



TEFILAT YAMIM

# PARSHAT BEHAR- BECHUKOTAI CHAZAK

22 Iyar 5786 - 9 May 2026



*Dear Community Family,*

Rabbi Danzinger was not supposed to be in that airport.

His flight out of Israel was cancelled in an

instant. It was November 2024, and Hezbollah rockets had triggered sirens across the region. No one was harmed, but the ripple

effects were immediate. The plane originally sent to collect his flight had been forced to divert to Turkey for refueling,

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and Turkey refused to service any aircraft bound for Israel. Just like that, Rabbi Danzinger and his large family found themselves stranded, their plans in ruins.

He was frustrated. Understandably so. But somewhere in the chaos of the terminal, he made a decision. Instead of stewing in his frustration, he asked himself a different question: *Why am I still here?*

He began to look around. And that is when he noticed a man wearing a kippah on a flight to Russia, of all places. Rabbi Danzinger approached him. They spoke. The man mentioned, almost in passing, that

he was from Pyatigorsk.

Rabbi Danzinger's eyes went wide.

Someone close to him urgently needed to see a top oncologist based in that very city. Every connection he had pulled, every door he had knocked on, had led nowhere. The appointment simply could not be made.

He took a breath and asked the stranger: Do you happen to know that doctor?

The man smiled. "*He is my best friend.*"

He called the doctor on the spot. The appointment was made.

A cancelled flight. A diverted plane. A

refusal at the Turkish border. A man in a kippah on a Moscow-bound flight. A best friend who happened to be an oncologist. And a rabbi who chose, in the midst of his frustration, to look for the reason instead of cursing the inconvenience.

This week's parshiyot, Behar-Bechukotai introduce one of the most unusual words in all of Torah. The word is *keri*. It appears seven times in a single passage and nowhere else in the entire Torah. G-d warns: "If you behave toward Me with *keri*, I will behave toward you with a fury of *keri*."

What is *keri*?

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Rashi translates it as "happenstance," the attitude that life is a series of random events, that what happens to us has no author, no message, no design. The Rambam deepens this: *keri* is treating G-d's involvement in our lives as mere chance. And the consequence, the Torah warns, is that G-d will respond in kind, withdrawing His personal providence and leaving us to the cold and indifferent mechanics of history.

*Keri* is not atheism. It is something subtler and, in many ways, more corrosive. It is the attitude of the person who prays when they need something, forgets to say thank you when they receive

it, and attributes their successes entirely to their own cleverness. It is the person who finds a parking space and says, "Never mind, G-d, I handled it." It is the relationship where you only call when you need a favor.

And yet, the Torah does not only warn us against *keri*. It implicitly points us toward its opposite: a life of attentiveness, of awareness, of looking at the events of our days and asking, what is being said to me here?

There is another story I want to share with you.

Moshe Tzarfati grew up in Istanbul at a time when most Jews were afraid to be seen as Jews. He was the kind

of young man who went to the synagogue anyway, sneaking out different exits to avoid the boys who waited to ambush him on the way home. The faith he built in those years, under pressure, stayed with him for the rest of his life.

Moshe describes his relationship with G-d honestly, with an honesty many of us might recognize. He prayed when he needed things. He made promises and sometimes kept them, sometimes not. He believed deeply and genuinely, but his belief was conditional.

"I always wanted the blessing to be sent before I agreed to improve."

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For years, he prayed for a grandchild. His daughter Jenny had been married for a decade with no children. He visited the graves of tzaddikim. He gave charity. He prayed and promised and prayed again. Nothing.

Then one Friday afternoon, on a whim he did not fully understand, he followed a friend to a Chabad shul he had never attended. The rabbi welcomed him warmly and then, against all expectation, invited the congregation to sing Shir HaShirim. In an Ashkenazic Chassidic synagogue. For him.

After davening, the rabbi told a story. Two chassidim had come to

the Rebbe, both childless, both asking for a blessing. The Rebbe blessed them both. When they returned, one came back with a son. The other did not. The difference, the Rebbe explained, was not the strength of the blessing. It was the strength of the belief. The first chassid had walked out of the Rebbe's room, gone straight to a store, and bought a baby carriage. His faith was not merely an emotion. It was an act.

Moshe sat very still. He felt the story was not about two anonymous chassidim at all.

When Shabbat ended, he drove directly to a baby store. He chose

the most expensive stroller in the shop. He brought it home and showed it to his wife, his children, his daughter. They looked at him like he had lost his mind. "You're crazy," his daughter said. Everyone agreed.

A few months later, Jenny called with news.

*"He's already three years old,"* Moshe said, pausing to collect himself. *"May he live to 120."*

G-d communicates with us through our daily lives, through the cancelled flights and the chance encounters, through the doors that close and the strangers who happen to appear.

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These are not interruptions. They are messages. The question is only whether we have our receiver turned on.

Rabbi Danzinger could have spent those hours at the airport in bitter frustration. He would have been forgiven for it. But he chose attentiveness instead, and a sick person got the appointment they needed.

Moshe could have kept his belief abstract and internal, warm but weightless. Instead he made it real. He parked a stroller in his apartment as an act of trust, and the heavens responded.

The antidote to *keri* is not simply "more faith." It is a posture of wakefulness, the daily practice of noticing, of asking why, of treating the events of our lives

not as a sequence of random noise but as a conversation that G-d is trying to have with us. When we live that way, we do not merely observe divine providence. We invite it.

Wishing a warm  
Shabbat Shalom,

*Rav Mendel Wuensch*

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## Kiddush Sponsors

Needs and Benjy Rutland in honor of the birth of their Son, Ari Jacob.

Weiss and Adivi families honouring the first Yartzheit of the beloved Allen Weiss Z"l, יצחק  
אליהו. May his memory forever be a blessing.

Alisa and Jonathan Gellis and Phyllis and Sidney Ulreich in honor of the birth of Alumah Tair  
born to David and Ahuva Gellis.

## Weekday Minyan Schedule

**7:30 AM Shachrit** @ Beit Chabad Ir Yamim

**7:20 PM Mincha/Maariv** @ Be Pharmacy On Piano

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## Shabbat Schedule

### Friday

7:04 PM Candle Lighting

7:00 PM Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat - Dvar Torah by Rav Mendel Wuensch

### Shabbat Day

8:30 AM Shachrit - Dvar Torah by Rav Mendel Wuensch

9:45-10:30 AM Kid's Program

10:30 AM Kiddush

11:00 AM Kolot Yamim by Tal Braude "Lessons Learned From The Rabbi & Rebbetzin"

6:20 PM Rabbi David Rue Shiur

7:05 PM Mincha Followed By Seudat Shlishit "Raava D'Ravin" with Rav Mendel Wuensch

8:02 PM Arvit

8:07 PM Shabbat Ends

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## Weekday Events & Lecture Schedule

**9-11 AM Monday** Men's Kollel By Rav Mendel Wuensch @ Young Israel Of Poleg,  
Hanurit St. 33, Poleg

**8 PM Monday** Sages Of The Ages Series By Rav Mendel Wuensch on "The Rav"  
@ Briga Towers, Ehud Manor 7 Beit Knesset/Tenants Room

**10:30 AM Tuesday** Family Purity Perspectives By Rebbetzin Itty @ Biscotti For  
Women In Childbearing Years

**5-6 PM Tuesday** Programming For All Ages With Oryah Seminary! Mommy & Me,  
Toddlers Room, Kid's Program, Teen Room & Women's Kollel  
@ Tefilat Yamim, Corner of Beni Berman and Uzi Hitman Streets

**11 AM Wednesday** Experience Prayer Series By Rav Mendel Wuensch

## Contact Info

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**Location:** Chaim Guri School, Corner of Beni Berman & Uzi Hitman Streets,  
Entrance On Uzi Hitman Street