



קשר KESHER

פרשת צו

Friday 27 March 2026
ח' ניסן תשפ"ו

The story of Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya

Shula Lazar, Principal

This past Shabbat, as I sat with my children reading our way through the long Shabbat afternoon, I did what I usually do prior to an upcoming Chag and decided to read some Pesach material. I picked up a Rav Riskin Haggadah, published in 1983, which I think I bought in a second-hand bookstore in Israel some time ago.

I was reading through the Haggadah, both the text and the explanations (I've learnt not to skip over the familiar parts, as you never quite know what you've missed the previous ninety times you've read them). And this year, one particular paragraph stood out to me, one that, if I'm honest, has never previously been a highlight.

אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה, הרי אני כבן שבעים שנה, ולא זכיתי שתאמר ויצאת מצרים בלילות, עד שדרשה בן זומא, שנאמר למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך. ימי חייך, היםים. כל ימי חייך, הלילות. ויחכמים אומרים, ימי חייך, העולם הזה. כל ימי חייך, להביא לימות המשיח.

The story of Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya, who is "like a seventy-year-old man", was fascinating when I was in primary school. The idea of someone who overnight appeared older, wiser, and more respected made for a great midrash to share at the Seder table. (For me, the greying has been more of a slow burn, and thankfully still mostly hidden under my baseball cap.) But after that, the paragraph always felt a little... rambling. A discussion about remembering Yetziyat Mitzrayim during the day, at night, and then somehow ending with Mashiach. Until this year.

What we read in the Haggadah is actually drawn from the Mishnah (Brachot 1:5), which begins with the simple halachic statement: מְזַכְרִין יְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם בְּלֵילוֹת – we mention the Exodus from Egypt at night. And Rav Riskin's explanation makes the statement say 'we mention the Exodus from Egypt ESPECIALLY at night'.

Rav Riskin explains that this is not merely a technical discussion about Kriyat Shema. It is something far deeper.

"These disputants argued over the obligation to mention the Exodus in the evening Shema. Figuratively, their disagreement goes much deeper. Night is generally a symbol of darkness and servitude. Day is a symbol of freedom and redemption... Ben Zoma felt that one should always remember the going out of Egypt – even at night – for we may never cease hoping for redemption.

פרשת צו

Shabbat Times 

Light candles 7:03pm

Shabbat ends 7:59pm



The story of Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya contd...

Shula Lazar, Principal

In our darkest exile, during the most violent persecution, even during the long night of the Roman tyranny, we can never lose faith in G-d as our redeemer."

The past two and a half years have given us a kind of whiplash between night and day, between servitude and redemption. At times, we have witnessed extraordinary strength and moments that feel almost Biblical. And at the very same time, we have been confronted with sirens, rockets, loss and devastation for the people of Israel. We have been living "כָּל יְמֵי חַיֵּיךָ" and "כָּל יְמֵי הַלִּילוֹת" all at once. And Ben Zoma reminds us that through all of this, we must hold onto faith. Even at night we must remember the Exodus. Hashem took us out of Mitzrayim, and He will take us out of this.

It is also worth noticing what we are commanded to remember. Not the slavery, but the Exodus. Not the suffering, but the redemption. Even in the darkness, we train ourselves to look towards the light. As we sit around our Seder tables this year, we will of course be thinking of those who are not able to do so in the same way. The soldiers on the front lines, the injured in hospitals and rehabilitation, the families in places like Lod and Arad still recovering from devastating attacks. We daven for their refuah sheleimah and for their safety.

And we will also be thinking of members of our own Yavneh family, separated from loved ones who are in Israel, waiting for the time when they can once again be together.

The paragraph in the Haggadah concludes:

"כָּל יְמֵי חַיֵּיךָ לְהֵבִיא לִיְמֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ"

Rav Riskin goes on to explain that

"the Sages disagreed. They believed that hope and faith are not sufficient. It is not enough simply to recite the Shema and remind ourselves of the Exodus from Egypt. To bring about the final redemption and the exodus from galut requires more than prayer and study – it requires activism. This is the meaning of LeHAVI LIMOT HaMoshiach."

While Ben Zoma teaches us the importance of faith, the Chachamim push us one step further. Faith alone is not enough. Remembering is not enough. To bring about redemption requires action.

Pesach is not only a story we tell, it is a call to what we do.

In recent weeks, we have farewelled families from our community who are taking that step, making Aliyah and building their lives in Israel. That is truly the ultimate form of "לְהֵבִיא לִיְמֹת הַמְּשִׁיחַ." We wish the Harari and Braver families much hatzlacha!

May this Pesach bring with it not only renewed faith, but renewed purpose. And may we merit, במהרה בימינו, to celebrate together in ירושלים הבנויה.

And in the meantime, may your Seder tables be filled with the voices of your children, their learning, their questions, and their enthusiasm, delighting you with their knowledge and carrying our story forward to the next generation.

Chag Sameach,
Morah Shula

Tzav DT: The Eternal Command

Raphael Eppel, Jewish Life Educator

This week's Parsha, Tzav, opens with the command to the Kohanim regarding the offering of the Korban Olah. Unlike many other mitzvot, which are introduced with softer expressions such as "ואמרת", say, or "דבר", speak, here the Torah uses the more forceful language of "צו", command.

Rashi explains that this stronger term signals a need for extra diligence with its handling, both immediately and for future generations. But why does the Olah, the elevation offering, require this heightened emphasis?

When we compare the Olah to other korbanot, such as the Shlamim, a key difference emerges. The Kohanim would receive portions of the שלמים to eat, whereas the Olah was entirely consumed on the Mizbeach, leaving nothing for them. The Siftei Chachamim notes that the Torah, given to human beings and not angels, recognizes the natural inclination of the Kohanim prefer offerings from which they benefit. As such, the Torah specifically uses the language of Tzav to urge the Kohanim to rise above personal interest and serve Hashem with complete integrity.

Stepping back, the very name of the Parsha, Tzav, reflects a broader idea. The Rambam teaches that a mitzvah is defined only through the language of Tzivui, command. In outlining this, the Rambam uses the Passuk "וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם" – "And you should serve Hashem your G-d" as the source for our obligatory relationship with Hashem. At its core, a mitzvah is not merely a recommendation or a suggestion, but a binding obligation, a call to act in accordance with Hashem's will, regardless of personal convenience.

This idea becomes especially relevant as we approach Pesach. On the one hand, Pesach celebrates our freedom, our transition from slavery under Pharaoh to becoming a free nation. Yet, according to the Rambam, becoming Hashem's people still defined us as an 'Eved', a servant of Hashem. How can true freedom coexist with obligation and command?

The answer lies in understanding the nature of freedom itself. The experience of slavery did not merely end at redemption; it prepared us for a higher form of servitude. Unrestrained freedom can be empty and even dangerous, while structured freedom, a life guided by purpose and responsibility, is deeply meaningful. We did not move from servitude to independence, but from servitude to Pharaoh to servitude to Hashem. This new form of service is completely different from slavery. The Maharal explains that true freedom is not a lack of restraint, but rather the potential to fulfill our ultimate purpose as a Jew to attach to Hashem through His Mitzvot. Rabbi Sacks develops the idea that the point of Yetziat Mitzrayim wasn't just to free us FROM Egypt, but to provide us with the liberty TO serve Hashem.

It is precisely this structure that defines us. Our commitment to mitzvot reflects a belief that action shapes identity, that through disciplined practice, we cultivate deeper values and a stronger connection to Hashem. Jewish freedom centres around duty, purpose and binding oneself to a higher purpose rather than just selfish autonomy.

Through the lens of the Kohanim dutifully offering the Olah, Tzav reminds us that true greatness lies not in doing what is easy or self-serving, but in answering the call of obligation with consistency and sincerity.

Wishing everyone a Shabbat Shalom and a Chag Kasher VeSameach.

A busy start to the month of Nissan

Sara Amzalak, Head of Jewish Life and Learning

Last week, students started the month of Nissan with the JLife Year 6 Leaders giving out coins and collecting Tzedakah at the Nagle Gate while Pesach music was playing. Students from years one to four made frog and/or Matzah men puppets, while the Year 6 JLife Leaders commenced their collection of gold coins for their frog guessing competition, with all money raised going to Maot Chitim.

Year four, five and six, had an extra special guest speaker on Rosh Chodesh – eleven-year-old Ben Carasso. Ben, an advocate, spokesperson and influencer, representing Israeli children, spoke to the students about life as a child living in Israel since October 7th, and what he has done to help Israel and children since then. He also shared his passion for gymnastics with the children, finishing off his presentation with a handstand. Students were very keen to ask him questions during the question-and-answer session at the end, and Year 6 Students stayed on a little longer and stood around the piano singing Am Yisrael Chai while Ben played the piano. It was a very educational and engaging experience for all.

Wishing everyone a Chag Pesach Sameach



Year 1 Explorers!

Megan McKenzie, *Primary General Studies Teacher*

It has been a busy and exciting term for Year 1 as we wrapped up our Science Unit of Inquiry on Living and Non-Living Things.

The children have become wonderful observers, investigating what living things, like plants and animals, need to grow and survive compared to non-living objects. We put our knowledge into action by planting our own seeds, carefully providing the water and light they needed to thrive while we tracked their growth in class.

To celebrate the end of our unit, we had a fantastic incursion from Wild Action Zoo! The students met a variety of reptiles and Australian native animals, learning about their unique features and habitats. It was a highlight for everyone to get up close and even have the chance to touch and hold some of our special animals.

It has been a brilliant term of discovery and hands-on learning for our Year 1 students!



Music In Prep

Sarah Finch, *Music And Primary Jewish Studies Teacher*

Prep students have been enthusiastically exploring the world of music this term through movement, listening, and hands-on experiences. Our focus has been on developing music appreciation, as the children learn to recognise and respond to beat and rhythm in different ways.

The students have been enjoying dancing to music, using colourful scarves to move creatively while feeling the beat. Through these activities they are beginning to understand how music can guide the way our bodies move.

We have also been experimenting with a variety of percussion instruments, practising how to keep a steady beat and follow rhythmic patterns together as a class. These experiences help the children develop listening skills, coordination, and confidence in expressing themselves through music.

In addition, the children have been exploring ways to move their bodies to different music. This encourages creativity and helps them notice how movement can change depending on the sound, speed, and mood of the music.

It has been wonderful to see the joy and enthusiasm the students bring to these activities as they discover new ways to listen, move, and make music together.



Year 1 Pesach Learning

Yossi Smoller, *Primary Jewish Studies*

Year 1 has been enthusiastically learning all about Pesach. We discussed the story of the Yitziat Mitzrayim, as well as the special minhagim and halachot that make the Chag so meaningful. The children have worked incredibly hard creating their beautiful Haggadahs, which they are excited to share with their families at the Seder. One of our favourite activities was a fun game where we hid ten pieces of chametz around the classroom and searched for them, just like in bedikat chametz.



From Mitzrayim to Melbourne: Pesach's Eternal Message

Michelle Sharp, *Primary Jewish Studies*

Over the past several weeks, the Year 3 and 4 students have been immersed in meaningful Pesach preparation. We have been reviewing the story of Yetziat Mitzrayim and exploring the Haggadah, learning how each part of the Seder tells a piece of our national story. We have been reviewing the Mah Nishtanah and the order of the seder, in addition to singing the well-known repertoire of seder songs as well as learning new ones. Excitement is in the air, and it is palpable!

From learning about how we prepare our homes for Pesach, to learning what exactly chametz consists of and how we search for it, burn it and sell it, to learning about what items are included on the seder plate and the symbolism behind each of them, to learning about why we have 3 matzot and 4 cups of wine, to learning about why we dip twice, why we recline at certain points in the seder and what we need to do at each step of the seder, the students are now ready to take active roles as confident participants in their seders this year!

The students have thoroughly enjoyed sharing their own family customs, including how they perform the search for the chametz and who helps hide and find the hidden pieces of chametz, as well as the best hiding places! They also loved sharing their favourite afikoman hiding places and beamed with pride that they were good detectives!

We also emphasised the mitzvah of Ma'ot Chittim, encouraging students to contribute to families in need so that everyone can celebrate Pesach with dignity. This act of chesed reinforces the value that true freedom is not only about our own liberation but also about ensuring the wellbeing of others.

Pesach is the most fundamental of the Jewish holidays, a time for family connection and Jewish tradition where we have the opportunity to impart essential Jewish values to the next generation. Reciting the Haggadah at the seder is based on the concept that parents must convey to their children the inspiring story of the great miracles of Yetziat Mitzrayim. It is uniquely the book of continuity, the book of children, the book that represents parents building bridges from the world of the past to the building blocks of the future. The Torah wants the seder to be a partnership of all the generations.



Students in Years 3 and 4 with their Pesach cards for Israeli Soldiers.

As we enter Pesach, may our homes be filled with joy, our Sedarim with meaningful conversation, and our hearts with gratitude for the blessings of freedom — both the ancient redemption from Mitzrayim and the modern gift of a strong, vibrant Jewish homeland.

This year let's not just tell the story—let's live it. Let's pass on to our children the courage of Moshe, the faith of our ancestors, and the hope that has carried our people through every generation. May we feel the blessing of being part of Am Yisrael—free, united, and forever moving forward.

May we see a speedy end to the war in the Middle East and may we be zoche to celebrate Pesach together next year in Jerusalem in the rebuilt Beit Hamikdash, with the arrival of the Moshiach, speedily in our days! Chag Kasher V'sameach!

Book Club Excursion with Mrs Vorchheimer

Shoshi Vorchheimer, *Director of Teaching and Learning*

On Tuesday 24 March, three of our Book Club members joined us for a fantastic excursion to The Avenue Bookstore, where we browsed, debated and delighted over shelves of new reads. We returned with an exciting haul, including the first two Lemony Snicket books (*The Bad Beginning* and *The Reptile Room*), Bill Bryson's *A Really Short History of Nearly Everything*, Philip Pullman's *Northern Lights*, Holly Jackson's *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*, Jules Verne's *Around the World in 80 Days*, and Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt. Morah Shula has asked us to spruik these wonderful titles at assembly next term, so stay tuned for our recommendations. And if anyone has a copy of the first two Harry Potter books they're willing to pass on, the Resource Centre would be very happy to give them a home.



Jewelry holder

My jewelry holder is designed to be both practical and stylish, helping to keep accessories organized and easy to access. It includes hooks for hanging necklaces to prevent tangling, as well as a small tray for storing rings, earrings, and other small items. The design is simple and modern, with clean lines and a neutral color palette so it can fit well in a variety of spaces. Overall, the holder combines functionality with an elegant appearance, showing how everyday objects can be both useful and visually appealing.



Mila A



Comfy light-chair

This innovative lamp seat is designed for optimal comfort while still being aesthetic. It lights up the room beautifully while being the most comfortable seat you've ever sat on. Its dual use optimizes your space and prioritizes your need for a comfortable seat and great lighting.

Liora B

Innovative Creations by Year 9 Object Design Students

Fabi Sierra, *Secondary Teacher*

The Year 9 Object Design students have created innovative everyday items, including a lamp, an earring stand, and a serum-bottle brush. They have demonstrated exceptional creativity, skilful marker rendering, and strong conceptual thinking as they prepare to present their work.



Abbey I

Preparation for Text & Traditions

Chaim Cowen,

Deputy Principal, Head of Jewish Studies

In preparing our students who are currently studying VCE Texts and Traditions, Rabbi Cowen attended the Texts and Traditions conference hosted by ISV where he met with Muslim and Christian teachers and academics as well as VCAA representatives, networking, sharing the Jewish perspective on leadership and participating in an open Q&A.



Slezak Scholarship.

We are delighted to announce the successful candidates who undertook this year's Slezak Scholarship.

Year 6 Gavriel H

Year 8 Adir M

Year 10 Raph E

Scholarship tests are designed to identify and distinguish between students of high academic ability and clearly identify a student who can demonstrate higher-order critical thinking skills.

Students are assessed in:

Abstract Reasoning and Problem Solving – this test assesses the ability to reason with and analyse information using verbal, mathematical, figural and spatial concepts.

Mathematics Achievement and Reasoning – for primary and junior secondary students these tests assess curriculum-related mathematics tasks and mathematical reasoning tasks. Middle and senior secondary students are assessed on mathematics reasoning tasks. These are different to curriculum-based mathematics and focus on problem-solving skills.

Reading Comprehension – this test assesses the ability to remember, locate, analyse, evaluate, derive and combine text propositions with fiction and non-fiction texts of increasing complexity.

Written Expression – this test assesses students' facility with written language. A stimulus is provided for students to produce a piece of writing in a particular genre (e.g. narrative or argument) depending on the requirements of the School.

Jewish Studies and Ivrit – Yavneh are grounded not only in strong general studies, but also in meaningful, high level Jewish learning. As such, scholarship candidates are also tested in Jewish Studies and Ivrit. The Jewish Studies component includes Yeda Klali, together with Chumash and Mefarshim, while Ivrit assessment focuses on both comprehension and written expression.



**VCE
Subject Selection
Info Evening**
Wednesday 15 April
7:30 – 9:00 pm
28 Nissan 5786

Lamm Hall
Elsternwick campus
All Students & Parents in Year 10 (Year 11s are welcome to attend)



We' are excited to announce the return of The Yavneh Academy!
Join us every Friday morning from 8:20 – 9:00am in the VCE Study Centre at our Elsternwick Campus for inspiring LafLaf-style learning sessions.
Stay connected and never miss an update, scan the QR code here to join our WhatsApp group for all upcoming session details!



SCAN HERE



What a week in JLife!

Ilan Davis, Jewish Life Educator

As we lead up to Pesach our secondary students enjoyed another jam packed week in J-life with the year 10 Manhigut program starting, preparing the Pesach packs, and of course the continuation of the Bar/Bat-Me programs it was action packed. This week we were also very excited to run our Year 7 Inter-Generational Learning Evening, where students had the opportunity to learn with their parents under the guidance of Rabbi Epstein, ahead of Pesach. Term 1 has been an absolute blast, we can't wait to be back with you all next term!

Chag Sameach!



YOM HA'ATZMAUT PARTY 2026

78

TUESDAY
APRIL 21ST

8-9:30 PM

SIGN UP VIA
COMPASS

COSTUME'S

YEAR 7. CHARGEIDIM
 YEAR 8. ARSIM
 YEAR 9. KIBBUTZNIKIM
 YEAR 10. DATI LEUMI
 YEAR 11. TZFAT LOCALS
 YEAR 12. TLV FASHION
 ICONS/ BEACH ATTIRE

יום העצמאות

יום העצמאות 78





Upcoming Dates 2026

MARCH:

Friday 27:
Last Day Term 1

APRIL:

Wednesday 1: Erev Pesach

Tuesday 2: Pesach Day one

Wednesday 3: Pesach Day 2

Tuesday 14: First Day Term 2
Yom Hashoah

Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Maya L on her Bat Mitzva and Benjamin G on his Barmitzva

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME

Yavneh Tuckshop is seeking helpers.

Great remuneration!
Healthy food,
big smiles,
happy faces and
lots of thanks from
the staff and kids

.....
Interested in joining us?
.....

Please Contact
Glenda:

0412 532 244

A unique event of food, history and remembrance

RECIPES that SURVIVED the SHOAH

SUNDAY 19TH APRIL
7:15 FOR 7:30PM START

Presented by Rebbetzin Ilana Epstein
Survivor recipes reborn - taste biscuits & dishes that kept hope alive

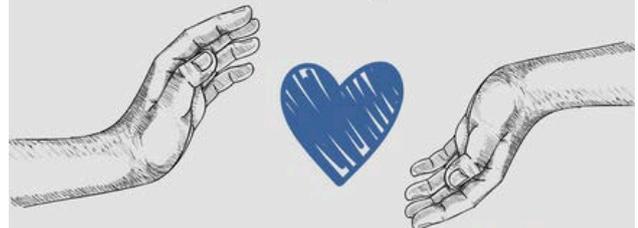
Live cooking demonstrations
Behind the recipes-the stories of hope and resilience
A time to remember & reflect

Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/foodandtheshoah>

Funds raised from the evening will help send the girls of Emunah's Achuzat Sarah Children's Home to the March of the Living - an experience that would otherwise be beyond their reach.



EMUNAH AUSTRALIA *needs you*



Children in Emunah's homes are currently in **bomb shelters** due to **ongoing sirens**.

We are raising urgent funds to provide **basic supplies and comfort for these children**.

PLEASE CONSIDER SUPPORTING

[HTTPS://EMERGENCY-CAMPAIGN-MARCH-2026.RAISELYSITE.COM/](https://EMERGENCY-CAMPAIGN-MARCH-2026.RAISELYSITE.COM/)

DONATE NOW!