

# FROM THE SHALIACH TO YOU

## Shalom everyone!

### Two Countries, One Promise

A couple of weeks ago, we celebrated the United States' birthday, the Fourth of July. It's not a secret that I (really) love the US, and the Fourth of July is my favorite "American" holiday. It may be surprising to some of you, but after three years of living in the D.C. area, this was my first Fourth of July in D.C., shocker, right? I've spent the previous Independence Days in Wisconsin, NYC, Las Vegas, but never here, where I live, in the capital of this country I love so much.

This year, as I prepare to leave the D.C. area, it was clear to me I have to spend the holiday in the heart of our nation's capital. I was really lucky to watch the fireworks on the National Mall and watch a show of American classics right on Capitol Hill.

As the sun started to set and the nice breeze was blowing on my face, I was thinking about this special day in this special place, and the special place I'm going to move to in just a few months for school. I was thinking a lot about these two homes I have, Israel and the US, and the similarities and connections they share.

Many different singers and speakers talked about the US and this vision of hope, the promise of a better life. They were talking about how this country was founded by brave people, and on values of freedom. When talking about these values, I was thinking about Israel. The promise is the same - a better life. The longing for hope and freedom is so basic in the stories of these two countries.

My family immigrated to Israel because they wanted a better life for their children. I'm sure many families that came here felt the same. We live in a time where many times evil forces try to divide us and point out our differences, putting us against each other. In my time here, I tried to be a living bridge between our countries, to fill in a gap. I was looking at the sky with the Washington Monument in the horizon and realized - the bridge was already there, we just had to walk it together.

It's hard to talk about the Brave and the Free without mentioning our brothers and sisters in captivity. Pidyon Shvuyim (Redemption of Captives) is not just a Jewish value, it is an American Value, an Israeli Value, a Universal Value. We were promised freedom, hope, and we should never give up on it. These brave people have endured living hell, and I hope and pray with all my heart that they will return back home swiftly, and can regain their hope and the life they deserve.

Two countries, one promise, united together. God Bless America and Israel!

With love,  
and hope,  
Snir




Israel News

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## Israel News

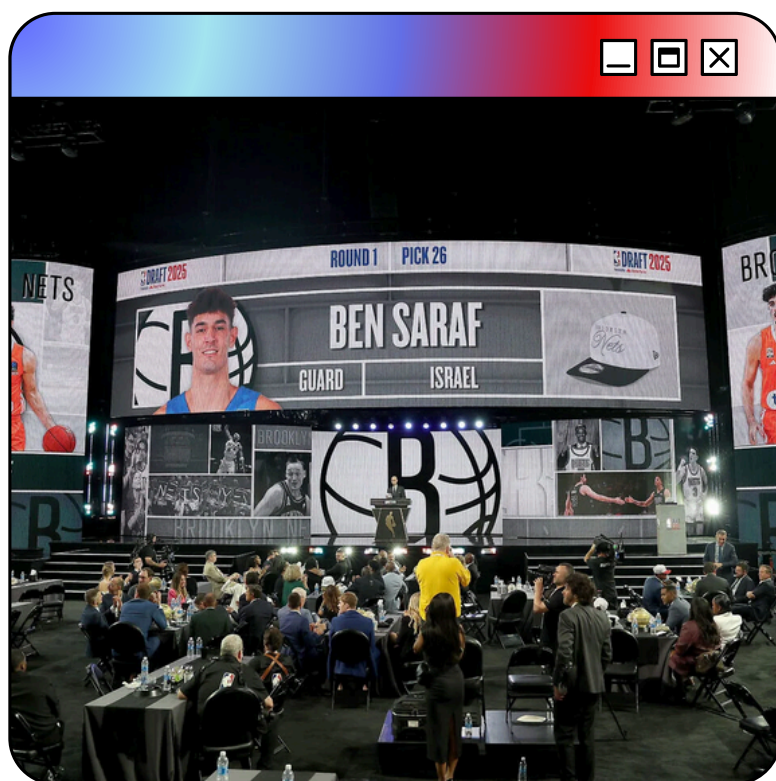
### Israelis Taking Over The NBA

In a night that will be remembered in Israeli sports history, the Brooklyn Nets made headlines by selecting two Israeli-connected players back-to-back in the first round of the 2025 NBA Draft—Ben Saraf at No. 26 and Danny Wolf at No. 27.

This marks the first time two Israeli players have been drafted in the first round by the same NBA franchise, cementing a new era of international recognition for Israeli basketball. They'll be joining fellow Israeli Deni Avdija, who started his NBA journey right here in D.C. with the Washington Wizards, and now with the Portland Trail Blazers, forming a trio of Israeli talent currently in the NBA.

Ben Saraf, a 6'6" guard and MVP of the 2024 FIBA U18 European Championship, most recently played for Ratiopharm Ulm in Germany. Known for his elite ball-handling, creativity, and poise under pressure, Saraf has been on NBA radars for over a year thanks to his standout performances in both international and professional European competition.

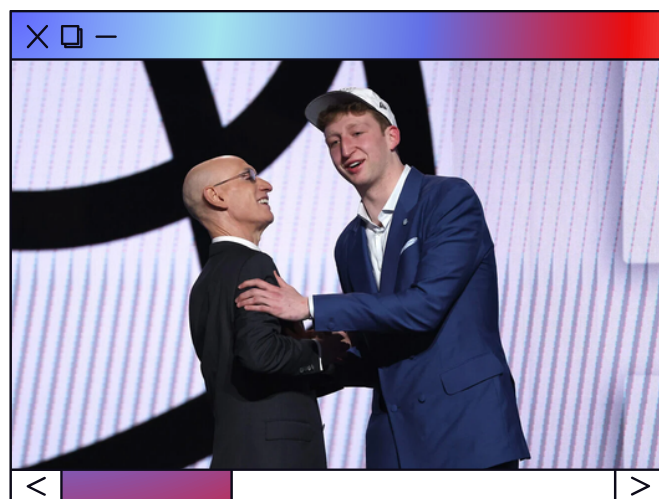
Danny Wolf, a 7-footer with Israeli-American dual citizenship, turned heads at Michigan after transferring from Yale. He brings a rare combination of size, court vision, and outside shooting, and previously starred for Israel's U20 national team. Wolf's emotional draft night moment—hugging his brother in tears—quickly made waves across social media. From the East to the West, as these talents take the court, Israeli basketball fans have every reason to cheer.



Ben Saraf is drafted 26th overall by the Brooklyn Nets during the 2025 NBA Draft at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn



The Nets Welcome Ben Saraf



Danny Wolf (right) shakes hands with NBA Commissioner Adam Silver after being drafted 27th overall by the Brooklyn Nets



## Israeli Movie Recommendation

### Land of the Little People

#### מדינת הגמדים

*Land of the Little People* (2016), directed by Yaniv Berman, is a powerful film that explores the emotional cost of growing up in a society where military service is a fact of life. Set in a small Israeli town, the story follows four children who discover their secret hideout has been taken over by two army deserters. What unfolds is not just a tense confrontation, but a deeply human reflection on how conflict touches even the youngest lives. It's a striking and timely watch—one that resonates deeply in 2025, when so many families continue to hold their breath between duty and home.



**Click the Poster to Watch**

While the film critiques the presence of violence and power struggles among youth, it does so with a clear awareness of the complex reality Israeli families live with. In today's context—post-October 7th, when thousands of Israeli parents, teachers, and neighbors serve in reserve duty—the film feels even more poignant. It reminds us that children absorb the world around them, and that their actions often mirror the fears, pressures, and responsibilities placed on the adults they look up to. There's a quiet heartbreak in watching kids navigate a world shaped by defense and survival.

Rather than pointing fingers, *Land of the Little People* invites us to look closer—with compassion, not blame. It raises difficult questions about how we protect childhood in a country where military duty is part of the national fabric. And yet, in its raw honesty, the film also shows the strength, creativity, and emotional depth of Israeli youth.

**Rated TV-MA and free on Tubi**  
**Click to Watch**



## What's Happening in Israel?

REMEMBERING AMIR  
FEY GUTTMAN



**23  
JUL**

BAR-NOAR  
ATTACK



**1  
AUG**

HAPPY BIRTHDAY,  
YONIT LEVI!



**12  
JUL**

Yael Arad Wins  
Israel's First  
Olympic Medal



**30  
JUL**

ISRAEL AND UAE  
NORMALIZATION



**13  
AUG**

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 on the last page).

## On The Horizon

### Jewish Community Days with the Nationals and Orioles!

Our local Baseball teams are celebrating Jewish heritage! Join the Baltimore Orioles on **8/25** for Jewish Heritage Night and get a free Israel-themed blue and white Orioles Hat ([Purchase qualifying tickets here](#)) and Join the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington on **8/31** for Jewish Community Day with the Nationals and get a themed jacket ([Purchase qualifying tickets here](#)).



Orioles Tickets



Nationals Tickets



## Israeli Recipe - Persian Rice

The war with Iran reminded us we're not at war with the Iranian people, but with their terror regime. The Iranian people want peace with Israel (and America), and wish to go back to times where they were free. I was thinking a lot about the Iranian Jews that I know, the friends I grew up with, their families and the communal need for a better life that brought our families to Israel in the first place. I was thinking a lot about the Jewish Persian cuisine. My grandmother always talks about the food she tasted and learned to make from her Iranian neighbors in Bat Yam (her childhood house was recently destroyed in an Iranian attack), and those flavors are a big part of my childhood. I decided to share with you the most basic recipe, kind of an intro to Persian Jewish cooking, the Persian rice. This rice, with its crispy, golden bottom, is the heart of Persian cuisine. My grandmother makes it for us every Shabbat, and it became a part of our Shabbat table years ago. A simple recipe, basic ingredients, that reminds us that we all want a better future.

### Ingredients:

- 3 cups rice
- Oil
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 tablespoon salt
- Water to completely cover the rice (like when making pasta)

### Instructions:

- Soak the rice in a bowl of water for about half an hour and drain.
- Boil water with salt in a large pot, cook the rice like pasta for 7 minutes and drain.
- In a wide pot with a thick bottom, pour 1 cm of oil and bring to a boil.
- Add the turmeric and stir so that the oil is completely orange and uniform. Swirl the oil in the pot so that it also sticks to the edges of the pot (about 2-3 cm high).
- Gently pour the strained rice into the pot and, using the handle of a wooden spoon, poke holes in the rice to release the steam.
- Cover the pot with a towel and place the lid on top and cook on high heat for 7 minutes, then on the lowest heat for another 50 minutes.
- Invert the pot onto a serving plate, you will have a "rice cake."
- [Click here to go to a website where you can convert the measurements!](#)





## Ways We Can Support Israel

**October 7th, 2023**, changed the lives of Israelis and Jewish people across the world. We're still living through this change. Israel still needs our help - and there are many ways to do so. As I always mention - the easiest way to help is to **REPORT** any lies and anti-Semitic and anti-Israel propaganda online. Those lies lead to many cases of anti-Semitic violence and terror as we've witnessed here in D.C., in Boulder, CO, and unfortunately, all across Israel, the US and across the world.

The second thing that we can do is to donate to organizations that are helping Israel and strengthening the Jewish community all across the globe. Organizations like The Jewish Agency, FIDF, the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, the Missing and Hostages Families Forum and more. Our most important mission is to get every single one of the Hostages will be back home - the living to rehabilitation and the dead to burial - **NOW**.

In times like this, we show the world that the Jewish people, Am Yisrael, are stronger together, and that our love will rebuild.

מחזירים אותם הביתה - עכשיו!

## 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](mailto:youth@templeemanuelmd.org)

That's it for this time!

As the summer heat rises and fireworks light up the sky, I'm reminded of the freedom we celebrate and I continue to pray that all of our brothers and sisters will leave the burning tunnels and be reunited with their loved ones soon.

La'Shalom,  
Snir



## Prayers for Israel

If you're interested in adding the Prayer for the Welfare of the State of Israel and Mi SheBerakh for the Welfare of Israel Defense Forces Soldiers to your prayer cycle, you can find them [HERE](#).

## Make Sure to Follow Us on Instagram to Get All the Latest Updates!

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