



קשר KESHER

פרשת כי-תצא

Friday 21 August 2026
ח' אלול תשפ"ו

The Songs That Refuse to Die

David Fisher, Head of Administration

I want to talk about the dearth of singing *Zemiroth* at the Shabbat table.

I find, when I go out for meals these days, that fewer people sing *Zemiroth* anymore. The table talk continues, the food is passed around, but the singing has quietly disappeared from so many homes. I find this very sad.

Let me explain why it means so much to me, through a story. Many years ago, I attended the simcha of a cousin of mine in America, also named David Fisher — the oldest child of my father's oldest brother, Shimshon a"h. We had never met before that day. We had certainly never sat at a Shabbat table together. Our families had been separated by oceans and by decades, and by a history neither of us had chosen. My father was the youngest of eleven children. Of those eleven, only five survived the Shoah. Out of that loss, my father rebuilt a home, and every week at our own Shabbat table he taught us a set of tunes for the *Zemiroth* — tunes I have never heard sung anywhere else. They were, I always assumed, unique to our family, and I have wondered whether they came originally from Bratislava, from the world my father's family had come from before it was destroyed.

Some of the tunes never quite sat comfortably with the words; the melody would stretch or squeeze to fit a phrase, and as a child I never understood why. It just seemed to be the way our family sang.

Then, at that simcha in America, I sat down at my cousin's Shabbat table for the very first time. And the tunes he sang — the same rare, unmistakable, unique tunes — were exactly the ones my father had taught me.

What was extraordinary was, first, that the tunes had survived at all — carried by two brothers who had lived through the destruction of their family, into two households on opposite sides of the world that had never once sat together to sing them. And second, that at his table, the tunes suddenly made sense.

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Shabbat Times



Light candles 5:31pm

Shabbat ends 6:30pm

Goldschlager Family School of Jewish Studies
Leopold and Isabella Abrahamovits
Yavneh Primary School
A.S. Leibler Secondary School
P +61 3 9528 4911

Abeles Liberman Pre-School incorporating
The Gillian and Colin Mandel Family
Yavneh Creche
81 Balaclava Road, Caulfield VIC 3161
P +613 8317 2510



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The Songs That Refuse to Die, continued...

My cousin's father, Shimshon had been the oldest child of my grandparents, and he had learned the tunes properly, with the words fitting exactly as they should. My father, the youngest of eleven, had picked them up further down the line, and somewhere along the way a few of the words had shifted just slightly out of place — enough that, as a child, I always sensed something didn't quite sit right, without ever knowing why. Sitting at my cousin's table, decades later and a continent away, I finally heard the tunes as they were meant to be sung.

That is what a Zemer is, I think. It is not decoration on a Shabbat meal. It is a thread, sometimes an imperfect, well-travelled thread, that is handed from a parent to a child, and that somehow survives fire and separation and silence, waiting to be picked up again the moment two people who share it happen to sit at the same table.

More than that, I think Zemirot are one of the great, quiet opportunities we have for passing down family tradition. Every family that sings has its own tunes, its own small variations, its own inheritance — something that belongs to nobody else in the world in quite the same way. Singing together at the table is a chance for the generations to hand something on to one another, something that might be entirely unique to their own family, and that a grandchild might one day recognise, unprompted, at a table on the other side of the world.

So when I see a Shabbat table today where the food is wonderful and the conversation is warm, but where nobody opens their mouth to sing — I feel that something is quietly being lost. Not just a nice custom, but a thread like the one that connected me, without warning, to a cousin I had never met.

I hope we can bring the singing back.

Shabbat Shalom
David

Yavneh: Leading and Learning

Chaim Cowan, *Deputy Principal, Head of Jewish Studies*

This week, a number of Yavneh staff had the opportunity to participate in the ZFA Educators' Conference, joining Jewish educators from across Australia for two days of learning, discussion and professional growth.

It was particularly wonderful to see Yavneh so strongly represented not only as participants, but as leaders and presenters. Rabbi Zach Gomo presented two sessions, "Antisemitism or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Rule the World" and "What Can Ballistic Missile Defence Teach Us About Inclusive Education?" Rabbi Sammy Brygel presented "Lessons for My Jewish Studies Classroom from the Royal Australian Navy", Rabbi Daniel Epstein presented "'Add to Playlist': Tefillah, Emunah and Tzionut", and I had the opportunity to present "Laflaf: Making Torah Learning Personal."

The conference was a valuable opportunity for our staff to learn from talented educators working in a range of schools and organisations, to exchange ideas and to reflect on our own practice. At the same time, it was a source of pride to see the innovative and thoughtful pedagogy taking place at Yavneh being shared more broadly, enabling educators from other schools to benefit from the work being developed in our classrooms.

We returned with new ideas and inspiration, as well as a renewed appreciation for the excellent Jewish education taking place within our own school.



Secondary Resource Centre

Tanya Shaltiel, Executive Director

We were delighted to officially open the Secondary Resource Centre, generously donated by Shoshy and Zalman Blachman and dedicated in loving memory of Shoshy's father, Moshe Goodman z"l.

This beautiful space is a calm, purposeful hub for our Years 7-10 students filled with books chosen with student input, flexible spaces for both individual and collaborative learning, and a central location that reinforces a culture of engaged and aspirational learning.

Thank you, Shoshy and Zalman, for your gift, which will have a lasting and meaningful impact and shape our students' educational journeys for years to come.





Australian Friends of
Shaare Zedek Inc.

WHEN THE NEED NEVER STOPS, *Neither Can We*





GIVING WEEK
23rd – 30th
AUGUST 2026



Every gift
saves lives.

LAUNCH DAY
SUNDAY 23RD AUGUST 2026
Join us to kick off Giving Week
by making calls together and
helping save lives.



TIME: 10:30AM – 5:30PM



BE PART OF THE TEAM
Your calls make a real impact.



CALLING HUB
At the home of the
Gecelter family



For more information
email:
marketing@shaarezedeek.org.au



or call
0490 477 949

www.shaarezedeekgivingday.com.au

READY TO HELP?
Scan the QR code
to register and
join the Launch Day
Calling Hub.



Together,
WE SAVE LIVES.





Parashat Ki Teitze: Taking the high ground

Rabbi Bochi Broh

A man was walking along a road when he slipped and fell into a deep, muddy pit. Seeing a bystander walking past, he cried out for help.

The passer-by eagerly jumped down into the pit to rescue him. But the moment his feet hit the mud, he too became trapped, slipping alongside the first man.

A wise elder approached the edge, looked down, and lowered a sturdy rope from the rim above. Calling down, he said: "To pull someone out of the mud, you cannot jump into the mud with them. You must plant your feet firmly on solid ground above."

In this week's Sedrah, Parshat Ki Teitzei, the Torah opens with the posuk: "When you go out to war al oyvecha" (Devarim 21:10). While commonly translated as "against your enemy," the literal Hebrew reads "above your enemy."

Our Sages and Chassidic Masters explain that this subtle nuance holds a powerful insight for everyday life. Every conflict or challenge we encounter—whether navigating playground politics, a stressful moment at home, or an argument with a friend—takes place on one of two levels:

- The Valley: The knee-jerk reaction driven by impulse, pride, or anger. When we get sucked into a tit-for-tat argument, we descend into the mud where even a "win" leaves everyone dirty.
- The High Ground: The deeper response, guided by dignity, empathy, and a higher purpose.

At Yavneh, we constantly encourage our students to develop strong middot and to lead with menschlichkeit. As a Jewish Studies Year 12 instructor, I have the great responsibility of preparing them for the next chapter of their lives. They are an incredible group, and I have complete faith that wherever they find themselves, be it on a gap year, at university, or within new social circles, they will rise above and always stay out of the mud.

May we all be blessed with the strength to stay firmly grounded in our Torah values, so that the petty struggles below quickly lose their power.

Wishing the entire Yavneh community a meaningful week and a peaceful Shabbat!

Rabbi Bochi Broh

בס"ד

ELUL PARENT-CHILD LEARNING EVENING

**TUESDAY 25TH OF AUGUST
6PM**

YEAR 7-12

HAMERKAZ

SIGN UP VIA COMPASS BY 17/8

SANDWICH BAR DINNER PROVIDED

בס"ד

The Yavneh Academy
תולייבנה וחכמיה

Fortnightly Laflaf Sessions

A parsha focus that is
personal and meaningful

Join us Friday mornings!

Fridays, fortnightly
Starting 14 Aug
Through to end of Term 3 (18 Sept)

8:20-9:00am

VCE Study Centre
Yavneh Elsternwick Campus

Coffee & cake provided

**Join the Yavneh Academy
WhatsApp group**

We'll run a weekly poll there.
Sessions run only if a minimum
of 5 people sign up.

YEAR 6 – Vonnies

Claudia Benau, Primary General Studies Teacher

For the last five weeks, Year 6 have been busy planning and preparing for our Vonnies – Coopersmith Public speaking competition. Using our Talk for Writing scaffolding, structure and planning processes students were able to create, draft and present their work. Students could not use devices to 'research' or 'elaborate on ideas' until the very first draft had been completed. The pride they had knowing that they had with little support created a speech on a topic that resonated with them. Some students were out of their comfort zone presenting whilst it gave others a time to shine.

"I tried very hard, it was challenging and even though I didn't get in I am still very proud of myself" (Annie C. 6B).

"At first it was a struggle to create ideas but then it was good" (Shira G. & Ariella S. 6B).

"For us it was hard to come up with our idea without using devices, but we were proud to have made it through to the next round" (Shilo B. & Adam D. 6B)

'At first it was hard to come up with ideas but as the journey went on our ideas became stronger' (Asher L. & Isaac K. 6B).



The ZFA Jewish Educators' Conference: Passing on the Jewish Flame

Michelle Sharp, Primary Jewish Studies Teacher

This past Sunday and Monday I had the privilege of attending the ZFA Jewish Educators' Biennial Conference at Mount Scopus with my Jewish Studies and Hebrew colleagues from Yavneh and over 400 educators and lay leaders across Australia and around the world.

This year's conference featured almost 100 sessions led by more than 20 world-class international presenters, together with an exceptional group of Australian educators and practitioners. The speakers brought experience from Israel, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe and across Australia. They included leading educators, academics, rabbis, researchers, artists, school leaders and innovators from some of the Jewish world's most respected educational institutions.

The program offered an extraordinary breadth of content across Jewish identity and education, Israel and Zionism, Hebrew language, Jewish texts, early learning, Holocaust and antisemitism education, neurodiversity, student wellbeing, leadership, creativity, technology and practical classroom pedagogy.

We were also privileged to be addressed by the Israeli ambassador to Australia, His Excellency Dr. Hillel Newman, who emphasized the important role of Jewish educators, particularly in the climate the Australian Jewish community finds itself in today.



It was a wonderful opportunity for us educators to come together to learn from one another, be strengthened by one another, and recommit to our holy work of Jewish education.

Our sages taught, "The world endures only for the sake of the breath of school children" (Shabbat 119b). In every generation, the Jewish future has been guaranteed not by those with the loudest voices, but by those who have taught children the words of the Torah and story of the Jewish people.

May Hashem continue to bless us, the Jewish educators, with the ability to educate and inspire your children, in partnership with you as their parents and role models, to keep the Jewish flame alive and burn brightly within them. Am Yisrael Chai!

Hebrew Class Visits the Art Room

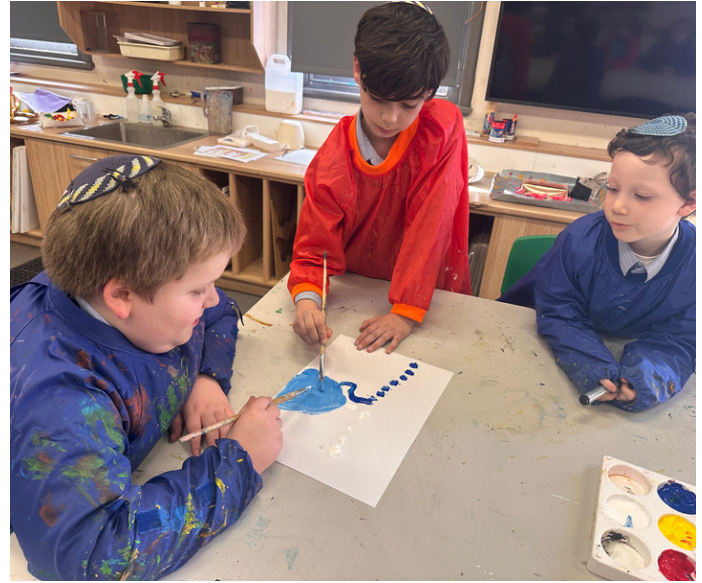
Shiri Peres, *Primary Hebrew Teacher*

As part of our Hebrew unit on colours, the Year 3 students took part in a hands-on activity in the Art Room. After learning about the primary colours, red, yellow and blue, students experimented with mixing colours and adding white to create new colours and shades.

Students recorded and labelled the colours they created in Hebrew, linking their language learning with a creative and practical experience. The activity sparked curiosity and encouraged students to think about how colours are formed and used around us.

This lesson is the starting point for our colours unit, in which students will continue to build their Hebrew vocabulary and learn to use colour words as adjectives to describe people, objects and the world around them. Through songs, games and other engaging activities, students will develop their understanding of colours in Hebrew while having fun along the way.

The students enjoyed the experience and were proud of the colourful results they created.



Just Do It – In the Month of Elul

Sara Amzalak, Head of Jewish Life and Learning (Primary)

Photos of students doing a variety of Mitzvot are fast coming in and our pin board display is filling up. Get your photos in to ensure you are in the running for one of two major prizes.

Year level buckets are filling up fast with raffle tickets. Be sure to bring a coin to give to Tzedakah to get your raffle ticket to be in the draw for some great prizes.

Please remember to do the Mitzvah of bringing in some honey which will be donated to CCare.

JNF is also running a Tzedakah box design competition for the month of Elul – see flyer for details.



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JUST DO IT.

1. Do a Mitzvah
2. Take a photo, wearing your wristband
3. Send it in to JLife
4. Win epic prizes

Email: s.amzalak@yavneh.vic.edu.au
Phone: 0451 237 481

C CARE

HELP US SWEETEN THE NEW YEAR FOR OUR COMMUNITY!

Please bring in a jar of Kosher Honey by
Tuesday, 1st September

Honey will be distributed to vulnerable members of our community through C Care in their 'Rosh Hashanah gift bags', ensuring that everyone in our community has the opportunity to celebrate the Jewish New Year.

C Care supports individuals and families experiencing food insecurity and social isolation through personalised, dignified food relief and meaningful connection programs.

VCE Business Management: Bringing Theory to Life

Prue McLeod, Head of Year 12 & VCE Co-ordinator

As VCE Business Management students prepare for the end-of-year VCAA examination, a key focus is learning to apply theory to real businesses and real-world situations. Knowing the theory is important, but being able to use it effectively in a case study is what can really lift examination marks.

This year, we have mixed things up by exploring Smith's Snackfood Company as our contemporary Australian manufacturing case study. Students have connected Smith's to a range of Business Management concepts, from operations and quality strategies to change and management decision-making. And, in true Business Management fashion, we even tested the theory with a taste test of kosher chips!

Students have also explored Coles' investment in technology, including the use of robotics and AI to pick and pack online grocery orders. Year 11 and 12 students had the opportunity to pass the Coles Truganina Customer Fulfillment Centre enroute to Zio Camp. These real-world examples help students see that the theory they learn in class is not just a collection of definitions.

Our approach to using engaging, contemporary case studies has also attracted attention beyond the classroom. Later this year, we have been invited to share our teaching practice at Comview, the VCTA conference at the University of Melbourne, providing practical ideas and resources for other Business Management teachers, as well as participating in a Q&A session to support and mentor colleagues.



We are also excited to introduce the inaugural Jake Israel Award, recognising the student who demonstrates the strongest application of theory to case study material in a SAC.

Jake undertook Business Management as a Year 11 student in 2025 and became somewhat legendary in our BM classes for his ability to apply theory to real businesses. For example, using on-the-job training at Qantas to demonstrate how management theory operates in practice.

The award is a fitting way to celebrate what we want our Business Management students to do: know the theory, understand the business, make the connection and enjoy their VCE studies along the way!



Upcoming Dates 2026

September:

Friday 11 – Erev Rosh Hashana (early dismissal) 1pm

Mazal Tov

To **Family Cylich** on the birth of a baby girl

To **Odella Leonenko** and family on her Batmitzvah

Condolences

to the **Paluch Family** on the passing of their grandfather **Avi Paluch z'l**





Rosh Hashana Boxes 5787/2026

What's in the box?



Emunah provides a range of life-changing programs that support Israel's most vulnerable children, women and families helping them break cycles of dysfunction and build stable, fulfilling lives.

JNF Education
Tikkun Olam
REPAIRING THE WORLD

Design a tzedakah box.

Show us your creativity
as we enter the month of Elul
and reflect on giving.

SUBMISSION DETAILS

Include:

- Full name
- Mobile

Submission deadline:
Submit your design by
9th October 2026

Submit to:
education@jnf.org.au





Prize

WINNING DESIGNS WILL
RECEIVE THEIR VERY OWN
SPECIALISED BLUE BOX
WITH THEIR DESIGN.

Bringing

KINDNESS, GENEROSITY AND
COMPASSION INTO THE WORLD



125

YEARS