KESTY's Hanukkah Lock-In!

KESTY's Hanukkah Lock-in was amazing! We had great programs through the night, including a latke cook-off (some were very good!), a social action program in which we wrote letters to our Senators, we learned about Hanukkah and the history of our people, made cool snow globes with the holiday theme, did Havdalah together and - of course - got to spend the night with our great friends! Start getting ready for the Purim Lock-In on March 4th!



Temple's 70th Anniversary Hanukkah Party!

We had our 70th Anniversary Hanukkah party and it was a blast! We started with a screening of the Israeli Musical Festigal from 2008 starring Gal Gadot, it was so fun and super funny. We then moved to the activities, we made edible dreidels and Hanukkah crafts, got some temporary tattoos, and even our KESTY teens helped to run a station where we needed to pin the candle to the menorah! Some of us were even lucky enough to talk to a Maccabi and hear a special reading by the illustrator of Sammy the Spider! We feasted on some delicious latkes and donuts and then sang and lit our menorahs as a community. This was amazing, thank you for everyone that took a part in making this dream come true!



Even More of What's Going On!

Camp Shabbat

Camp Shabbat was so fun! We started with a service and I shared some of my camp stories with the community. After that we had a camp fair where representatives from local camps got to share info about the amazing Jewish summer experiences around us! We also (and maybe most importantly) got to enjoy a very special Oneg with Smores! So delicious! Hope to see you all next year wearing your camp t-shirt!

A \$3,250 Gift for Israel Trip for Our B-Mitzvah Teens!

For years Jewish teens from across North America would come to Israel over the summer for an experience they could never get in any other place, connecting them to Jewish history and peoplehood. The URJ and RootOne would offer \$250 gift for B-Mitzvah teens for the purpose of an Israel trip through Yallah! Israel (Formally NFTY in Israel), but as of 2023 the gift is now increased to \$3250! for more info about the trips and options you can visit [Yallah! Israel's](#) website and reach out to me for more info about the gift and how to use it! Get ready for a meaningful, extraordinary summer!

KESTY Color Wars on January 10th!

On January 10th we had our KESTY Color Wars, and it was one of the best (and funniest!) programs so far! We had the Blue Team and White Team (Not planned but Israel colors!) going head to head in a series of unique competitions, like eating donuts off a string, leap from relay, telephone charades and even a round of a nose dive competition. It was so fun to see everyone working together and having fun at it!

NFTY-MAR Winter Kallah!

Over MLK weekend, we got to send 2 teens of our KESTY youth to the NFTY MAR (Mid-Atlantic Region) Winter Kallah in VA! They got to spend the weekend with a lot of other Reform Jewish teens from the area and learn a lot about Judaism and so much more! In March there's a similar event in Camp Harlam, called the Sprinter, with NFTY MAR GER and PAR (More regions = more Reform youth!). This is the biggest event of the region in 3 years and the Sprinter is going to be even bigger! Hope to see you all there!



On The Horizon

Leadership Program and Israel Program Showcase on January 29th!

In continuum of the Madrichol/Apprentices Leadership training, our next program is going to focus on practical skills while working with kids, teens and youth, and how to be the best counselor for your class! Also, during the day, I will have a table set up with informal flyers and merch for the amazing program options we have in Israel, from a semester abroad, volunteer options, gap year and fun trips! Also, a [grant for Maryland students](#) to enable High-Schoolers to learn in Israel is available! Stop by for a snack and hear all about what the Holy-Land has to offer. Can't wait!



Click on the flag to learn more about Israel Opportunities!

Jewish Diversity Awareness and Inclusion Month at Temple Emanuel!

February is Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance and Inclusion Month, and here at Temple we decided to commemorate this important cause in a variety of ways! Through the month of February, at Friday service will discuss some important issues revolving this month's theme:

- **February 3**, Laura Naide, Director of Congregational Learning, will discuss how Temple Emanuel provides education to all of our learners and works to understand and meet their inclusion needs.
- **February 10**, I will discuss the IDF inclusion of Soldiers with disabilities, and initiatives of volunteer work through the IDF, including some of my experiences as a drill sergeant.
- **February 24**, Campbell Hughes Weiss, Madricha and KESTY member, with her mother, Kim Hughes, will discuss the impact of mental health challenges on teens and children.

Also, on **February 12**, as part of our Religious School program, we'll have, Nick May who will present "Being Heard" to our 5-7th Graders and a shorter version to our K-4th Graders. Nick May is a singer/songwriter, educator, songleader, and inclusion activist based in Fairfax, Virginia. Nick has created a presentation called "Being Heard" to describe his experience growing up as a person who stutters and how it affected his Jewish identity.

JDAIM means a lot and I'm very excited about all the things in store for us!

KESTY Lounge Night for JDAIM - February 7th!

Our next KESTY event is another incredible program made especially for JDAIM by our amazing KESTY Board! We'll meet up at Temple Emanuel at 7:30PM for a fun evening together! Grab a friend and we'll see you there!

JDAIM
FEBRUARY
Jewish Disability Awareness,
Acceptance & Inclusion Month



Click on the picture to learn more about Nick May



[Follow us on Instagram: @templeemanueld](#)

Time for Food!

Yummy Stuffed Peppers Recipe

In the winter everything you want is a hot, fulfilling and comforting meal to warm you up, in your belly and in your heart. This recipe is just that! In cold, gray days, my mom or grandmother would make this to us - an easy solution and a (somewhat) quick fix that answers all your needs. It has veggies, carbs and protein! This dish takes whole peppers and stuffs them with a rice and beef mixture and cooks on low heat in an amazing sauce to create this decadent and comforting meal. I used to love coming back home to this after long weeks away from home during my service or when I worked in boarding school. You can make this even healthier and switch the white rice with brown rice, or make this vegan and switch the meat into any type of meat substitute you desire. Enjoy and Bon Appetit!

Ingredients

For Peppers and Filling:

- 6 Bell peppers (Any color you desire)
- 8 Cloves of garlic, chopped
- 2 onions, chopped
- 1 lbs of ground beef
- 1 Handful of cilantro, chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup of white rice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ of a cup of water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon Salt
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of the following spices: cinnamon, pepper, cumin, nutmeg.

For the Sauce:

- 6 Tomatoes, grated or blended
- 1 Chili pepper, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 Handful of cilantro, chopped
- Salt to taste
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 cup of water

Directions

Read carefully!

- In a pot, fry the onions and garlic for a minute, then add the beef and cilantro.
- Once the beef changes its color, add the rice and spices and mix.
- Add the water and bring to a boil. It's not enough water but there's more cooking later, don't worry! Cook for 6 to 7 minutes covered on low heat, then take it off.
- Cut the peppers "heads" off and put it to the side (don't throw them away!). Fill each pepper almost to the top (the rice will puff up) and set aside.
- In a large pot (that can go into the oven) fry the onions and add the tomatoes, water, salt, ginger and chili. bring to a boil and add the cilantro.
- Put the peppers in and spoon about 2 tablespoons of sauce into each pepper, and cover with their "heads". Cover the pot and cook for 30 minutes on low heat. In the meantime, preheat an oven to 400°F.
- After 30 minutes, carefully move the pot to the oven for another 30 minutes.
- בתיאבון!



What's Happening in Israel?



For Tu BiShvat - Did you know that one holiday tradition is a Tu BiShvat Seder?

Click here to know more: tinyurl.com/TuBiSeder

For 2/1 - On the Columbia Space Shuttle there was one Israeli - Ilan Ramon z"l - the first Israeli astronaut, (My division in the army was named after him) - [Learn more about him here](#)



The calendar images are clickable and have more details! Also, for more information about those special days, please don't hesitate to reach out! (Contacts below).

See You Later & Keep In Touch!

For any question or just to chat:

Mobile: +1-240-204-3033

WhatsApp: +972-54-984-6312 (Add to contacts and then you'll see me on the app)

Email: youth@templeemanuelmd.org

That's it for this time!

Hope you enjoyed this issue! I want to wish you an amazing 2023 and I hope that everything you wish for in this year will become a reality!

La'Shalom,
Snir

A Song For New Beginnings

If you noticed the Hebrew quote in my opening column, it's a line from a famous Israeli song by Israeli artist Danny Robas.

The song's name is **משהו חדש מתחיל** which means "Something New Is Starting", and it talks about all the possibilities of new things that can happen all around, starting from the little things and all the way to the giant ones.



"זוג צעיר עובר, מחזיק לו יד ביד
מעבר לפנה פנים, חיוך רחב
משהו חדש מתחיל אצלי עכשיו..."

"A young couple walks by, hand in hand
From around the corner, a face, a wide smile
Something new is starting with me now..."