

# FROM THE SHALIACH TO YOU

first



## Shalom everyone!

### Saying L'Hitraot

The time has come. Three years, who would believe it?! People keep on telling me that time flies, but I didn't really feel it until just now. It's mindboggling, trying to understand how to I want to start this goodbye piece, but I think I'll start at the beginning. Some of you may know this and it may be a surprise to some, but in 2022 I was on the verge on giving up on the idea of *Shlichut*.

I went through many interviews with different communities here across the United States but none of them "clicked". I had just moved out of my apartment in Hod HaSharon (while working for AMHSI) and moved back to my parents' place in Holon for a couple of weeks, before leaving for Camp OSRUJ again. I was sitting on the ground, stuffing my suitcase with camp shirts and swimsuits, when I got a phone call from Hagai, who was the senior *Shaliach* at the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington at the time, urging me to do an interview with this Reform Temple right outside of D.C., who wished to join the *Shlichut* program. I was hesitant at first, as all of my previous interviews didn't bear any fruit. I decided to take a leap of faith, and a few days later I jumped on a call with Rabbi Adam and Laura. From there, well, the rest is history.

*continues on the next page!* →

Israel News

Israeli Movie  
Recommendation

On The Horizon

Israeli Recipe

Ways We Can  
Support Israel



## Saying L'Hitraot

That call has changed the trajectory of my life. I moved across continents and time zones, and was embraced in a community of passionate, caring and loving people, full of life and joy. The love, support and encouragement I got from all of you didn't go unnoticed. I will forever carry it in my heart and soul. I moved here at the age of 23, and as I shared during my Bar-Mitzvah D'var Torah, the twenties are a time of change, growth, and shaping one's identity. I'm glad I was able to spend a significant part of them with all of you, shaping me and who I am; and that I, hopefully, in return, helped shape others.

As we all know, the past three years weren't easy for the Jewish people and Israel. Together, hand in hand, we went through them and came out stronger. Our care for each other and the relationships and friendships we made out of the depths of pain and despair are strong and unbreakable. I will hold on to them very tightly, as they are very dear to me and to my heart.

We are living through history. Globally, the past years will have big chapters in the history books. I've got to live in the United States through some historic events, like the Elections, Rihanna performing at the Super Bowl and more, but the biggest one is, without a doubt, the release of the Wicked movie. This is an event that changed the face of the Earth, right?! Anyways, I unfortunately won't be in the US to watch the culmination of this cinematic event in November, but I did watch the musical! Although the name of one of the writers is Winnie Holtzman, we are not related, but this is not where I'm going with this. The title of the next movie and also the last song of the show is called 'For Good', and I would like to draw your attention to some very important lyrics from it:

***"I've heard it said, // That people come into our lives,  
For a reason // Bringing something we must learn...  
Because I knew you // I have been changed for good"***

It's exactly how I feel. I feel that there was a reason that I came here, that I took that leap of faith. That you, in return, took that same leap of faith with me, believing in me and letting me be a part of this incredible community. The stars aligned perfectly to bring me here in the most precise time, to the most precise place for me. This has been the greatest gift of my life, and just like in the song, I know, for sure, that I have been changed for good.

As I'm ready to embark on a new journey of film studies, now is the time to say *La'Hitraot*. You may have heard this before, but the Hebrew word for Goodbye actually means "to see you later". I truly believe that I will see you later, and even when I'm far away, this community, the family I made myself here will forever be a part of me and in my heart.

Thank you for providing me the space to write to you every month, and a space for me to immerse myself in the community, to work with you, celebrate with you, and welcoming me into your homes and hearts. Thank you for being my family.

Please stay in touch, and *La'Hitraot*, until we'll meet again.

**Love Always,  
Snir Holtzman**



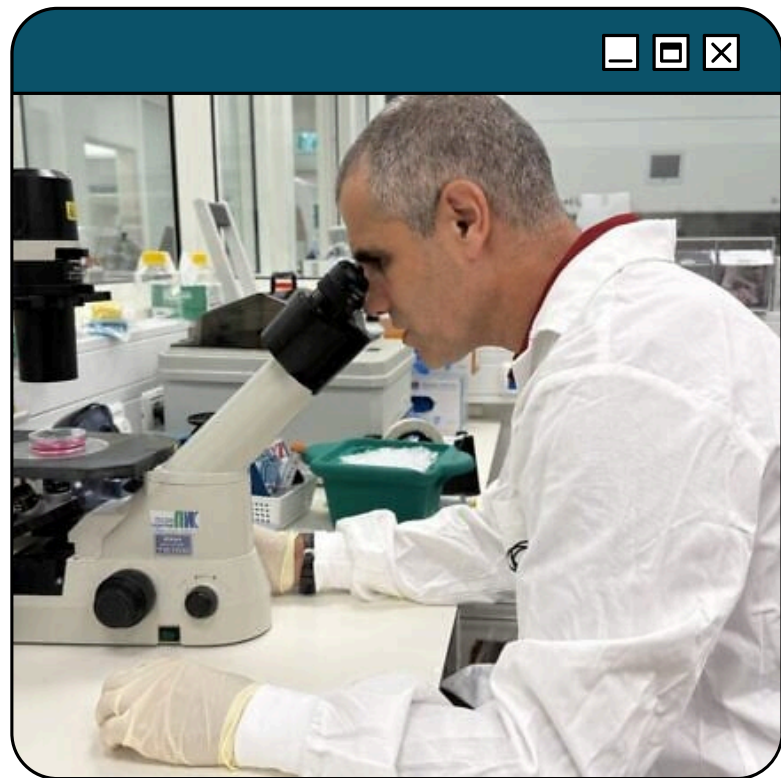



## Israel News

### Israel Poised to Deliver World's First Human Spinal Cord Implant

In a pioneering medical breakthrough, Israeli scientists are preparing to perform the world's first-ever spinal cord implant using lab-grown, personalized tissue, with the surgery authorized under a compassionate-use protocol by the Health Ministry. The procedure, developed by Prof. Tal Dvir's team at Tel Aviv University in collaboration with biotech company Matricelf, uses the patient's own reprogrammed cells embedded in a customized hydrogel scaffold to replace damaged spinal cord tissue. Animal trials showed remarkable results—many mice with chronic paralysis regained mobility, and 100% of those with recent injuries walked again.

In a country smaller than New Jersey, facing countless challenges, Israeli researchers continue to push the boundaries of what's possible. From life-saving medical technologies to global humanitarian contributions, Israel consistently shows how innovation and resilience can change lives far beyond its borders. The technology, developed at Tel Aviv University under Prof. Tal Dvir and further advanced through the biotech firm Matricelf, involves engineering a three-dimensional spinal cord segment using the patient's own cells. Blood cells are reprogrammed into stem-like cells, while fat-derived materials form a custom hydrogel scaffold. Together, they create a viable implant intended to fuse seamlessly with healthy spinal tissue to restore neural connectivity. Previous animal trials produced remarkable results: mice with chronic paralysis regained mobility—some even regained the ability to run—while nearly all recently paralyzed mice walked again. Now, with human trials imminent, the Israeli team aims to help paralyzed patients rise from their wheelchairs and walk once more—an achievement that could redefine spinal cord injury treatment globally. Thank you for allowing me to share stories from Israel with you every month, and I hope you learned new things about the wonder that is Israel!



**Prof. Tal Dvir, Head of the Nanotechnology Center at Tel Aviv University**



## Israeli Movie Recommendation

### Zero Motivation

### אפס ביחסי אנוש

I think this is only fitting that this is the last movie recommendation in my newsletters. I always try to find movies that you can stream here in the US, but for some reason, this gem of a movie wasn't available outside of Israel. Fortunately, it is now available to rent on Amazon Prime, and this is your sign to see it ASAP! This award-winning dark comedy follows a group of young women serving their mandatory army duty in a small desert base, where boredom, bureaucracy, and office politics become just as challenging as any real battlefield.

With sharp humor and a refreshingly honest lens, the film captures a side of Israeli life that's rarely seen—absurd, and yet incredibly human. Directed by Talya Lavie in her feature debut, the film stars Dana Ivgy, Nelly Tagar, and Shani Klein, whose performances bring both humor and heart to the screen. *Zero Motivation* premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2014, where it won the Best Narrative Feature Award, and it also received six Ophir Awards (the Israeli Oscars), including Best Director and Best Screenplay. The film's critical success put Lavie on the map as one of Israel's most exciting contemporary filmmakers. Beyond the laughs, *Zero Motivation* offers a powerful commentary on gender, authority, and the universal struggle to find meaning in our daily routines. It's a story that resonates far beyond Israel, because at its heart it's about young people searching for purpose, friendship, and self-definition. I know for a fact that I felt a similar way when I started my service in the IDF. Whether you're familiar with the Israeli army or not, this film will leave you thinking, smiling, and maybe even recognizing a bit of yourself in its characters. Thank you for allowing me to share my passion for cinema with you every month, and I hope you enjoyed as much as I did!

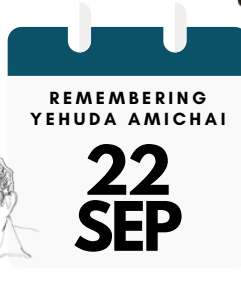


**Click the Poster to Watch**

**Rated TV-MA, Click Here to Rent  
on Amazon Prime**



## What's Happening in Israel?



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).

## What's Going On

### My Last-First Day of TERS and Farewell Shabbat

When you're about to leave a place, you start to be aware of the things you do for the last time. Last time I write a staff email, last time I make lunch for work... My last couple of days at TERS were incredible! It was hard to say goodbye, but it was such a joy seeing our school growing, developing, and our teens and students having a good time (they are also so big now! Three years is a lot!). My last Shabbat was also amazing, emotional and special. Thank you to all who came to say goodbye, and even if you couldn't make it, make sure to stay in touch!



# GOODBYE



## On The Horizon



**Come Support Our Teens!**

9/23 -  **KESTY**-led Rosh Hashanah Service



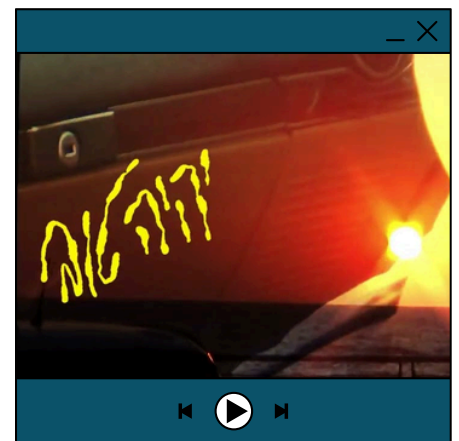
10/2 -  **KESTY**-led Yom Kippur Service

 **@kestymd**



## Farewell Song

I sometimes would sneak in a music recommendation into my newsletters. Being completely honest, I mainly (99.9% of the time) listen to music in English. When I listen to music in Hebrew, it unlocks something in me. The words have a gripping effect on me; it's like magic. Especially during days like the Yoms or special events, when I need a strong wave of emotions, I crank up the volume and listen to songs in Hebrew, my native tongue. This song, יהיה טוב, *It'll be Okay*, by Jasmine Muallem, was already featured in one of my newsletters, kind of. I recommended the album this song is a part of in the past. Now, as I'm headed to my next chapter, surrounded by uncertainty, the words of this song are like a lullaby, reminding me that, at the end, everything will be okay. In a way, this song is also an anthem for my time here, and what we've faced together as a community. The last couple of years weren't easy for Jews, but together, we went through them, heads up high. Now I say goodbye, but this song, and all of you, are in my heart.



Click the Image to Listen to the Song



Click here for the  
English Translation

## Israeli Recipe – Basbousa – Special Moroccan Cake

Over the past three years, sharing recipes with you felt like welcoming you into my house. I shared tastes, scents, and textures that are a part of my identity and of the way I was brought up. These recipes are a part of my family's DNA, and it made me so happy to share them with you, my new family. For my last recipe, I wanted to share something special, and this Basbousa cake is the perfect fit. My grandmother makes this cake for Shabbat, but only special ones, like someone's birthday. It's so simple to make, but rich in flavor and texture. Seeing my grandmother brushing syrup on the cake, carefully placing almonds and cutting it to perfect diamonds is one of my earliest and happiest memories. I'm excited to share this recipe with you and hope it'll bring the same joy and create special memories for you too. It's a little something sweet to overcome the bitterness of saying goodbye. Thank you for allowing me to share my story, and stories of so many others, through food and culture. I miss it already!

### Ingredients:

#### For the Cake Batter

- 4 cups semolina flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup + 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 cup shredded coconut
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons baking powder
- 200g or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  sticks melted butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cups buttermilk
- Pinch of salt
- Whole Almonds

#### For the Syrup

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

### Instructions:

- Combine all the dry ingredients in a bowl.
- Add the buttermilk and melted butter and mix thoroughly.
- Pour the batter into a greased baking pan and let it sit at room temperature for 10 minutes.
- Bake at 350°F for approximately 35-40 minutes. The Basbousa will be golden. Let it cool while working on the syrup.
- Bring the syrup ingredients to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes.
- Once the Basbousa is cold, cut into squares.
- Pour the hot syrup over the cooled cake. Do not pour hot syrup on hot cake!
- Put an almond in the middle of every square, serve and enjoy! **בתאבון**! If you make this recipe, please send me a picture!





## 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: snirholtzman@gmail.com

### That's it!

Three years! Who would believe it?! I will deeply miss you! I wish you all a happy and healthy new year, please stay in touch, and remember - it's not a goodbye, it's a see you later!

La'Hitraot,  
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!

 @templeemanuelmd

 @kestymd





THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE TIME OF MY LIFE!  
PLEASE STAY IN TOUCH!

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אני לא אהבתי להיות מארח!

With love,  
Snir Holtzman

