



LEIBLER  
YAVNEH  
COLLEGE

# קשר. KESHER.

LEIBLER YAVNEH COLLEGE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER | 24 MARCH 2023 . 2 NISSAN 5783



## OLAM CHESED YIBANEH

*EITAN MEYEROWITZ, Jewish Life Educator*

Every year, Yavneh operates under a school-wide theme. This theme informs how we approach learning in the classroom, and frames our Jewish Life events and camps. This year we unveiled Olam Chesed Yibaneh, an extract from Tehillim that conveys the powerful message of building a world from love. These words have inspired generations and continue to resonate, reminding us of our roles as active participants in shaping the world.

**Olam:** Leibler Yavneh College students embrace both individualism and globalism. They strive for personal development while remaining aware of their responsibilities as global citizens, concerned with climate change, political extremism, and consumerism.

**Chesed:** A central value in Judaism, chesed translates to "loving-kindness." It asks our students to practice empathy and offer help, even when it's uncomfortable. The science of kindness

## PARSHAT VAYIKRAH

### SHABBAT TIMES

Light Candles - 7:08pm  
Shabbat Ends - 8:04pm

### UPCOMING DATES

#### MARCH

**Sunday 26** College Musical - Les Mis  
**Monday 27** Secondary Parent Teacher  
**Thursday 30** Autumn Concert  
**Friday 31** Final Day Term 1

CONTINUED...



demonstrates how one act of kindness can inspire a ripple effect, leading to exponential growth in kindness worldwide.

*"let's work together to create a world of kindness, by embracing the theme of Olam Chesed Yibaneh"*

**Yibaneh:** As Jewish educators, our mission is to inspire students to be partners in creation, building the world with kindness rather than indifference or self-centeredness.

An exciting secret hides in Olam Chesed Yibaneh. The Hebrew letters of 'Yibaneh' are Yud, Bet, Nun and Hey – יבנה. Look familiar? Switch the nekudot around and it no longer reads 'Olam Chesed Yibaneh' (Build a world of kindness), but 'Olam Chesed Yavneh' (Yavneh's world of kindness). Hence why this verse is so

fitting to be our school theme in 2023. Paying homage to the original Yavneh's wealth of wisdom, Leibler Yavneh College seeks to develop a world centred around kindness, focusing on community service, inclusivity, and kind language.

**Community Service:** We support our students in volunteering and making a positive impact in the community. We celebrate their efforts through assemblies, special events, and guest speakers.

**Inclusivity:** We value inclusivity and community-building, exemplified by events like Friday night Onegs. Our students welcome newcomers, support those in need, and ensure that everyone feels a sense of belonging.

**Kindness in Language and Action:** Our community cultivates a culture of kindness and empathy through language. By being kind in our words and actions, we create a world where everyone feels supported, valued, and respected.

In conclusion, Olam Chesed Yibaneh reminds us that our actions profoundly impact the world. By committing to kindness, inclusivity, and community service, we can build a better world for all. This year, let's work together to create a world of kindness, by embracing the theme of Olam Chesed Yibaneh and inspiring others to join us in building a brighter future.



**FINAL SHOW THIS SUNDAY**



בס"ד

LEIBLER YAVNEH COLLEGE  
presents

# Les Misérables

## SCHOOL EDITION

Performed entirely by students  
 A musical by ALAIN BOUBLIL and CLAUDE-MICHEL SCHÖNBERG  
 Based on the novel by VICTOR HUGO  
 Music by CLAUDE-MICHEL SCHÖNBERG  
 Lyrics by HERBERT KRETZMER  
 Original French text by ALAIN BOUBLIL and JEAN-MARC NATEL  
 Additional material by JAMES FENTON  
 Adapted by TREVOR NUNN and JOHN CAIRD  
 Original Orchestrations by JOHN CAMERON  
 New Orchestrations by CHRISTOPHER JAHNKE  
 STEPHEN METCALFE and STEPHEN BROOKER  
 Originally Produced by CAMERON MACKINTOSH  
 School Edition specially adapted and licensed by  
 MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL and CAMERON MACKINTOSH (OVERSEAS) LTD

**MARCH 2023**  
**WED 22 & THU 23 7:30PM**  
**SUN 26 1:00PM**



**TICKETS: [yavneh.vic.edu.au/musical](http://yavneh.vic.edu.au/musical)**



## #LUVYAV SPOTLIGHT

### Jocelyn Hurley

#### NAME:

Joss Hurley

#### POSITION:

PE Teacher and e-Learning coordinator  
Mum to 4 year old Twins Ben and Tily

#### WHAT MAKES YOU #YAVNEHPROUD?

The great group of PE teachers I work with at Yavneh.

#### WHO INSPIRED YOU TO FOLLOW THIS CAREER PATH?

I had a PE teacher at high school who inspired me to become a PE teacher myself. Getting to play sport and games every day seemed like the best job ever! (and it is!)

#### WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO WHEN YOU AREN'T WORKING?

I love sport! I play cricket for Elsternwick Cricket Club and I play football for Elsternwick Amateur Football Club

#### WHERE IS THE BEST PLACE YOU HAVE TRAVELLED TO?

I travelled to Central and South America when I was 19. I love Costa Rica where I went white water rafting and ziplining through a rain forest.





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will only conclude long after the finals bars of "Do you hear the people sing" when the 40' container is packed and sent back to Brunswick! A thank you seems so lacking, but we are so grateful for your efforts and your dedication.

We must also thank Jack Hollander our amazing voice coach and keyboard extraordinaire, Ellie Goldenberg, Assistant Director, Katie Roose, Stage Manager and the many musicians, tech staff and back-stage crew who made this musical a sell out success. We are indebted to the team at Caulfield Grammar School, especially Connor Bannister who so graciously hosted us over the past week.

One of the many benefits of our arts and musical program at the College is the ability for a venture like this to deepen friendships across multiple year levels. How beautiful it is to see students supporting one another with this challenging and intense performance. Each year we are so excited to see students who have never shared their vocal and acting abilities, indeed some of the shyest students find their inner strength in performing, no doubt, due to the efforts of Katie and Michi. Of course, the musical is an incredible experience, however, it is also a core learning opportunity as well. Students learn to collaborate, to push their own boundaries, and along the way, they gain resilience and inner strength.

To the entire musical cast and crew, we say, thank you, we are so proud of you, we all stand taller sharing in your glory for a absolutely extraordinary fabulous performance of Les Misérables.

The hundred of so students who have dedicated countless hours over many months, will never forget this moment, this musical, this performance, and neither will we.

In the words of the cast,

*One day to a new beginning , Raise the flag of freedom high!*

*There's a new world for the winning, There's a new world to be won*

*Do you hear the people sing?*

We hear you and are so proud of each and every one of you.



# CAST LIST I STUDENT ACTORS

Jean Valjean .....Eli Faraday  
 Javert .....Adam Geller  
 Thenardier .....Lee Slade  
 Madame Thenardier ..... Lani Salomonovitch  
 Bishop of Digne, Student and Others ..... Yoni Shroot  
  
 Fantine ..... Shira Etzion  
 Eponine ..... Livia Alford  
 Cosette ..... Sami Chait  
  
 Gavroche ..... Avi'el Hurvitz  
 Little Cosette ..... Sarah Cohen  
 Little Eponine and Others ..... Goldie Fineberg

## WORKERS OF 1823

The Old Woman and Others ..... Leah Spivak  
 Factory Worker and Others ..... Shira Vorchheimer

## THENARDIER'S GANG

Eli Babet and Others ..... Ilai Bracha  
 Brujon and Others ..... Judah Wiseman  
 Claquesous and Others ..... Jacob Smith

## THE POOR

Michal Etzion (Featured)	Yael Kwiat
Benji Adelman (Featured)	Aliza (Leezy) Schachna
Eden Eckstein (Featured)	Maya Goldschlager
Meira Eppel (Featured)	Noa Steiner
Meital Wiseman (Featured)	Maytal Almagor
Rachel Singer (Featured)	Atalia Schneier
Aura Krigsman (Featured)	Oren Davis
Michaela Nahmias (Featured)	Gabriel Kelmman
Deena Eppel	Orly Mond
Noa Kowadlo	Nadav Rachmani
Amity Paluch	Phoebe Miller
Ella Etzion	Jessica Levin
Benjy Orwin	Ruvi Tenne
Ranya Sender	Zara Lewis
Joshua Gochin	Tali Barnett
Merav Fell	Kezia Gillis
	Garfield Guntmakher

## STUDENTS

Enjolras .....Noah Goldenberg  
 Marius ..... Osha Rubenstein Slesenger  
 Grantaire, Foreman and Others ..... David Goldman  
 Courfeyrac, Factory Girl and Others ..... Dinah Tenne  
 Joly and Others ..... Emily Gelller  
 Feuilly and Others ..... Matan Gozlan  
 Combeferre and Others ..... Nissim Sibony  
 Jean Prouvaire and Others ..... Nadav Leibler  
 Lesgles and Others ..... Orel Morris

# PRODUCTION TEAM I CREW & ORCHESTRA

## PRODUCTION TEAM

<b>Katie Weston</b> Production Manager & Music Director/ Conductor	<b>Brenton Staples</b> Original Set Design
<b>Michelle Swersky</b> Director	<b>Victoria Horne</b> Original Costume Design
<b>Jack Hollander</b> Assistant MD / Keys 1 / Voice Coach	<b>Michelle Swersky &amp; Katie Weston</b> Costume Co-Ordinators
<b>Ellie Goldenberg</b> Assistant Director / Production Manager	<b>Bernard Hedger / Grant Alley</b> (CLOC) Set Hire Coordinators
<b>Katy Roose</b> Stage Manager	<b>Connor Bannister (CGS)</b> Theatre Manager / Head Technician
<b>Jack Pryce &amp; Jason Bovaird</b> (Moving Light Productions) Lighting Design	<b>Gideon Begleiter</b> Production Assistant / Runner
<b>Jack Pryce</b> Lighting Operator	<b>Sarah Finch &amp; Eliana Morris</b> Production / Costumes Assistants
<b>Jake Sipcic (LSS Productions)</b> Sound Design	<b>David Fisher</b> Production Administration Support
<b>Dana Samuel</b> Sound Operator	<b>Tanya Shaltiel</b> Ticketing Support
<b>Rachelle Donovan</b> Radio Mic Technician	<b>Katie Weston</b> Poster Design
<b>Nathan Firman</b> Keyboard Programming (Patched Keyboards)	<b>Nechama Ruschinek</b> Program Design

## ORCHESTRA

<b>Katie Weston</b> Musical Director/Conductor	<b>Pranav Roy</b> Trombone
<b>Jack Hollander</b> Assistant Music Director / Keys 1	<b>Anthony Cardamone</b> Horn 1
<b>Michelle Nguyen</b> Keys 2	<b>Hayley Blakiston</b> Reed 1
<b>Mitch Roberts</b> Bass	<b>Fliss Hardiman</b> Reed 2
<b>Isaac Ben Salamon</b> (Year 12 Student) Guitar	<b>Alison Shuttleworth</b> Reed 3
<b>Heather Wright</b> Percussion	<b>Lakeisha Stephen</b> Cello
<b>Miles Izzo</b> Trumpet	<b>Prue Glenn</b> Violin
<b>Daniel Heskett</b> Trumpet	<b>Clara Salzmann</b> Viola

## BACKSTAGE CREW

Eliana Morris	Nicole Podolsky
Ellie Goldenberg	Shira Sztrochlic
Gideon Begleiterw	Simone Grinberg
Gilad Junger (Assistant Stage Manager)	Zev Gordon
Caleb Epstein	
Jade Grinberg	
Keshet Chul	
Leib Sharp	



## SKB SNAPSHOT

*SHEREE MAUJEAN, SKB General Studies Teacher*



Recently, the children in SKB have been captivated by nature, specifically living creatures in their environment. This has been inspired by recent weekend trips, new pets and the increased flora and fauna in our kindergarten yard. We shared our Morning Tea with a visiting possum and discovered a praying mantis and many crickets. The children have been excitedly sharing their current knowledge and theories about insects

and animals. Teachers have programmed sensory play spaces to foster this interest and extend related vocabulary. Actively making curriculum decisions responsive to children's interests is meaningful, relevant and engaging for children in early years settings.



With Pesach around the corner, we experimented with blue and yellow Edicol dye this week to make frogs. This mirrored current Jewish Studies teaching about the Ten Plagues. The children enjoyed manipulating droppers to apply drops of colour to a sponge. This added sensory and fine motor skill building elements to the activity. This week the children have looked at photos of different frog species and added features to their sponge paint outline. They noticed that frogs vary widely in the wild and we plan to extend our knowledge of amphibious creatures over the remainder of the term.



## SKB PARENTS EVENING

Earlier in the term, Senior Kinder Bet parents enjoyed coming together to meet and get to know each other. There were lots of laughs and they are looking forward to catching up again throughout the year.





### ALIYAH HONOUR BOARD

Please let Lynda Pilalis at [lpilalis@yavneh.vic.edu.au](mailto:lpilalis@yavneh.vic.edu.au) know if any ex-students have made Aliya, so we can update the Aliya Honour Board.

### BAR/BAT MITZVAHS

Please remember to register the date of your son or daughter's Bar/Bat Mitzvah with Lynda Pilalis at Reception on (03) 9528 4911 or email [l.pilalis@yavneh.vic.edu.au](mailto:l.pilalis@yavneh.vic.edu.au).

### HESDER בנות & בחורים

If you would like to host the Hesder Team, please contact Rae on 8317 2504 or email [office@mizrachi.com.au](mailto:office@mizrachi.com.au)

## YPO & Michael Shafar

Invite all Yavneh parents to a night of comedy for Rosh Chodesh Nissan on opening night at the Comedy Festival

Thursday 30th March, 7:15pm

MICHAEL  
SHAFAR

WELL WORTH  
THE CHEMO



Please use promo code: **YPO** for **\$15** tickets!

[HTTPS://WWW.COMEDYFESTIVAL.COM.AU/2023/SHOWS/MICHAEL-SHAFAR-WELL-WORTH-THE-CHEMO#3936:75318](https://www.comedyfestival.com.au/2023/shows/michael-shafar-well-worth-the-chemo#3936:75318)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MAZAL TOVS

To the Lazar & Dorfan families on the engagement of Mikey & Hannah.

May you continue to have Nachat from your families.

To include your announcement in Keshet, please email Lynda at [reception@yavneh.vic.edu.au](mailto:reception@yavneh.vic.edu.au) with relevant names and a contact phone number.

## SECOND HAND UNIFORMS

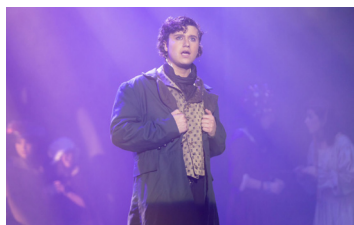
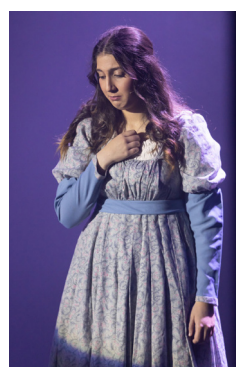
YPO Second Hand Uniform Shop welcomes your donations of pre-loved uniforms in good condition. All proceeds from sales support our Yavneh children via YPO projects.

Contact [ypo@yavneh.vic.edu.au](mailto:ypo@yavneh.vic.edu.au) if you wish to buy or donate pre-loved uniforms.

Join over 350 members in the [Yavneh 2nd Hand Uniform & Books Facebook group](#) to buy and sell your pre-loved uniforms, books or extra-curricular gear (eg. ballet, karate, cricket kit). Please restrict the sales and requests to items relevant to education.

**Please note:** The YPO will no longer be accepting secondhand books but you are welcome to buy, swap and sell them via the Facebook page.

# LES MISERABLES





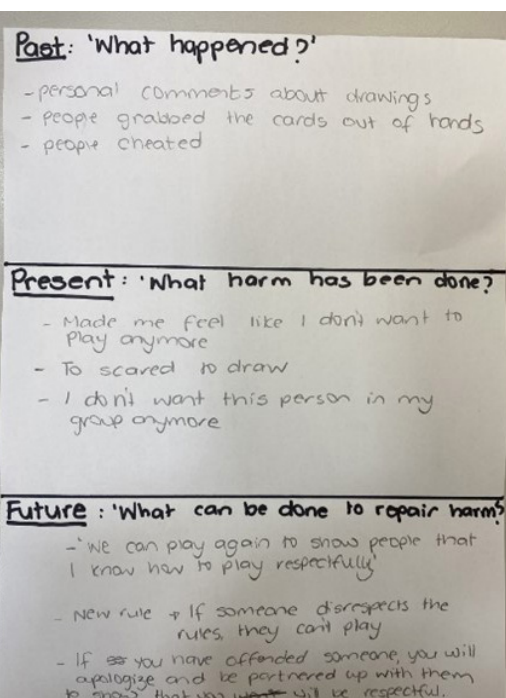
## YEAR 5 RESPECT IN REALITY

*CLAUDIA BENAOU & CARA KOLSKI, Primary General Studies Teachers*

It is important that students feel that the classroom environment is safe, supportive, respectful and inclusive. This term, using the “Safe and Unsafe relationships” unit we have unpacked what respect is. Students created Y Charts, illustrating what respect looks like, feels like and sounds like. Each chart had a heading Respect in the Classroom, Respect in the Playground, Respect at Home, Respect at Sport and Respect at the Shops.

Interestingly, all students were able to contribute to the charts, demonstrating an excellent knowledge of respectful expectations. When applying these concepts to group games of Pictionary, many students needed reminders from their peers to be respectful. During our feedback session, students were amazed at how many of their peers felt that the games could have been played in a more respectful manner.

It was during our debrief that we used Adam Voigt’s response circle discussion, P3-P3-F3, making it clear what went wrong, how it made people feel and what can we do to make the game more enjoyable for all.



## Year 6 JLife Leaders - Guessing Competition - Gold coin donation to Mizrahi Charity Fund

In honour of the upcoming Chag of Pesach, the Year 6 JLife Leaders will be running a chocolate guessing competition in the Primary school during the last week of term. They will be coming around to classrooms during homeroom and at lunchtime to give students a chance to guess.

Each guess is a **gold coin donation** and all money raised will be donated to the **Mizrachi Charity Fund** for those who need extra funds to purchase their Pesach supplies.

The student with the closest guess to the number of chocolates will win the jar of Kosher for Pesach Alprose Chocolates. Please help the JLife Leaders collect for this worthy cause.

Wishing you all a happy and Kosher Pesach.

# PESACH

CHAVI GROSSMAN, Co-ordinator of Jewish Studies



I know that Pesach is a time of the year where many of you will be busy preparing for the upcoming seder. And let's face it, there's nothing like a good seder to bring out the passion in all of us. The food, the songs, the stories - it's all part of the magic that makes Pesach such a unique and cherished holiday.

But here at our school, we take Pesach preparations to a whole new level. We believe that the best way to engage our students in the learning is to make them feel that this is their history and birthright.



So, each year level prepares a Hagaddah according to their level of learning. And let me tell you, these Hagaddahs are no joke. They're packed with interesting stories, thought-provoking questions, and even some cheeky humour to keep the kids on their toes.



The best part? The students get to bring their Hagaddah home and share them around the seder table. And let's be honest, who doesn't love a robust discussion? From the storylines to the songs and Divrei Torah, their Hagaddah are designed to spark conversations that will keep everyone engaged and interested.



Of course, we understand that not everyone is a natural-born seder host. Some of you may be feeling a bit overwhelmed by the prospect of hosting a seder that's both educational and entertaining. But fear not, dear parents, for we have some tips to help you navigate the Pesach waters.

First and foremost, don't be afraid to get creative. Pesach is all about thinking outside the box, so why not try something new this year? Maybe you could incorporate some fun games or activities

into the seder to keep the kids engaged.

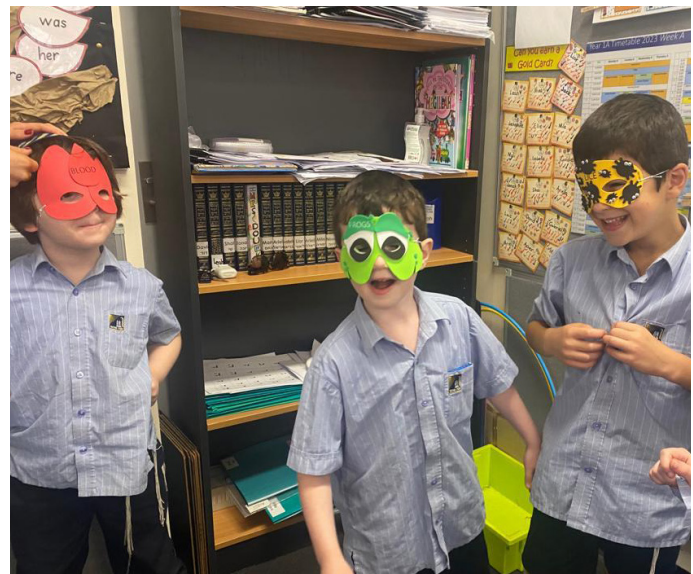
Secondly, just like every family is unique, so is every seder. And sometimes our best laid plans don't come to fruition at the seder table. But what matters is that it is memorable and that we learn something new each year. How amazing is it that a text as old as the Hagaddah has new insights for all of us, old and young, every single year!"

In conclusion, our school's approach to preparing for Pesach is not only about creating an educational experience but also about helping our students feel a connection to their Jewish heritage. By engaging them in the learning process and encouraging them to ask questions, share stories and insights, we aim to create a sense of ownership of their Yiddishkeit by understanding the meaning and significance of Torah and Mitzvot.

We believe that this sense of connection to Judaism is vital for our students' overall wellbeing and helps them to develop a strong sense of self and community. When they feel connected to their culture and traditions, they are more likely to be invested in them and continue them into the future.

So as we prepare for Pesach, let us remember that it is not just about the food, songs, and stories, but about the deeper meaning and significance behind them. Let us encourage our students to delve into their roots and embrace their Jewish identity with pride and joy.

Chag Pesach Sameach to all!





YAVNEH PARENTS  
ORGANISATION

2023

Trivia  
Night

SAVE THE DATE

THURSDAY, JUNE 1

FOR MORE INFO OR TO BE INVOLVED EMAIL:

[YPO@Yavneh.vic.edu.au](mailto:YPO@Yavneh.vic.edu.au)



# THE LAND FLOWING WITH MILK, HONEY... AND YAVNEHRIANS

*RABBI CHAIM COWEN, Deputy Principal & Head of Jewish Studies*

Presently, I am spending time in Israel, living in leafy Katamon and enjoying spending my days engrossed in research, exploring the intersection between halakha and secular law. My aspiration is that these studies will help the Melbourne community have the confidence to litigate their commercial disputes at a Beth Din who are able to apply Jewish law with a sensitivity to the secular law context, and with an integrity that inspires trust and confidence.

reminisced, caught-up, shared divrei torah, davened maariv and heard an inspirational story from Paca. Students mingled late into the night, far later than I was willing to stay up – and I have to say, it was lovely to not take the roll, nor to have to wait until the last parent arrived to pick them up.

One of the great delights of living in the Holy Land are the many Yavneh alumni I encounter – be it at shuk Machane Yehudah, at one of the random shuls I frequent, walking home on a Friday night, at a concert, on a bus, on a jog or anywhere else for that matter. As enjoyable as these chance meetings may be, they come nothing near the wonderful, planned experience in which I was able to meet up with 28 of our 2022 alumni who came from near and far last Monday night for a dinner and catchup. Our original choice of location was sufficient for the 15 who we thought would make it, but as the familiar faces started to trickle in, we soon realised that we were heading for almost double the amount of souls than we had anticipated!

As these classmates ferociously caught up with one another – they had come from a wide range of programs which were based across the country – we made our way through the shuk and out to Rechov Agrippas in search of a venue that could handle a motley crew of almost thirty. We explored the vibrant food scene, while learning of many diverse experiences (Carlia Slade shared her’s entirely in a fluent Hebrew) and looking out for the right bite. At last, Liam Grinberg caught the eye of a shwarma vendor with whom he had made acquaintance and the mutual agreement to this traditional – and filling – choice was palpable throughout the group. The vendor felt he had hit the jackpot and called a co-worker from the back room with whom he whipped up shwarma after shwarma with an awe-inspiring efficiency. Shwarmas in hand, we journeyed to the semi-circular steps that line the walkway where Agrippas meets King George (many intersections here conjure interesting meetings of personalities, previously denied by time and space) where we sat,



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A flurry of messages came in the next day, sharing how enjoyable the experience had been for all those involved. And I was very thankful too – thankful to have the friendship of this wonderful group of young adults who exude such positivity and love for Yiddishkeit, Israel, and one another. Ilan Davis also deserves a special shout out for being my contact in rallying the troops.



Thinking that that was that, I was uplifted on Friday morning as I headed from my apartment at 6am to the starting line of the Jerusalem marathon, to find a team of these very same students jiggling on the spot ready to broach varying distances, running the tortious hills (which come with compensatory glorious views) of this magical city. Many were doing the half marathon and some were doing the 10km and the 5km. While it was definitely a very taxing run, there was something wonderful and inspiring about getting a pat on the back at the 9km mark and turning to see Izak Bierenkrant (Bizza) smiling graciously as he effortlessly overtook me.

Israel may be the country flowing with milk and honey, but it is also flowing with Yavnehrians – proud and passionate about being a part of our precious people in this propitious land.

# CHAG IN A BOX

The Chaggim are a special and exciting time of the year. At Chag in a Box, we recognise the importance of celebrating the chaggim and so we have set out to provide and deliver food packages to families who may be going through tough times and are in need of financial assistance.

Filled with all the ingredients needed to make your chaggim that extra bit special, our boxes include meat, chicken, matzah, wine, fruit, veggies and more!

If you are in need of assistance or know anyone who may be need the extra support in receiving our food packages, please feel free to get in touch via email at [chaginabox@gmail.com](mailto:chaginabox@gmail.com) or learn more at [www.chaginabox.org](http://www.chaginabox.org)



Check us out at [www.chaginabox.org](http://www.chaginabox.org) or [@chaginabox](https://www.instagram.com/chaginabox) on Instagram



## WEEKLY DVAR TORAH - PARSHAT VAYIKRAH

NOAH EPSTEIN, Secondary JS Teacher & Jewish Life Educator

This week we begin the 3rd book of the Torah, filled with laws relating to sacrifices and other rituals within the Mishkan. Therefore, as Rabbi Sacks points out, the English name for the book is quite appropriate. The name Leviticus refers to the members of the tribe of Levi, who were charged with almost all of the responsibilities outlined in this section of the Torah. In contrast, the Hebrew name for the book, ויקרא, appears to be entirely coincidental and anticlimactic, a reference to the opening word of the book which may be translated as 'and He called'.

However, a closer inspection of the text will reveal that this word is written in a peculiar manner within every Torah scroll. As shown in the image below, the aleph at the end of the word is significantly smaller than the surrounding letters, almost as if it has been reluctantly included in the next.



The Baal Haturim, a 13th-14th century rabbinic authority from Germany, describes a fascinating dialogue between Hashem and Moshe which sheds light on this textual anomaly. Hashem wanted the text to use the word ויקרא, an expression of the affection with which Hashem calls to Moshe (as explained by Rashi).

However, Moshe was opposed to this word choice, advocating instead for the removal of the aleph so the word would become ויקר, a word which denotes happening upon a person rather than actively seeking them out. They reached a compromise, in which the aleph would be written in a smaller size, thus allowing both words to be read into the text.

These two variations of the text reflect opposing experiences that we may have in relation to Hashem. There are times in which His presence in our lives feels entirely obvious,

***"There are times in which [Hashem's] presence in our lives feels entirely obvious...[and] there are times.. where things seem to be more incidental and irrelevant"***

where we feel a divine call to speak, act and live in an elevated manner. Yet there are times where G-d's presence in our world feels less obvious, where things seem to be more incidental and irrelevant. One of the greatest examples of this is the total absence of Hashem's name from the text of Megillat Esther, which we recently read on Purim. Once G-d is removed from the narrative, it can easily be read as a series of coincidences which lead to the Jewish people's lucky survival.

Our task is to recognise Hashem's presence in our lives, both in times where it is clearer and those where it is less so. The daily framework of Halacha provides us with an opportunity to develop a constant awareness of G-d's involvement in the world. This humbling yet powerful realisation can and should instil within us a sense of gratitude, hopefulness and yearning for a better world.

Shabbat shalom!





## JEWISH IDENTITY

**RABBI DANNY GOLD, Acting Head of Jewish Studies**

How is your Jewish identity formed and forged? Is it engendered or nurtured? How does our own Jewish journey connect with our collective journey as a People? Did you inherit your identity? Are we able to transmit it to future generations? Is Jewish identity only internalised, or does it have an external expression? Is it cognitive and rational or does it lie outside the realm of reason?

These are some questions I had and was inspired to think about after reading a deeply reflective piece written by Ethan Shnaider in Year 11 as part of his VCE English studies.

**Our identity is never static, who we are is constantly evolving.**

*When I think back to the beginning of 2022, I think of change. I thought moving schools wouldn't affect me in the way that it has. Even just the small lifestyle changes such as waking up earlier for school and finishing an hour later was something that I wasn't used to. Putting all of that aside, the way that I viewed and felt about my Jewish identity was changed forever.*

*The first high school I went to before moving to Yavneh was Brighton Secondary College. It was a non-religious public school that had 200 students per year level and was a place where students often had a problem when others wore religious symbols such as kippahs. Although I was never very religious and only wore a kippah when I went to shule for certain holidays, I still believed that my Jewish identity was something that was important to me. Unfortunately, my old school was known for antisemitism and that was the first thing that people thought of when they heard the name "Brighton Secondary College". That was not the reason that I moved to Yavneh, but it did play a role in considering what school I was going to be moving to. The reason I moved was because the education was poor and the teachers looked like they didn't want to be there.*

*My first day of Yavneh felt like a good change in my life. All of the boys in the year level were all friends and it felt as if everyone knew each other. This was an unfamiliar feeling, as before I barely knew half of the students in my class. Although I only met a few of the boys on my orientation day the year before I moved, I felt as if I had been welcomed with open arms. I had the feeling that I had known some of these people my whole life. I still speak to my friends from Brighton but my friendship with some of the boys at Yavneh already felt closer than any of my friendships at Brighton, most likely because of one factor, our Jewish identity.*

*Ever since my first Tefillah on my first day of Year 10 at Yavneh the connection with my religion and Jewish identity has changed. Compared to my old school where my religion was a small part of my life and wasn't something that I thought about very often, at Yavneh the Jewish values were instilled in me and my Jewish identity was something that I was proud of. Even just having to wear a kippah to school every day, something*

*that was a big change for me, gave me the feeling every morning of pride that my religion isn't something that should be hidden but should be embraced and cherished. Although I never did and still don't understand Hebrew, I still have a feeling of connection just being present while those powerful words are spoken.*

*Moving schools was something that I never thought would change me in the way that it has. Not just because of the close friendships that I have made or the education, but the way that I view and feel about my religion and Jewish identity. I have learned how important my Jewish identity is and that your identity is never static and can always change of be altered by your setting and the people who you surround yourself with.*

Before Hashem took the Jewish People out of Mitzrayim, they were bare of any mitzvot and lacking the requisite merit to be redeemed. To boost their 'merit-metre', Hashem gave them two special mitzvot: the commandment to perform a Brit Mila (circumcision) and to offer the Korban Pesach (Pascal Lamb). The blood from each of the two mitzvot were mixed and placed on the doorpost, serving as a protection for the Jewish People as Hashem killed all the firstborn of Mitzrayim in the finale of the Ten Plagues.

These two mitzvot are unique in that they are the only positive mitzvot that carry consequences for not fulfilling them (that of "karet" - being cut off spiritually). Why are these two mitzvot singled out as being the prerequisite to leaving Mitzrayim and carrying consequences for their lack of fulfillment?

The Brit Mila represents the personal commitment to serving Hashem, as was modelled after Avraham, who was the first person to perform this mitzvah. He discovered Hashem amidst a polytheistic culture and sought to bring the world to the recognition of the true God. The Brit Mila made him personally different and distinct and signified his partnership with Hashem. The Korban Pesach was brought at the inception of our forging as a nation and was shared experience. The communal sacrifice of the Egyptian foreign god represented the commitment to core Torah principles and united the people in their service of Hashem. Perhaps the 'mixing of the bloods' symbioses how each Jew needs to navigate their individual connection to Hashem, along with their connection to the chain of Jewish history and the entity of the Jewish nation. A person who negates one of these aspects is essentially cutting themselves off from the fabric of the Jewish People which could explain why these two positive mitzvot are the only ones that carry the consequence of 'karet' and why it was specifically these two mitzvot that paved the way for the Jewish People to be redeemed from Mitzrayim.

Ethan seems to have come from his own Mitzrayim, a place of constraints and limitations, and experienced a revival of his Jewish identity at Yavneh. The humble kippa, which may have once sought him out for ridicule, now serves as a symbol of personal pride and connection with community. The words of Hebrew resonating in his soul and starting each day with Tefilla sets the tone that we are here for a higher purpose and that the Jewish day and year is filled with so much meaning. We should be blessed that all our students take the time to reflect on the treasure they carry within and how life at Yavneh is able to nurture their Jewish identity.



GLEN EIRA  
CITY COUNCIL

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## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PLAYING AN IMPORTANT COMMUNITY ROLE, SUPPORTING THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN WITHIN GLEN EIRA?

Glen Eira City Council is looking for friendly, reliable and community-minded people to fill the roles of School Crossing Supervisors.

Our School Crossing Supervisors enjoy flexible paid roles that fit in with their lifestyles, while making a positive and visible impact in Glen Eira — engaging and connecting with young people and parents.



### If you:

- have a current driver's licence;
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- are able to use a computer/email and a mobile phone;
- are willing to travel within Glen Eira and are available in mornings and afternoons; and
- are willing to undertake a Police Check and Working with Children Check

then you may enjoy the role of a School Crossing Supervisor.

All School Crossing Supervisors receive training and support by Glen Eira City Council to ensure they are confident in performing their role, ensuring the safety of Glen Eira's young people.



If you are interested in this important role, applications may be made via [gleneira.vic.gov.au/about-council/careers](http://gleneira.vic.gov.au/about-council/careers)

or for further information, please call (03) 9524 3419



# Ladies Shiur



## Some Inspiration for Pesach with Rebbetzin Via Kimche

Monday, 27 March

8:30 pm

Beit Yitzchak

(Kehillat Ohr David)



בס"ד

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# AUTUMN Concert

THURSDAY MARCH 30

OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATRE (weather permitting)

or

LAMM HALL  
7:00PM to 8:30PM

FEATURING ALL LYC BANDS, ENSEMBLES & CHOIRS