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**Rabbi Uri Zohar, Gifted Trailblazer in Comedy, Film, and Teshuva, Dead at 86**

**By** [**David Israel**](https://www.jewishpress.com/author/di/)

[](https://www.jewishpress.com/wp-content/uploads/Rabbi-Uri-Zohar-and-his-son-Efraim-Dec-12-2010..jpg)**Rabbi Uri Zohar and his son Efraim, Dec 12 2010. Photo Credit: Moshe Shai/Flash90**

Rabbi Uri Zohar fell in his Jerusalem home Thursday morning, June 2nd, and the medics who rushed to his side performed CPR on him for more than an hour but in the end, were forced to call his death. The coverage of his passing offered a remarkable distinction between Israel’s religious press, compared to the secular, with one exception: they all loved and admired this man who was destined to be a culture hero and an inspiring innovator no matter where he turned.

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**Uri Zohar, circa 1960s**

He was born in Tel Aviv, in 1935, and for the first 25 years or so of his adult life was renowned as one of Israel’s most talented actors, stand-up comics, screenwriters, and film directors.

His film “Three Days and a Child” based on the novel by A. B. Yehoshua, received critical acclaim and its star, Oded Kotler, won the Acting Award at the Cannes Film Festival.

For those 25 years, you couldn’t talk about Israeli popular culture without referring to his enormous contributions. Israelis loved his direct and occasionally blunt sense of humor and irony, his daring vulnerability, and his love for the values they shared. He and his long-time friend and artistic partner, the late singer Arik Einstein, were poster boys for secular Israel’s most cheerful view of itself.

And then, practically overnight, Uri Zohar switched sides to examine and then follow his Jewish roots, with the same vigor and excitement that characterized his show biz career. His small book, “Choose Life,” influenced a generation of Israelis who followed in his path to a life of mitzvah observance.

Rabbi Zohar used his skills to promote religious Jewish life and was unafraid to confront the people he used to entertain with a radically different message, although with his familiar personal touch.

Israel was much smaller and more homogeneous in the 1970s, with a limited number of media outlets, a fact that greatly enhanced Rabbi Zohar’s impact on Israeli society, more so on the secular side.

Lior Schlein, a sworn anti-religious Israeli entertainer whose personality is astonishingly reminiscent of Uri Zohar circa 1970, expressed secular Israel’s ambivalence about Zohar in a Tweet: “Thanks for the movies and sketches, Uri. We didn’t exactly agree on all the matters of G-d and the next world, but today I hope for your sake that you were right.”

The Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi David Lau, offered the religious community’s view: “Together with all the people of Israel, I mourn this morning the departure a great man, my beloved friend, the righteous Rabbi Uri Zohar, who was an exemplary figure in our generation, paved the way to the roots of the people and returned many away from sin. He was privileged to live a meaningful life of Torah, in modesty and humility, out of devotion to the Blessed Creator.”

In my humble opinion, both notes are absolutely right. Uri Zohar of my youth offered a secular promise and a catharsis the moment you turned on your radio or TV to hear and see him. He then offered a G-d-loving promise and reward with the same all-out availability and connection.

May his memory be blessed.

Rabbi Uri Zohar was buried in Jerusalem’s Givat Shaul Cemetery.

*Reprinted from last week’s website of The Jewish Press.*

**Thoughts that Count**

They shall confess the sin that they committed (Num. 5:7)

The commandment to confess one's sins is the cornerstone of the mitzva of repentance. By mentioning it in connection with the sin of stealing, we learn a lesson. G-d gives every person a certain measure of strength and energy to be able to perform the mitzvot. By using that energy to commit a sin, he is "stealing" from

G-d. *(Chidushei HaRim)*

Speak to Aharon and his sons, saying, "So shall you bless the Children of Israel (Num. 6:23)

According to Jewish law, when the kohen recites the Priestly Blessing he must raise his hands and stretch them out. This teaches us that when someone is in need, we must do more than wish him well and bless him with whatever he needs. We must "raise our hands" and stretch them out -- we must actually do something to help them. *(Fun Unzer Alter Otzer)*

*Reprinted from the Parhat Nasso 1997/5757 edition of L’Chaim Weekly,*

**Rav Avigdor Miller on**

**John Hinckley and a**

**Country Gone Mad**



**QUESTION:** **What can we learn from the verdict given to John Hinckley (who attempted to assassinate President Reagan on March 30 1981) of non-guilty by reason of insanity?**

**ANSWER:** We learn from this that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is angry at America; He is making America insane. If a country has fallen so low, if the judges are such rascals, so stupid as to acquit a man on weak grounds of insanity – a man who attempted to kill the President! – it is a tragedy; and such a thing could never happen unless Hakodosh Boruch Hu is angry at that country.

America is being punished today and we are sinking lower and lower. And I want to tell you one thing that may hurt: to a big extent you people are to blame because if you don’t raise your voices in protest constantly against this wildness and wickedness then you are sharing the blame. Thousands of letters should go out protesting this. There should be big protests! The American public is crazy if they don’t do something!

But it is all a sign of a puraniyos. Hakodosh Boruch Hu is sending puraniyos on the country. When such insane verdicts can be handed down, it means it is an encouragement for every adventurer to try to put a bullet in the President’s head.

*Reprinted from June 2, 2022 email of Toras Avigdor. Adapted from Tape #415 (July 1982).*

**The Lesson of the Tabernacle that Every Jew Must Use all of One’s Talents in**

**The Service of G-d, A-mighty**

**From the Talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe**

**Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, Zt”l**



In this week's Torah portion, Naso, we read of the offering brought by the princes of each tribe of Israel upon the completion of the Tabernacle: "And it came to pass on the day that Moshe had finished setting up the Tabernacle...that the nesi'im (princes) of Israel brought their offering...six covered wagons and 12 oxen, a wagon for two of the princes, and for each one an ox."

The contribution of the nesi'im, the leaders of each tribe, consisted of the wagons that were to carry the Tabernacle and the oxen that pulled them. The 12 nesi'im contributed six oxen; that is to say, each nasi contributed half an ox.

At first glance this seems like a small contribution. Why weren't the nesi'im more generous with their offerings? The Tabernacle was an extremely heavy structure consisting of numerous large and varied components. Why then were they content to offer just half an ox each?

To explain:

The Tabernacle was built according to strict specifications. No element of the entire Sanctuary -- not even the smallest detail -- was superfluous. Every item served a distinct function, including the wagons that transported it from place to place. Thus, because the number of wagons required to carry the Tabernacle was specifically six, no more than that number could be contributed by the nesi'im. Furthermore, the wagons had to conform to an exact set of dimensions, no more and no less.

Our Sages declared: "Nothing created by the Holy One, Blessed Be He, in His world was created in vain"-- a principle that applies in every time and in every place. Every detail in the vast universe has a specific function, and not one element has been created without a purpose.

Just as every part of the Tabernacle was necessary and played an integral role, so too must every aspect of our inner "Sanctuaries" -- our own individual talents and abilities -- be fully utilized and taken advantage of. All of a Jew's inner strengths and capacities must be used to fulfill his Divine mission in life. After all, G-d does not endow us with these talents for nothing.

Time, too, is something we must utilize properly.

Each and every moment we are granted is precious. Even if 23 hours and 59 minutes of the day have passed and only one minute remains, it too must not be wasted. For time itself falls into the category of things we are obligated to use the fullest.

*Reprinted from the Parhat Nasso 1997/5757 (Iussue #472) edition of L’Chaim Weekly, a publication of the Lubavitch Youth Organization in Brooklyn, NY. Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Volume 28.*

**Another Thought for the Parsha**

On the tenth day, the leader of the children of Dan... (Num. 7:66)

The tenth day of Nisan was set aside especially for the tribe of Dan, because when Yaakov blessed his children, he blessed Dan with the power of earthly judgement. The tenth day of Nisan always falls on the same day of the week as Rosh Hashana, when G-d judges mankind. Therefore, the leader of the tribe associated with earthly judgement brings his offering on a day which is connected with Divine judgement.

*(Otzer Chaim)*

*Reprinted from Vedibarta Bam, compliled by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky*

**Rabbi Berel Wein on**

**Parshat Nasso 5782**



The book of Bamidbar contains many puzzling portions. In this week's Parsha, the Torah records the sacrificial offerings by the leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel, upon the dedication and consecration of the tabernacle. These twelve offerings were identical in every detail. Yet, the Torah describes each of these offerings individually, as though the offering of each leader was his decision and was unique and different from the offering of his colleague who was the leader of very different tribe.

Over the ages, many ideas and interpretations have been offered for this seeming redundancy. The overwhelming number of interpretations concentrate on the idea that even though the offerings may physically have been identical, the spirit and motivation of each differed from individual to individual, and tribe to tribe.

This type of interpretation lends itself to understanding how one Jew can achieve personal prayer while reciting a set number of printed texts which everyone else around him or her is also reciting at the very same moment. Since no two people are alike physically, they certainly are not alike mentally, emotionally, or spiritually.

Prayer is derived not only from the brain and lips of the person praying but, rather, it also comes from the emotions and unique perspective that each human being brings to the relationship with one's creator and to life. So, too, the offerings of the leaders of the tribes of Israel in the desert may have been physically identical, but the emotional perspective and spiritual elevation of each of the offerings was truly unique and distinctive for that tribal prince who brought it and gave it as a service of the public in the Mishkan.

Another lesson that is to be learned from this seeming repetition of the offerings of the leaders of the tribes of Israel, is the triumph of constancy over flashes of brilliance. It is the old parable regarding the race between the tortoise and the hare. And repetition always leads to a feeling of security and hope. Much of Judaism is based upon repetitive behavior. With each recurring action, we absorb and internalize it into our very being, so that doing the right thing in fulfilling the commandments of the Torah becomes second nature to us.

This is especially true in the field of prayer. I once read a memoir of an Israeli soldier who fought in the battle for Jerusalem's Ammunition Hill in 1967 during the Six Day War. The Jordanian army was entrenched on that hill, and most military experts believed it was suicidal to try and dislodge them. The hill was the central point in the battle for Jerusalem, and by controlling it, the rest of the West Bank was open to mobile contact and conquest.

The soldier wrote of the terrible battle that waged that night, and how hundreds of his comrades were killed and wounded, while the Jordanians also suffered great losses. He wrote that at one moment in the battle he was alone and nearly surrounded by Jordanian troops. He said that he felt an overwhelming urge at that moment to pray, but he then realized that since he had never prayed in his life, he did not know what to do. He resolved, therefore, that if he survived – and he did – he would learn how to pray, so that when he had to pray, he would know what he must do.

Shabbat shalom

*Reprinted from the current website of rabbiwein.com*

**Parshas Nasoh**

**Arrogance: A**

**State of Delusion**

**By Rabbi Bentzion Shafier**

**Founder of TheSmuz.com**



A man or a woman who separates themselves as a Nazir to HASHEM…Bamidbar 6:2

With these words the Torah begins the parsha of Nazir. A Nazir is one who in order to distance himself from sin will separate from worldly pleasures and dedicate himself for a given time exclusively to serving HASHEM. because he is now in a state of holiness, he must not cut his hair, drink wine or become spiritually impure. If he does become spiritually impure during this time, he must bring a sacrifice of atonement.

The Gemerah explains that Rebbe Shimon Hatzadik never ate from such a korbon that a Nazir brought, because he was afraid that the Nazirs intentions weren’t pure, and the korbon might be invalidated.

**Gemerah Nazi 9b**

*Rebbe Shimon HaTzadik said all of my life I never ate from the Korbon that Nazir brought. One day a nazir came from the south and I saw that he was extremely handsome, with beautiful eyes, and long flowing hair. I said to him, “My son, why do you wish to destroy your beautiful hair? He said to me, “I was a shepard working for my father, one day I went to fill the water from the spring, I looked into my reflection in the water and my evil inclination grabbed me, and tried to fill me with arrogance. I said to him, ‘Wicked one, why are you being arrogant in a world that isn’t yours? In a body that will be filled with worm. I will shave you to serve HASHEM. Rebbe Shimon HaTzadik said, I kissed him on the head and I said to him, “My son, there should be many more nazirs like you in the Jewish nation.*

The Maharsah explains that this Nazir was a Chacham.

The man’s statement is difficult to understand: he said to himself, “Wicked one, why are you arrogant in a world that isn’t yours. Why does arrogance automatically make him wicked? And if arrogance is wicked, what difference does it make whether it is his world or HASHEM’s?

The answer to this question is based on understanding arrogance

The Chovos Halevovos (Shaar Hachnah) explains that the antidote to arrogance is to remember that I am human. The simple recognition that I am made of flesh and blood will dislodge the sense of superiority from my heart. The reason for this is that all arrogance is based on delusion. The delusion that I am powerful, the delusion that I am invinible and ultimately the delusion that I will live forever.

Arrogance is not a feeling of self worth, rather it is a false sense of invulerablity

*A master needs a servant, and a servant needs a master*

*Arrogance is based on a state of delusion*

Talent on loan from G-d

Taking credit for the attribute

To recognize one’s strengths isn’t arrogance.

*Humility is pivotal towards our Avodas HASHEM*

It is difficult to be humble when you are so great

In the common parlance we hear the expression it is

really it is easier- provided you recognize where those gifts come from. The Misilos Yesharim explains that more that I have, the more that I have been given—provided that I remember that I have been given all of this. The problem is that I take credit for it, in some sense I feel as if I were its creator.

***Reprinted from the one of the three volumes of The Shmuz on the Parsha.***

**11 Kippah Facts Every**

**Jewish Guy Should Know**

**By**[**Yehuda Altein**](https://www.chabad.org/search/keyword_cdo/kid/17830/jewish/Altein-Yehuda.htm)



**1. A Kippah Is a Head-Covering**

A [kippah](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3913641/jewish/The-Kippah-Yarmulke.htm) is a head-covering traditionally worn by Jewish men and boys as a sign of reverence and respect to G‑d.

**2. It Is Also Called a Yarmulke or Koppel**

*Kippah* (lit. dome) is the Hebrew word for *skullcap*. It is also referred to in Yiddish as a [*yarmulke*](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3913641/jewish/The-Kippah-Yarmulke.htm), or less frequently as a *koppel*(lit. little cap).

According to many, *yarmulke* is a contraction of the Aramaic words *yarei malka*, “awe of the King” (referring to [G‑d](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/433240/jewish/God.htm)), since wearing it reminds us that there is a Higher Being above us.

**3. It Is a Reminder of G‑d’s Presence**

Wearing a kippah helps us remember that there is a Higher Being to whom we are held accountable. Wearing a kippah is required by Jewish law for reasons of modesty and to distinguish ourselves as Jews,[1](javascript:doFootnote('1a4766006');) reminding us of our responsibility and privilege as members of the Chosen Nation.

**4. Kippahs Come in a Variety of Sizes, Materials, and Designs**

Kippahs come in various colors and designs, and are made from materials as diverse as velvet, suede, leather, and knitted yarn. Many sites offer personalized embroidering services and will add the images or words of your choice. (It is not uncommon to spot a boy with a kippah featuring his name.)

Some communities have developed kippah designs that are highly intricate works of art, such as those made by Jewish artisans from Yemen and Georgia, most of whom now live in Israel.

**5. It Is Worn at All Times**

The Talmud states that one should not walk the distance of four cubits bareheaded.[2](javascript:doFootnote('2a4766006');) A head-covering is also required when praying, reciting a blessing, or entering a synagogue.[3](javascript:doFootnote('3a4766006');) According to many authorities, head-coverings are required at all times (even when sitting in place and doing nothing).[4](javascript:doFootnote('4a4766006');)

**6. It Is Sourced in the**[**Talmud**](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/2537389/jewish/Talmud.htm)

The practice to wear a kippah at all times comes from an anecdote in the Talmud in which a woman was told by astrologers that her son was destined to become a thief. To prevent this from happening, she insisted that he keep his head covered at all times, to remind him of G‑d’s presence and instill within him the fear of heaven. Once, while sitting under a palm tree, his head-covering fell off. Suddenly overcome by a burning desire to eat fruit from the tree which did not belong to him, it was in that moment he realized the strong effect wearing a kippah had on him.[5](javascript:doFootnote('5a4766006');)

**7. Some Cover the Head Completely**

In certain communities, it was customary to wear large, tall kippahs that covered the head completely. Many Lithuanian scholars of yesteryear are pictured wearing such headgear. The kippahs of Bukharian Jewry are similarly famous for their large size, as well as for their intricate embroidery.

**8. Some Also Wear Hats When Praying**

In addition to wearing a kippah, many men also wear a hat when [praying](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/862345/jewish/What-Is-Jewish-Prayer.htm). Donning a hat is viewed as an act of respect; as recently as a few decades ago, when men went out in public, they would make sure to wear a hat. A hat is also reminiscent of the turban worn by the priests during the [Temple](https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/52755/jewish/What-Was-the-Holy-Temple.htm) service.

**9. Women Do Not Wear Them**

Women and girls do not wear kippahs. One reason for this is that the kippah is there to remind us of G‑d’s presence (see above). Women, who are more spiritually intuitive and possess more powerful faith, do not require a constant reminder.

Married women do cover their heads, albeit not with a kippah, and for different reasons.

**10. It May Be Discarded and Replaced**

When a prayer book or other sacred object becomes worn out and unusable, it may not be discarded. Instead, out of respect for the object’s sanctity, it is carefully buried in a Jewish cemetery. (Many synagogues provide this service on behalf of their congregants.)

Despite the kippah’s special role in Jewish life, it does not possess any inherent holiness, and it may be discarded and replaced with another as needed.

**11. A Printer Favored Lashes Over Walking Without a Kippah**

Rabbis Pinchas and Shmuel Abba Schapiro, brothers and chassidic printers in the town of Slavita, were falsely accused of murder and arrested by the czarist police in 1839. As punishment, they were forced to run the gauntlet. While being led through two rows of vicious soldiers, Rabbi Shmuel Abba’s kippah fell off. Despite the ongoing blows, he refused to proceed until it was returned to him.

This story sent waves through the Russian Jewish community, inspiring many to disregard their discomfort and wear a kippah at all times.

*Reprinted from this week’s website of Chabad.Org Magazine*

**The Merit of Yosef**

Why was the Nassi of Shevet Ephraim, descendant of Yosef, permitted to offer his private korbanos on Shabbos, although usually only communal korbanos are brought on Shabbos?

Hashem said, “Yosef, you observed the Shabbos in Mitzrayim before I commanded to keep this day holy. When you invited your brothers to dine in your palace, you told your son Menashe to prepare the Shabbos meals on Friday. In return, I shall honor your descendant by permitting him to bring his personal korban on Shabbos.” (The Midrash Says)

*Reprinted from the Parshas Nasso 5782 email of The Weekly Vort.*