



## From Fear to Awe

Recently I had the opportunity to study a deep and profound teaching from Rabbi Berezovsky, the last Slonimer Rebbe, who passed away around 18 years ago. In this teaching, the Slonimer focuses on a verse from the book of Deuteronomy: 'And now, Israel, what does the LORD require of you, but to fear the LORD, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him.' (Deuteronomy 10:12)

What is this fear that God demands from us? This is difficult for many of us. Many of us don't relate to a God that demands to be feared. If I want to praise the creative force in the universe that manifests all the diversity, all the beauty and the elegance and even, sadly, all the suffering, do I want to do so from a place of fear?

The Slonimer, though, states that a person cannot be in a state of *devekut*—'closeness to the Divine'—without it! For the Slonimer, fear of God comes first. A person's capacity to love is predicated on it.

In the *Zohar*, the foundational Jewish mystical text, it states that '[A] person who has fear of God does not lack anything.' Additionally, in the book of Proverbs, the author informs us that 'the fear of the Lord sustains life' (Proverbs 14:27).

Both *yirah* and *pahad* are Hebrew words that for 'fear'. But *pahad* describes a fear that invokes anxiety and terror, whereas *yirah*, in addition to fear can also mean awe and wonder. *Yirah* is used to describe a feeling of wonder and awe that penetrates the very core of our being when we are overwhelmed by the magnitude and mystery of existence.

We have all had these moments. They serve as what Emanuel Levinas, an important French Jewish philosopher, called an 'interruption'. These moments disrupt the quotidian regularity, reframing our world, if only for a moment.

I remember one such experience when travelling in India. I arrived at a little town in the foothills of the Himalayas, late at night. There were no street lamps or lights of any sort. I sat down, in a field, and looked up at the sky, full of stars. And then it happened to me: time stopped; there was no separation between me and all of Creation. I understood intuitively that I was made from the same material as the stars, the sky, the earth under my feet. It was a very deep knowing—of interconnectedness; a kind of breakthrough—an interruption. My concerns, worries, anxieties, all ceased in that moment that felt like eternity. Something very important was gained by that experience and it changed me. It led to the realisation that there is some inexplicable force beyond and within all phenomena-

*continued over...*

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*Thank you to the Nathan and Severin Harris families for sponsoring the Masorti kiddush. Thank you to the Vexler family for sponsoring the Progressive kiddush.*

## MAZAL TOV

**Stuart Nathan** on his **Bar Mitzvah**  
(*New Sanctuary*)

**Ben Harris & Alyssa Severin** on their **auf ruf**  
(*New Sanctuary*)

**Mia Vexler** on her **Bat Mitzvah** (*Heritage Sanctuary*)

**Wilson Haski-Njoroge** on his **Bar Mitzvah**  
(*mincha*)  
(*New Sanctuary*)

**CANDLE LIGHTING**  
Friday 5:12pm  
Saturday 5:49pm

**TORAH** (*page 1037*)  
Deuteronomy 7:12 - 11:25

**HAFTARAH** (*page 1055*)  
Isaiah 49:14 - 51:3

## SHABBAT SERVICES Erev Shabbat

- 6:15pm Masorti service (*Neuweg*)
- 6:15pm *Shabbat Live* (*New Sanctuary*)
- 6:15pm Renewal Shabbat (*Education Centre*)

## Shabbat Morning

- 9:00am - Masorti service (*New Sanctuary*)
- 10:00am - Progressive service (*Heritage Sanctuary*)

force that we are all a part of, all connected to.

This is the fear that Hassidic masters refer to as ‘*yirat adonai la chayim*’—fear that sustains life. This kind of fear is considered to be a very deep form of connection with the Divine. ‘*Yirat adonai la chaim*’—a sense of fear transformed into awe—is an awakening to the life-force that sustains all of Creation. My whole existence is dependent on this awesome life-force that is constantly creating, renewing, birthing, destroying. What’s more, I will never really comprehend it.

‘And now, Israel, what does the LORD require of you ... ?’ If we are to be Israel, if we are striving to be people who struggle to understand and embody divinity in our lives, we need to embody the *yirah* articulated by the Slonimer and transform fear into a sense of awe. A sense of awe and radical amazement awakens us to the pulsing miracle of life, a miracle that is constantly unfolding. Like the caterpillar that transforms into a glorious butterfly, fear/awe of God cocooned in our hearts can emerge as *ahavah* (deep love).

We are approaching the month of Elul. The first letters of four Hebrew words found in the Song of Songs—‘*ani l’dodi v’dodi li*’ (‘I am my beloved and my beloved is mine’) (Song of Songs 6:3)—spell the word ‘*Elul*’. We are required to locate *yirah* in our hearts and to transform it from anxiety and terror to an overwhelming sense of awe and gratitude. It is a time to deepen our relationships with one another, to remember who we really are and why we are here.

*Etz Hayim*, Deuteronomy 10:12: ‘And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God demand of you? Only this: to revere the LORD your God, to walk only in His paths, to love Him ... ?’ May we all be blessed this Elul to cultivate a sense of awe that shakes the very core of our being and inspires a sense of wonder and amazement as we approach these the Days of Awesomeness.

*Shabbat Shalom,*  
Cantor George Mordecai



Rabbi Jeffrey B. Kamins OAM  
Arno & Hella Seefeldt Rabbinic Chair



Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio



Rabbi Rafi Kaiserblueth



Rev. Sam Zwarenstein  
Director of Communal Engagement



Cantor George Mordecai



Rabbi Dr Orna Triguboff

**Dr Alan Finkel AO,  
Chief Scientist**

## **THE FUTURE OF ENERGY**

**Sunday 8th September  
5:00pm - 6:30pm**

Hear Australia’s Chief Scientist, Dr Alan Finkel, AO, on the future of energy.

Civilisation needs energy, whether it be the oil in the menorah in the ancient temple or the fuel that powers our modern cars and trucks. Unfortunately, the by-product is carbon dioxide, driving global warming. What if there were a clean alternative to oil, natural gas and coal?

**Book now: [tinyurl.com/finkel-energy](https://tinyurl.com/finkel-energy)**

# WHAT'S ON

## **Conversations about Israel - Monday 10:00am-11:30am**

Rabbi Rafi Kaiserblueth and guest speakers examine contemporary issues impacting the Jewish homeland. This Monday August 26, guest speaker, Sefi Shalam will look at the upcoming *Israeli elections - what are the likely outcomes and implications?*

## ***The Lost Princess* - weekly from Thursday July the 25th at 7.15pm**

Cantor George Mordecai will start a new series of classes. To kick off we will study *The Lost Princess*, a deeply insightful story from Rabbi Nahman, with music and meditation.

## ***Learn to Blow the Shofar* - 25 August 11:00am**

Join Barry Cantor, an experienced Shofar blower who has taught hundreds (including rabbis) the correct way to blow a shofar. Register now: [tinyurl.com/shofar-blow](http://tinyurl.com/shofar-blow)

## **Kabbalah Meditation Friday August 30 from 9:30am**

An opportunity to learn meditation in a Jewish context. With Rabbi Dr. Orna Triguboff, accompanied by musician Emanuel Lieberfreund.

## **Shabbat Tot - for 2-5 year olds - Friday September 6th from 4:30pm - 5:30pm**

A lovely way to introduce your children to Shabbat and to meet other families.

## **Family Friday - Friday September 6th from 5:30pm**

Come along for a light, child-friendly dinner and then stay for services.

A great opportunity to meet families in the congregation and celebrate Shabbat together.

## **Lunch 'n' Learn with Rabbi Dr Orna Triguboff - Sat 14 September after services**

Topic: *Teshuvah - Connecting with your Essence*

## **The Mystery of the Holy Language**

**Thursdays in September from 7:00pm**

**5, 12, 19, and 26**

In this series, Arie Ilisar will reveal hidden

meanings in the Bible. These meanings can be fun to find, or at times more difficult to unveil; they may even be spiritually moving.

These classes will reveal the fascinating link between numbers and the language of the Bible.

Please register: [tinyurl.com/holytext](http://tinyurl.com/holytext)

**Sydney Sacred Music Festival presents**

## **A NIGHT OF WORLD MUSIC**

**Saturday 7th September from 7:00pm**

### ***For one night only!***

Don't miss this special event for the first time in the Eastern Suburbs!

The 12-piece inter-faith Orchestra is made up of artists representing diverse cultural and faith backgrounds, creating 'new' Australian Sacred music featuring Cantor George Mordecai.

The Orchestra will take the audience on a transformative journey of cultural exchange and discovery in its Eastern Suburbs debut.

Book now: [events.humanitix.com.au/sacred](http://events.humanitix.com.au/sacred)

# IN MEMORY

There are mourners in our community to whom we extend our sincerest sympathies on the death of their loved ones.

*Shiva:* Elizabeth (Lisie) Parker, George Litwin

*Shloshim:* Daphne Kaplan, Roslyn Levi, Risha (Fred) Perlmutter, Brendon Meyers, Ida Antflick, Rabbi Reuven Hammer, Vera Kolman, Linda Watson, Judith Katz, Rosalyn Baker, Ruth Gotlieb, Wolf (Robert) Hochmann, Sophia (Senya) Fooks

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This week we observe the Yahrzeits of (observed by):

\* Memorial Light

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**Judith Auerbach** (Marsden Auerbach)

**Jeannette Aaron** (Ruth Rusanow)

**Sophie Baehr** (Peter Bloomfield)

**Norma Beanstock Hechtman**

(Anne Wolfson)

**Edith Beran** (Danny Beran, Roger Beran)

**Avraham Bobrow** (Devorah Lees)

**Elli Lore Braude** (John Brieger)

**Yakov Chudnovski** (Feliks Tchoudnovski)

\* **David Dawson**

**Jacob Diamond** (Anthea Hemphill)

**Leonard Isadore Eizenberg**

(Caroline Haski)

**Jack Fink** (Hannah Fink)

**Emanuel Fischer** (Eleanor Sangster)

**Freda Fischer** (Eleanor Sangster)

**Harry Goldberg** (Ivan Goldberg)

\* **Maurice (Moss) Goldberg**

**Ronald Goodman** (Sharon Gold)

**Daniel Goodridge** (Anthony Goodridge,  
Eleanore Goodridge)

**Gerry Gotlieb** (Kim Gotlieb)

**Phoebe Green** (David Green)

\* **Trudy Gries**

**Jacques Haski** (Caroline Haski,  
Danielle Haski, Eli Haski, Joel Haski,  
Roberta Haski)

**Benjamin Haski**

(Caroline Haski, Danielle Haski,  
Eli Haski, Joel Haski, Roberta Haski)

**Alexander Hauser** (Gerda Hauser,  
Jeffrey Hauser, Lisa Hauser)

\* **Margaret Hosek** (Valerie Hosek)

**Vera Jacoby** (Lesley-Ann Hellig)

**Matthew Paul Jellins** (Jack Jellins)

**Rudolfine Jellins** (Jack Jellins)

**Pessa Landovitz** (Jacqueline Dale)

**Peter Lewin** (Robert Lewin)

**Anne Lieberman** (Golda Lieberman)

**Sam Miller** (Keith Miller)

**Bella Obrart** (Alan Obrart)

**Nettie Perling** (Renee Pinshaw)

**Samuel Pozniak** (Brett Pozniak,  
Sheldon Pozniak)

**Zenon Reiner** (Yvonne Snow)

**Robert Lewis Richards** (Lavinia Fuller,  
Anthea Hemphill)

**Mary Segal** (John Segal)

**Joseph Segal** (Melita Segal)

**Stephen Selby** (Alex Selby)

**Abraham Sinani** (Ron Sinani)

**Ruth Singerman** (Deborah Singerman)

**Norman (Dennis) Smith**  
(Giovanni Frischman)

**Ashley Harry Smith**

(Suzanne Huberman, Iris Schnabl,  
Alan Smith, Fay Smith)

**Edwarda Spinak** (Richard Spinak)

**Bettina Streimer** (Jeffrey Streimer)

**Eric Tannenbaum** (Gene Sherman)

**Paul Torok** (Nora Torok)

**Shoah Remembrance:** Kopel Ring was born in Lodz, Poland in 1923 and lived there until he was murdered during the Holocaust.