



### SAVE THE DATE

The Congregation Beth Aaron Annual Dinner will take place on Sunday, May 9, 2010, at Keter Torah. Guests of Honor are Renee & Harry Harcsztark. Service Awardees are Nechama & Steven Pudell.

# Congregation Beth Aaron

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 Laurence Rothwachs, Rabbi

Ronnie Schwartz, President

# Shabbat Announcements

## Parashat Va'era January 16, 2010 1 Shevat 5770

- Latest Candles: 4:36 P.M.
- *Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat*: 4:40 P.M.
- *Shacharit Hashkamah*: 7:15 A.M.
- Rabbi Rothwachs' *Tefillah shiur*: 8:20 A.M.
- Main *Shul*: 8:45 A.M.
- Youth *Minyan*: 9:30 A.M.
- *Sof Zman Kriat Shema*: 9:42 A.M.
- Early *Mincha*: 1:45 P.M.
- *Daf Yomi*: 3:10 P.M.
- Rochi Lerner's *Rosh Chodesh shiur*: 3:20 P.M. All are welcome.
- *Mincha*: 4:20 P.M., followed by *Seudah Shlishit* and *siyyum* sponsored by the Furst and East families.
- *Maariv*: 5:36 P.M.
- *Havdalah*: 5:45 P.M.

Schedule for Week of January 17th:	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
	17	18	19	20	21	22
<i>Earliest Tallit</i>	6:17	6:16	6:16	6:15	6:15	6:14
<i>Shacharit</i>	6:30 7:15 8:00 8:45	6:05 6:20 7:10 8:00 8:45	6:05 6:30 7:15 8:00	6:04 6:30 7:15 8:00	6:04 6:20 7:10 8:00 8:45	6:03 6:30 7:15 8:00 8:45
<i>Mincha</i>	1:00					
<i>Mincha/Maariv</i>	4:40	4:40	4:40	4:40	4:40	4:50
<i>Maariv</i>	8:00 9:30	8:00 9:30	8:00 9:30	8:00 9:30	8:00 9:30	

### Weekly Shiurim:

- *Daf Yomi*: *Shabbat*: 3:10 P.M. For other *Daf Yomi shiurim*, go to [www.teaneckshuls.org/daf](http://www.teaneckshuls.org/daf)
- *Chabura on Revadim method of Talmud Study*: Sunday evening at 8:15 P.M.
- Rabbi Feldman's *shiur*: Monday evening at 8:45 P.M.
- *Parshat ha-Shavua shiur* by Rabbi Neil Lauer: Join us this week as we continue *Sefer Shemot*: "The Cost of Being Free," Tuesday evening, 8:45 to 9:30 P.M.
- Rabbi Rothwachs' *Bava Kama shiur*: Wednesday evening at 8:30 P.M.
- *Chabura* by Rabbi Herschel Grossman on *Sefer Nefesh ha-Chaim* - Thursday evening, 8:15 to 9:00 P.M.
- *Morning Mishnah Chabura*: Monday and Thursday - 6:55 A.M.; Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday - 7:00 A.M.

### Mazal Tov:

- *Mazal Tov* to Esther and Mark Bauman on the birth of twin grandchildren, born to their children Miriam Leah and Yisrael Schwartz of Baltimore.
- *Mazal Tov* to Dov and Lynn Silverberg on the engagement of their son Zvi to Dina Pirutinsky, daughter of Rafael and Sandy Pirutinsky of Monsey.

### Tzeitchem le-Shalom:

*Tzeitchem le-Shalom* to Joey and Shoshana Elbogen who are making *aliyah* on January 20th.

The next *iRabbi* program, which provides the youth of our *kehillah* with the opportunity to discuss issues of personal importance with the Rabbi, will take place on *Shabbat, Parashat Vaera*, January 15-16. On Friday evening, January 15th, at 7:45 P.M., boys in grades 9-10 will meet at the Rothwachs home, 288 Schley Place. On *Shabbat*, January 16th, at 3:00 P.M., girls in grades 9-10 will meet at the Rothwachs home.

An *iRabbi* program for 11th-12th graders will take place on *Shabbat, Parashat Yitro*, February 5-6. On Friday evening, February 5th, at 8:00 P.M., boys in grades 11-12 will meet at the Rothwachs home. On *Shabbat*, February 6th, at 3:45 P.M., girls in grades 11-12 will meet at the Rothwachs home.

Participants are encouraged to come prepared with questions to ask the Rabbi about topics of concern to them--*hashkafa*, *halacha*, social issues, etc. You may also e-mail questions anonymously to [iRabbi@live.com](mailto:iRabbi@live.com).

On *Shabbat Parshat Mishpatim*, February 12th-13th, Beth Aaron is excited to welcome Jewish music sensation, Eitan Katz, for a very special weekend. Eitan's latest album release, *Boruch Hu*, is a continuation of Eitan's trademark style, in which he has been able to both entertain and spiritually uplift the listener. Eitan will be the guest *ba'al tefillah* throughout *Shabbat*, which will include an inspiring and *ruach*-filled davening on Friday night. There will be a spirited *Oneg Shabbat* with Eitan at the Rothwachs home at 8:15 P.M. on Friday night, which will include singing and *divrei Torah* and promises to be a very special experience. Eitan and his band will also be performing a concert on *motzaei Shabbat* at the shul at 8:00 P.M. Admission at the door will be \$10 per person. For more information about Eitan, go to [www.eitankatz.com](http://www.eitankatz.com).

It is a big *zechut* to prepare a *tikkun* for a departed relative on their *yahrtzeit*. We encourage you to make a *lechaim*, a *bracha* on *mezonot* and a *shehakol* on a piece of herring with your Beth Aaron friends, so that the *neshama* of your beloved relative should have an *aliya*. However, we request that you please respect the shul and its appearance. Next time, when you are gathering your things to bring to the *Beit Knesset* for a *tikkun*, please include a disposable tablecloth. Additionally, I ask that we all assist by cleaning up and disposing of whatever is left over and not leave it to be cleaned up by others. Everyone's cooperation is encouraged and appreciated. Thanking you in advance.  
 —Ronnie Schwartz

**Miscellaneous Shul Announcements**

The **Third Annual Men's Club Cholent Challenge** will take place this Friday evening, January 15th, from 8:00 to 10:00 P.M. Everyone is invited to come to the shul to taste all of the *cholents* and participate in the judging process. The *cholent* with the most votes will win a \$100 gift card to Chef Central.

This Sunday, January 17th, at 2:30 P.M., the Beth Aaron Boys' Choir will be performing at the Daughters of Miriam in Clifton. The *tzibur* is invited. We wish our boys *b'racha ve-hatzlacha*.

On Friday, January 22nd, at 10:30 AM, the Beth Aaron Sisterhood will be going to **Disney on Ice -- 100 Years of Magic**. Tickets are \$20 each. For information regarding ordering, please contact Aliza Fischman, (201) 833-0801 or [fisch.chips@att.net](mailto:fisch.chips@att.net).

On Saturday night, February 6th, at 7:30 P.M., **Jeremy Gimpel, the host of Tuesday Night Live in Jerusalem**, the only Jewish TV show broadcast from Jerusalem to the world, will be speaking at Beth Aaron on "**Torah, Inspiration and Entertainment: The Settlement Freeze, Neo-Zionism and Yemot ha-Mashiach.**" For more information about Jeremy Gimpel and Tuesday Night Live in Jerusalem, go to [www.thelandofisrael.com](http://www.thelandofisrael.com).

The next **Sisterhood Book Club** selection is "My Father's Paradise: A Son's Search for His Jewish Past in Kurdish Iraq," by Ariel Sabar. The date of the next meeting will be announced. For more information, contact Diane Fogel, (201) 837-0651, [difogel@aol.com](mailto:difogel@aol.com).

Teaneck's first **centerpiece Gemach** has been established *le-Zecher nishmat* Shoshana Geula bat Yakov ha-Cohen (in memory of Shelley Goldberg). We have beautiful centerpieces for your *simchas*. Proceeds will go to the Beth Aaron Sisterhood.

As we continue to grow, we are accepting donations of centerpieces in excellent condition that you no longer need. We will be glad to pick them up from you. We are also in need of storage space in homes to house the centerpieces. Please contact us if you have some space in your garage or basement.

For more information, contact Rivka Fink, (201) 833-2527, [rivkafink@optonline.net](mailto:rivkafink@optonline.net), or Michelle Cooper, (201) 837-1999, [benandmi@yahoo.com](mailto:benandmi@yahoo.com).

Introducing an innovative and intensive **Bar Mitzvah training class!** In this eight-week Sunday morning seminar, beginning February 7th at TABC, from 8:30 to 10:00 A.M., your son will have the opportunity to personalize his Bar Mitzvah experience through hands-on learning about (1) *tefilin*, (2) becoming a *chazan*, (3) preparing a Bar Mitzvah speech and project, and more. For more information, please contact Rabbi Stephen Knapp, [RabbiKnapp@gmail.com](mailto:RabbiKnapp@gmail.com), (917) 837-2810.

**Beth Aaron Youth:**

- The **learning group for 3rd grade boys** will meet this *Shabbat*, January 16th, at **3:00 P.M.**, at the Breen home, 68 Edgemont Place. We will continue studying *Sefer Shmuel*. For more information, contact Doug Dubitsky, [douglas\\_dubitsky@glic.com](mailto:douglas_dubitsky@glic.com).
- The **learning group for 4th grade boys** will meet this *Shabbat*, January 16th, at **3:10 P.M.**, at the Cooper home, 915 Prince Street. Please bring your own *Mishnah (Masechet Beitzah)*. For more information, please contact Rebecca Kurz, [rkurz1@yahoo.com](mailto:rkurz1@yahoo.com), or Esther Klavan, [esksp@aol.com](mailto:esksp@aol.com).
- This *Shabbat*, January 16th, from 9:15 to 9:30 A.M., all 3rd-5th graders are welcome to join **Tefilah and Shoko**. Cookies and chocolate milk will be served.
- A **Seudah Shlishit** for 1st and 2nd graders will take place this *Shabbat*, January 16th, downstairs between *mincha/maariv*.
- Not going away for winter vacation? **Under-Night 2010** for 3rd-5th graders -- come have fun at the Davids' home (12 Grayson Place) making your own pizza, watching a movie, playing games, and enjoying ice cream sundaes. Girls' Night is on Tuesday, January 26th, from 6:00 to 9:30 P.M. Boys' Night is on Wednesday, January 27th, from 6:00 to 9:30 P.M. The cost is \$6 per child.
- Want to celebrate your child's birthday with their friends in *Shabbat* morning groups? You can sponsor a **birthday kiddush** for your child's group for \$36.
- If you would like to sponsor any of these events, please contact Erica and Jason David, [bethaaronyouth@yahoo.com](mailto:bethaaronyouth@yahoo.com).

**Junior NCSY (grades 6-8):**

- On Sunday night, January 31st, at 6:00 P.M., we will be having a **Winter Regional Psych-Up Night** at the shul. Come eat pizza, learn the chapter cheers, and help us make a chapter banner and t-shirts! The cost is \$10, and we hope you will come even if you are not attending Winter Regional.
- The **Winter Regional Shabbaton** will take place on the weekend of February 5th-7th in West Orange, at Congregation Ahawas Achim Bnai Jacob and David. The price is \$56 until January 15th, and \$66 from January 16th to January 31st. The buses will be leaving from school on Friday at 2:00 P.M. and returning to Beth Aaron on Sunday at 1:30 P.M. Busing will cost an additional \$20 (more information on the buses to follow). To register, go to [njncsy.org](http://njncsy.org) and click on the Winter Regional link.
- If you have any questions about our events, please contact Danielle, [bethaaronjuniors@gmail.com](mailto:bethaaronjuniors@gmail.com), or (201) 247-7961.

**Beth Aaron Teens (grades 9-12):**

- On *Motzaei Shabbat*, January 16th, beginning at 7:00 P.M., we will be having a **Study Party** at the shul. Either bring your notes and study in a "quiet room" in the shul basement, or take a break, hang out with your friends, and eat. The cost is \$5.
- Beth Aaron Teens are invited to join Teaneck NCSY at their **winter snowtubing trip!** It will take place on Thursday, January 21st. The bus will leave from Bnai Yeshurun at 3:15 P.M. The cost is \$30 for tubing and the bus. Please let us know A.S.A.P. if you would like to come, since there are limited spots.
- On Friday evening, January 29th, at 8:00 P.M., we will be having an **Oneg** at the shul.
- On Friday, February 5th, Beth Aaron will be hosting Teaneck NCSY for a **Shabbat dinner!** All local teens are invited to the *shul* for lots of great *divrei Torah* and *zmirot*.
- We'd love to hear feedback about past events and ideas for future events. We can be contacted at [bethaaronteens@gmail.com](mailto:bethaaronteens@gmail.com), or by calling Shiffy (Staiman) Friedman, (201) 341-6022, or Noam Friedman, (201) 937-6249.

## Community Announcements

**CareOne**, the kosher rehabilitation and nursing center located at 544 Teaneck Road, needs volunteers to help make a *minyán*. This Friday, *Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat* will begin at 4:40 P.M. *Shacharit* will be at 9:00 A.M., followed by a hot *Kiddush*. Youth groups begin at 9:30 A.M. *Mincha* will be at 4:25 P.M., followed by a *shiur* on *Masechet Ketubot* at 4:40 P.M. *Maariv* will be at 5:39 P.M.

The **72nd Annual Dinner of the Rosenbaum Yeshiva of North Jersey**, honoring Dr. Michael and Jennifer Wiederkehr and Mrs. Helen Adler, will be held on Sunday, January 17th. For more information, go to [www.rynj.org](http://www.rynj.org).

This Monday evening, January 18th, at 8:30 P.M. Shoshana Pudell will present a **Rosh Chodesh Shiur for Women** at the Teitelbaum home, 181 Cherry Lane. Please join us for an inspirational and interactive evening of Torah. For more information, or if you would like to give or host a future *shiur*, please contact Tzippy Staum, (201) 862-0307.

The **Jewish Foundation School of Staten Island** invites Bergen County parents to a **school tour and open house** at 10:00 A.M. on Monday, January 18th (Martin Luther King Day), at the school, 400 Caswell Avenue, Staten Island. The Jewish Foundation School provides an excellent *limudei kodesh* and secular education 40 minutes from Teaneck, and the 2010 tuition is \$6,500. For more information, call (718) 983-6042, send e-mail to [2010JFS@gmail.com](mailto:2010JFS@gmail.com) or go to [www.jewishfoundationschool.org](http://www.jewishfoundationschool.org).

The next meeting of **Partners in Caring**, a group which has been created to help individuals who have experienced the loss of a child, sibling or grandchild, will take place on Wednesday, January 20th, at 8:00 P.M., at Congregation Arzei Darom, 725 Queen Anne Road. For more information, contact [partnersincaring@gmail.com](mailto:partnersincaring@gmail.com) or call (201) 833-7663.

On Saturday night, February 6th, at 8:00 P.M., at Ma'ayanot High School, 1650 Palisade Avenue, there will be a "**Girls' Night On**" presentation -- sponsored by an initiative that organizes performances for women, by women. Admission is \$15 (\$10 for students). Performers receive a \$5 discount. For more information, go to [www.girlsnighton.com](http://www.girlsnighton.com).

On Monday, February 22nd, from 7:00 to 8:30 P.M., at the office of the Jewish Family Service of Bergen and North Hudson, 1485 Teaneck Road, David Giller, Esq. will present a workshop entitled "**Beating the Economy: Debt Management during Troubling Times.**" He will discuss strategies for managing and prioritizing debts, including credit cards, how to deal with creditors and outstanding debts, and how to avoid bankruptcy. For more information, or to register for the workshop, call (201) 837-9090 and ask for IRA, or e-mail [IRA@jfsbergen.org](mailto:IRA@jfsbergen.org).

Registration for the **2010 Yavneh Youth League** season is now open for all 1st-8th graders (boys and girls) who attend any Hebrew day school in the North Jersey area. Yavneh Youth League provides students with an appropriately competitive season on Sunday mornings and weekday evenings in the spring. The focus is on baseball skill building, sportsmanship and fun. Games begin after *Pesach* (with practices scheduled for late March), and playoffs and championships conclude by the end of the school year. For more information, or to download registration materials, go to <http://yavnehyouthleague.com>.

Beit Issie Shapiro, an organization that provides services for children with developmental disabilities and their families in Israel, is selling  *mishloach manot*  packages for Purim. Each beautifully designed box includes a few scrumptious treats, as well as a donation card for the special children of Beit Issie. Boxes are \$8 each or \$100 for 15. Checks should be made payable to AFOBIS (American Friends of Beit Issie Shapiro). To order, please contact Becky Wolf, (201) 928-0542, [gzwmom@yahoo.com](mailto:gzwmom@yahoo.com). For more information, go to [www.beitissie.co.il/eng](http://www.beitissie.co.il/eng).

The students of **The Sinai School** are offering a **free pick-up service of clothing donations** in good condition to community members. A *tevilat keilim* service is also available. All pick-ups are on Thursday evenings. Dishes will be returned within two weeks of pick up. There is a suggested donation of \$2 for *tevilat keilim*. For more information, contact Rochel Weitzman, [Rrodina@sinaischool.org](mailto:Rrodina@sinaischool.org), (646) 701-1255.

UJA Federation of Northern New Jersey's Israel Programs Center offers both **needs-based** and **merit scholarships to high school and college students wishing to participate in an Israel Experience**. To learn more about **Scholarships to Israel**, go to [www.ujanni.org/ipc](http://www.ujanni.org/ipc). The application deadline is **Friday, February 26th**.

### Parasha Questions for Parashat Vaera:

- (a) How could *Hashem* tell *Moshe* "[by] My Name '*Hashem*,'" I was not known to [the *avot*]," when in fact He said "I am *Hashem*" to *Avraham* (*Bereishit* 15:7) and *Ya'akov* (28:13) (4 reasons)? (b) The  *arba leshonot shel geula*  (4 expressions of redemption) indicate that *Bnei Yisrael* were liberated from which 4 of the oppressions of the *Mitzrim*? (c) For which 4 of *Pharaoh's* oppressive laws did *Hashem* promise, with the  *arba leshonot shel geula* , compensation to *Bnei Yisrael*? (d) On which calendar dates related to *yetziat Mitzrayim* did the 4 stages of redemption of the  *arba leshonot shel geula*  take place? (*Shemot* 6:6-7)
- (a) When identifying the lineage of *Aharon* and *Moshe*, why does the *Torah* preface *Levi's* family tree with the genealogy of *Reuven* and *Shimon* (2 explanations)? (b) Why does the *Torah* identify 3 wives – *Yocheved*, *Elisheva* and *Putiel's* daughter? (c) How do we learn that before a man marries, he must investigate his wife's brothers' backgrounds? (*Shemot* 6:14,20-25)
- (a) Since *Hashem* had "hardened *Pharaoh's* heart," preventing his free choice, why was *Pharaoh* faulted for refusing to free *Bnei Yisrael* (3 explanations)? (b) Why was *dom* (blood) the first plague (3 explanations)? (*Shemot* 7:3,20)
- (a) Since the *tzfardim* (frogs/crocodiles) caused *Pharaoh* great suffering, why did he ask for their removal the next day, not immediately? (b) What was *arov*, the fourth plague (9 opinions)? (c) Why did *Hashem* say, concerning *arov*, but not the previous plagues, that He will set *Goshen* apart and make a distinction between *Bnei Yisrael* and the *Mitzrim*? (*Shemot* 8:6,17-19)
- (a) Why did *Hashem* command *Aharon*, rather than *Moshe*, to bring about the first 3 plagues of *dom*, *tzfardea* and *kinim*? (b) How had the water protected *Moshe* (2 opinions)? (*Shemot* 7:19, 8:12)
- (a) Did *Hashem* kill all of the *Mitzrim's* livestock during the plague of *dever* (epidemic) (2 opinions)? (b) When *Hashem* told *Moshe* about the plague of *barad* (hail), why did He say, "I shall send all my plagues" (3 explanations)? (*Shemot* 9:3,14)
- In the *haftara*, why does the *Navi* call *Pharaoh*, "*ha-tanin ha-gadol*" (the great sea-monster) who said "*ye'ori li va'ani asiytini*" (the Nile is mine and I made it myself) (2 explanations)? (*Yechezkeil* 29:3)

## Learning Opportunities

• The **Amud Yomi shiur** meets week nights at 9:30 P.M. at Rinat Yisrael.

### Motzei Shabbat

Rabbi Reisman's satellite *Navi shiur*: 7:30 P.M. at Keter Torah.

### Sunday

• This Sunday, January 17th, in lieu of the regular Kollel Yom Rishon and Midreshet Yom Rishon programs, there will be a special **Conference on Jewish and American Law** at Furst Hall, 500 West 185th Street (corner of Amsterdam Avenue), Room 501, from 9:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. Speakers include Rabbi Mordechai Willig, Rabbi Michael Brodye, Rabbi Ronald Warburg and Rabbi Chaim Jachter. Both men and women are invited to attend, and advance registration is not required. Complimentary parking is provided, and refreshments will be served. For more information, go to [www.kollelyomrishon.org](http://www.kollelyomrishon.org).  
• The **Chofetz Chaim Women's Learning**

**Group** will meet this Sunday, January 17th, at the Lewy home, 138 Grayson Place.

### Monday

• Each Monday, from 9:00 to 10:00 A.M., a **Tehillim group** will meet at Rochi Lerner's home, 274 Johnson Avenue.

### Tuesday

• Rochi Lerner's **Tehillim shiur** takes place every Tuesday evening at 8:30 P.M. at Rochi Lerner's home, 274 Johnson Avenue.

### Wednesday

• On Wednesday mornings, at 10:30 A.M., Rochi Lerner presents a **Megillat Esther shiur**, in memory of the Seidenfeld children, at the Lerner home, 274 Johnson Avenue.

• Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky's Wednesday evening **shiur** takes place at Bnai Yeshurun at 9:15 P.M.

### Thursday

• **Rabbi Yissocher Frand's** weekly **shiur** will be broadcast at 9:00 P.M. at Keter Torah.

• Each Thursday evening, at 8:30 P.M., at the Yeshiva Gedolah, 1443 Palisade Avenue, **Rabbi Roberts** gives a **Parasha Shiur**, followed by *maariv* at 9:30 P.M.

### Friday

• The **Bergen Community Kollel for Baale Batim** meets every Friday morning in the Beth Aaron library. The schedule is as follows: 8:00-8:20 A.M. - *Mussar Classics*; 8:20-9:30 A.M. - *Gemara Ketubot*; 9:30-10:00 A.M. - *Hilchot Shabbat*. For more information, contact Dr. Andy Fink, (201) 833-2527.

Each Tuesday and Thursday morning, **Keter Torah** presents **Torah in the AM**: 9:00 to 9:40 A.M. - *Navi chavura* on *Sefer Shmuel Bet*; 9:45 to 10:45 A.M. - Rabbi Menachem Meier's *Talmud shiur* on *Bava Metzia*, Chapter 5; 10:50 to 11:40 A.M.-Rabbi Meier's *shiur* on Jeremiah (Thursday only); 11:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon - Rabbi Baum's *shiur* on *Sefer Ezra* (Tuesday only)

### Answers to Parasha Questions:

- (a) The *avot* knew His Name, *Hashem*, but one of His *midot* was unknown to them: (1) that *Hashem* fulfills His promises, since He promised to give the *avot Eretz Yisrael* but did not give it to them in their lifetimes (*Rashi*). (2) that He performs miracles in violation of nature, since He did not perform overt miracles for the *avot*; (3) He appeared to the *avot* through the *mida* of justice but to *Moshe* through the *mida* of mercy; (4) He appeared to the *avot* in visions and dreams but to *Moshe* "face to face" (*Ramban*). (b) (1) Material oppression – taking away *Bnei Yisrael's* wealth; (2) physical oppression – torturing them with extremely strenuous labor; (3) psychological oppression – trampling on their honor by making them slaves, the lowest rung of society; and (4) spiritual oppression – drawing them away from service of *Hashem* to idol worship (*Tiferet Yisrael*). (c) (1) Excruciating slave labor; (2) drowning newborns in the Nile; (3) slaughtering children for the king's bath; (4) withholding straw for making bricks (*Shemot Raba*). (d) (1) *Ve-hotzeiti* (I will take you out) refers to the end of slavery on *Rosh Hashana* (1 *Tishrei*), 6½ months before *yetziat Mitzrayim*; (2) *ve-hitzalti* (I will save you) refers to *yetziat Mitzrayim* on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of *Pesach* (15 *Nisan*); (3) *ve-ga'alti* (I will redeem you) refers to the splitting of *Yam Suf* on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of *Pesach* (21 *Nisan*); (4) *ve-lakachti* (I will take you) refers to *matan Torah* on *Shavuot*, when *Hashem* "took" *Bnei Yisrael* as His "bride" (6 *Sivan*) (*Sforno*).
- (a) (1) Since *Reuvain*, *Shimon* and *Levi* were the 3 sons that *Ya'akov* criticized in *Beresheet*, the *Torah* details their descendants to teach that despite their ancestors' mistakes, they were important tribes (*Rashi*). (2) So that it should not appear that in honor of *Moshe*, *Sheivet Levi* was henceforth first in genealogy, the *Torah* first lists *Reuvain's* and *Shimon's* descendants (*Ramban*). (b) The *Torah* alludes to the illustriousness of: (1) *Amram's* wife, *Yocheved*, mother of prophets *Aharon* and *Moshe*; (2) *Aharon's* wife, *Elisheva*, maternal ancestor of all *kohanim* and sister of the *Nasi Nachshon*, who was ancestor of the kings of *Yehudah*; and (3) *Elazar's* wife, who was another maternal ancestor of the *kohanim* and whose father *Putiel* is identified as *Yosef*, ancestor of *Ephraim's* kings (*Ramban*). (c) When the *Torah* identifies *Aharon's wife*, it adds that *Elisheva bat Aminadav* was the sister of *Nachshon*, since the characteristics of a man's children reflect those of his wife's brothers (*Rashi*).
- (a) (1) *Hashem* punished *Pharaoh* and the *Mitzrim* only for the evil they committed before He hardened his heart; they deserved punishment for this oppression, and He did not give them an opportunity to repent; (2) idolaters like *Pharaoh* might pretend to do *teshuva* as a result of the severe punishment inflicted on them, rather than out of sincere regret; *Hashem* hardened *Pharaoh's* heart so that he would not repent, and those who would be fooled by his false remorse should not think that *Hashem* was unfair to continue his punishment; (3) since the plagues were so harsh, they would have forced *Pharaoh* to free *Bnei Yisrael*; *Hashem* had to harden his heart in order to restore his freedom of choice as to whether or not to release *Bnei Yisrael* (*Ramban*). (b) The *Mitzrim*: (1) worshipped the Nile; *Hashem* struck their god first (*Shemot Raba*). (2) spilt *Bnei Yisrael's* blood like water (*Medrash Lekach Tov*). (3) threw *Bnei Yisrael's* babies in the water (*Pirkei de-Rebi Eliezer*).
- (a) *Pharaoh* thought that *Moshe* was merely an expert astrologer who had forecasted the plague's end. He gave *Moshe* an unexpected end date to outsmart him and show the plague was not a miracle. Therefore, *Moshe* responded that he would end the plague "*ki-devarecha*" (as you say), showing it was miraculous (*ibn Ezra*). (b) Harmful creatures: (1) a mixture of wild animals that killed and ate the *Mitzrim*; (2) flies (*Shemot Raba*). (3) Wild animals that devoured the *Mitzrim's* food (*Ralbag*). (4) Blood-sucking insects (*Philo*). (5) Insects and snakes (*Sefer ha-Yashar*). (6) Wolves (*Rashbam*). (7) Panthers; (8) eagles (*Midrash Tehilim* 78:45). (9) Giant squid (*Medrash Agada*). (c) Since the previous plagues (*dam, tzfardea, kinim*) were not migratory in nature, it was no miracle that they were confined to *Mitzrayim* and did not spread to *Goshen*; for *arov*, the animals migrated from their habitats and miraculously did not enter *Goshen*, harming only the *Mitzrim*, but not *Bnei Yisrael* (*Ramban*).
- (a) *Moshe* could not bring the: (1) first 2 plagues on the Nile because the water had protected him as an infant; (2) third plague because the dust had protected him when he concealed the *Mitzri* whom he had killed. By not striking them, he showed gratitude to the water and dust (*Rashi*). (b) (1) It kept *Moshe* afloat until *Pharaoh's* daughter rescued him (*Rashi*). (2) When the babies were cast into the Nile, the astrologers, foretelling that *Bnei Yisrael's* savior would be punished through water, thought the redeemer perished in the water. Immediately, *Pharaoh* ceased searching for him; thus, the water saved *Moshe* (*Alshich*).
- (a) (1) No – only livestock left in the field died; those brought inside did not (*Rashi*). (2) Yes - all of the livestock died, wherever they were (*Ramban*). (b) (1) *Hashem* was referring to the later plague of the firstborn, which culminated and was equal to all the plagues (*Rashi*). (2) The *barad* finally convinced *Pharaoh* that the plagues were from *Hashem*, not merely *Moshe's* magic (*Ohr ha-Chaim*). (3) To punish the wicked, *Hashem* previously had used water, wind or fire. *Dor ha-Mabul* was obliterated by water; *Dor ha-Haflaga* was dispersed by wind; and *Sodom* was destroyed by fire. Each of the previous plagues used one of these elements; *barad* combined water, wind and fire (*Vilna Gaon*).
- (a) The *Mitzrim* believed that the Nile was holy, that its crocodiles possessed divine powers and that one huge crocodile, *ha-tanin ha-gadol*, which created itself and the river, rules over the river. The *Navi* explains that just as *Hashem* will drag this creature and the fish from the river and scatter them in the desert, He will destroy *Pharaoh* and the *Mitzrim* (*Malbim*). (b) Since *Pharaoh* believed that the Nile provided all his necessities, he wrongly thought that he need not fear *Hashem* (*Rashi*).