



גַּן הַלֵּב * Gan HaLev

Garden of the Heart

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2005
www.ganhalev.org

415.488.4524

TEVET–SHEVAT–ADAR 5765
shalom@jcs gv.org

LEARNING MORE

Tu B'Shevat

THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD SAYS “It is forbidden to live in a town that has no garden or greenery.” We are fortunate in northern California to have abundant trees, gardens, and greenery year round. Tu B'Shevat celebrates a new year for trees, as it comes at the end of one year's fruit crop and, with new buds bursting open, the beginning of the next year's crop. Tu B'Shevat is a time to plant trees and to honor the life-giving benefits of trees. Trees are the lungs of the planet, creating oxygen and taking in carbon dioxide. They restore land, prevent mudslides, provide homes for small animals, fruit and shade, and add beauty and value to any property.

Jewish customs for celebrating Tu B'Shevat vary, but most center on sharing and celebrating fruit. A

Tu B'Shevat seder follows many of the same customs of a Passover seder, but includes four fruits along with four cups of wine. We are reminded on Tu B'Shevat that we are God's caretakers on Earth. We are called on to be good stewards of the environment, to make choices that show respect for our planet, and to do all we can to preserve and honor its air, water, land and trees.



For more information we recommend the book *The Jewish Year* by Barbara Rush (Stewart, Tabori & Chang). ☛

by Patti Breitman

The Woodacre Torah

by Suzanne Sadowsky

THE SEFER TORAH SCROLL that is entrusted to our Congregation for our services, for our Bat and Bar Mitzvah celebrations, for baby namings and for study purposes has

survived a long expanse of time and distance before reaching its present home in the San Geronimo Valley. Eleven and a half years ago in 1993, just in time for Rosh Hashanah, it came to the end of a journey that spanned nearly two centuries and thousands of miles on two continents to reach its destination in the San Geronimo Valley in Marin County, California.

Soon after Gan HaLev, the Jewish Congregation of the San Geronimo Valley, was formed in early 1992 we learned from one of our members, Gershon Mitchel, that there was an organization

in England that had acquired more than a thousand torah scrolls that had survived the Holocaust. We understood that these scrolls were sometimes made available to new emerging Jewish communities for educational purposes. The scrolls had once belonged to Jewish communities that had thrived in Bohemia and Moravia for hundreds of years. After Kristlnacht in November 1938, and the subsequent Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, all of the Jews who were still living there were rounded up and transported to Theresienstadt concentration camp. The old synagogues were desecrated, emptied of their contents and the buildings were used by the Nazis for other purposes. Their contents — books, artifacts, and torah scrolls — were moved to a warehouse in Prague where they were methodically catalogued and stored until 1964 when a British art dealer discovered them. After

TU B'SHEVAT CELEBRATION

Sunday, January 30 10:30 AM–12:30 PM
2710 Chileno Valley Road, Petaluma

Please join us at our second annual welcoming of the New Year for the Trees at the Kaplow home in Chileno Valley. In lieu of Sunday School, we will be celebrating a Tu B'Shevat Seder complete with fruits of the seven sacred species from Israel and the singing of traditional Tu B'Shevat melodies. Children and adults all invited. Pot-luck lunch to follow...bring a dish to share.

Call ahead for directions, 707-769-9114.
Rain or shine—bring rain gear.

Shabbat Services

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 6 P.M., celebrate the Sabbath with Rabbi Bernie Robinson at the home of Patti Breitman and Stan Rosenfeld in Fairfax. Vegan pot-luck dinner at 6 sharp followed by services at 7 sharp. Please come on time, and if you plan to come for dinner, bring a vegan dish to share. Questions about what is vegan? Call Patti: 459-1666.

Directions to Patti and Stan's

12 RALLY COURT, FAIRFAX

Coming from Fairfax: One mile west of downtown Fairfax and .3 miles from the 7-11 on Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

turn Right onto Mitchell Drive (signs say Christ Lutheran Church and Canyon Village). Go over two speed bumps (very high bumps; go slowly). Rally Court will be on your right. Park on Mitchell Drive and walk to #12 Rally Court, behind the last carport on the right.

From West Marin: Come over White's Hill and make the second left after Lefty Gomez baseball field onto Glen Drive (as if you're going to White Hill School). Make an immediate right onto Mitchell Court and an immediate right again onto Mitchell Drive. Rally Court will be the first street on your left. Park on Mitchell and walk to #12 Rally Ct., behind the last carport on the right.



New Shabbat Discussions

GanHaLev is launching a new program for 2005. Once about every three months there will be an adult discussion of a selected topic following a Friday night service and potluck. The topics will be related to our lives as Jews and will be selected by congregation members. Topics can range from politics, to social issues, to economics, to environmental concerns, or to whatever the congregation would like to discuss.

The first two services and discussions will be held at the home of Bob Cahn, 180 Bothin Road, Fairfax. It is hoped that the discussion will be led by a member with a particular interest in their topic. Bob will facilitate to assure that everyone can participate in a reasonable time frame. A typical evening would start at 6:30 P.M. as people arrive and socialize, with services from 7-7:45, blessings and dinner 7:45-8:15, discussion 8:15-9:30. Bob has a room set aside for children, so that families can attend.

Scheduled dates for the first two of these services and discussions are:

☆ March 4, 2005 ☆ June 3, 2005

Please contact Bob Cahn, 453-5890, with potential topics and with a willingness to prepare for and lead one of the discussions. If this program is successful, it can be expanded to include guest speakers/leaders or go in whatever direction fits the needs of GanHaLev. ☺

World Music Concert with Israeli Musician Yair Dalal

In association with the Jewish Musical Festival, the Dance Palace presents this special concert featuring the festival's resident artist, Yair Dalal. Dalal, a composer, violinist, and oud player, is probably the most prolific Israeli ethnic musician today. His music reflects the strong affinity he has for the desert and its inhabitants; Dalal's family came to Israel from Baghdad. Dalal creates new Middle Eastern music by interweaving the traditions of Iraqi and Jewish Arabic music with a range of influences originating from such diverse cultural milieus as the Balkans and India. Dalal was nominated by BBC World Music Rewards 2002 as the best musician from the Middle East, and performed at the Nobel Peace Prize gala concert in Oslo 1994. A peace activist, he devotes much time and energy to helping to remove ideological barriers between people and musicians from different cultures, in particular between Jews and Arabs. The concert will take place Sunday, March 20, 4 P.M., \$15 general, \$13 students and seniors, \$5 teens and kids. Purchase advance tickets at www.dancepalace.org. ☺

Mazel Tov!

To Hannah Leah Whitten-Vile and her family in celebration of being called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah. ☺



גן חל"ב ✪ Gan HaLev

The Jewish Congregation of the San Geronimo Valley

P.O. Box 280, Woodacre CA 94973-0280

voicemail: 415.488.4524

shalom@jcs gv.org www.ganhalev.org

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NEWSLETTER

Laurie Chorna, <i>Editor</i>	488.1428
Davo Knepler, <i>Proofreader</i>	488.0241
Bonnie Fisk-Hayden, <i>Design and Layout</i>	663-8411

negotiations with the Czech authorities, arrangements were made for the scrolls to be transported to London where they were restored by a Trust that had been established for that purpose. Our scroll had been given the number 1285. It had been taken from one of a number of small Jewish communities near Sedlcany, a small city in the countryside, 50 kilometers south of Prague.

In the Spring of 1993, we wrote a letter to Mrs. Ruth Shaffer, Trustee and Joint Chair of the Memorial Scrolls Trust at Westminster Synagogue in London. After an exchange of correspondence and phone calls, Mrs. Shaffer felt assured that we were a legitimate Jewish congregation, and an agreement was reached to provide us with a scroll "on permanent loan" as long as our Congregation continued to exist. A donation of \$1500 to the Trust was requested.

In September of 1993, Mr. Leon Cowan of Manchester, England was getting ready for a trip to America to visit his daughter and her family, the Chadwicks of Woodacre, who were founding members of the new fledgling Jewish Congregation. Leon had planned his trip so that he would be arriving in time for the High Holidays. The scroll was picked up in London and taken to the Manchester Synagogue by Leon's son who lived in London. Three weeks later, Leon boarded a flight from Manchester with the scroll in his arms and the customs papers in his pocket. He arrived in New York where he passed safely through customs and boarded another flight to San Francisco International Airport, still carrying the scroll in his arms. He was greeted at the airport in San Francisco by a small group of people from Woodacre who were anxiously awaiting his arrival.

Upon receiving this remarkable, beautiful Torah, I wanted to find out more about its history and the people who had lovingly used it, celebrated with and cared for it for so long. I wrote a story, part imagined, part fact, to tell as best I could the story of this beautiful, sacred scroll. Our scroll is our Tree of Life. It is our Sefer Torah that has inspired us to form our community, to read, remember and tell our stories, to give Tzedakah, and to teach our children. You can read the story on this website: http://www.ganhalev.org/torah/the_woodacre_torah.html. ☺



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Cheder Chailights Toddler Days at Sunday School

by *Suzanne Sadowsky*

FOR THE PAST COUPLE OF MONTHS my granddaughter, Sadie Carter has had the pleasure of joining the "big kids" for a mini-Sunday School experience on the first Sunday of the month. Sadie loves seeing her friends Sylvie and Shoshana Knepler and Hannah and Sarah Egger-Weiler, as well as a few children closer to her own age, like Abraham Lebos.

Toddlers have been welcomed and encouraged to come to our school (along with their parents) this year to be part of the morning assembly which begins at 10 A.M. Everyone from all of the classes and grades come together in a circle for some singing, a few prayers (like the Shema) and a teaching. All of the staff participate, including Rabbi Shula. After the assembly the littlest ones have been welcomed into Susan Tacherra's Aleph Class where they are invited to join in the Hebrew alphabet song or a crafts project. The toddlers don't generally stay for the entire morning but they do get a delicious taste of Jewish learning. (Susan is the Director of the West Marin Montessori School and she has a wonderful way of engaging little ones). Sadie came home singing Alephbet and told me how much she liked coming to our school.

There is no tuition charge for this innovative Toddler Program. The scheduled days for the remainder of the school year are February 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, and June 5. Come along with your toddler and join the fun. Call 488-4524 if you need directions. Sunday School is held at the upper campus of the San Geronimo School. ☺

ANDREW RADER, L.A.C. M.S.C.M.

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Please join Gan HaLev for an
All-Music Kabbalat Shabbat Service!
Shabbat Shir HaLev



Friday, January 28, 2005 at 7 P.M.

at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center

Bring the family and join us for
 a spiritually uplifting and fun evening
 Refreshments will follow

For more information please call 488-4524

Multi-generation Klezmer Band

All ages welcome...must be able to play an instrument.
 (Music reading helps but not necessary.) Rehearsals will be
 on Sundays after Jewish School. A SMALL FEE WILL BE
 CHARGED. If interested, contact Julie Egger at 488-9125
 or julieegger@comcast.net. ☺

Bartons Annual Sale and Fundraiser

We are pleased to announce our third annual Passover
 Dessert Sale. Proceeds of the sale will be used to support the
 Penina Maier Children's School. Last year we raised over
 \$500. Let's top that this year! Passover begins April 23, so
 you'll want to stock up on these Passover sweets. There is
 something for everyone.

An order form is enclosed, which you can send in directly,
 or you can place your order with any of our students as there
 are also sales incentives and awards for the school children.
 Help us make this a successful fundraiser.

Catalogs and order forms will be handed out at school
 mid-January. If you would like to know more about the
 products, you can call Karen or Davo at 488-0241.

Send your completed order form and check to Gan HaLev,
 P.O. Box 280, Woodacre, CA 94973, no later than February
 20. Product will be available by the beginning of April, and
 we will call you to arrange delivery or pick-up. Please feel
 free to call if you have any questions. ☺

Yahrzeits in memory of. . .

Betty Seiden	January 2, 2002	19 Tevet	(Dec. 31, 2004)
Muriel Oberlander	January 4, 1987	3 Tevet	(Dec. 15, 2004)
Max Zamist	January 16, 1997	8 Shevat	(Jan. 18, 2005)
Penina Maier	January 25, 1997	17 Shevat	(Jan. 27, 2005)
Abraham Knepler	February 8, 1996	19 Shevat	(Jan. 29, 2005)

In the Pleasure Garden of Torah

THE TORAH PORTION for 2 Adar is Terumah, which is
 about the construction of the first sanctuary, the Mishkan.
 It was a huge tent that the Israelites carried all through their
 wanderings in the desert. The most interesting part is that
 it was constructed completely out of the gifts of the people,
 which they gave from their hearts.

Join us for a Shabbat service, a potluck meal, and an eve-
 ning of creative Torah discussion with Rabbi Shula Stevens at
 the home of Andy and Shanna Rader on February 11, 2005,
 beginning at 6:30 P.M. Please arrive between 6 and 6:30, so
 that we can start the service promptly at 6:30.

DIRECTIONS: 100 MONTEZUMA IN FOREST KNOLLS.
 Sir Francis Drake to Forest Knolls. Turn south on Monte-
 zuma, follow the road about 200 yards to a yellow house with
 a wood fence on the right, opposite the intersection of Forest
 and Montezuma. Call 488-0320 for additional information. ☺

Thank You to Our Generous Congregants

SHABBATS

Bob Cahn for hosting our November Shabbat gathering
Veronica Buros & Karen Koenig for hosting the November Oneg Shabbat after the Music Shabbat
Diane and Sheldon Whitten-Vile for their continued coordination for the music shabbats—and to the Shir Halev music group for providing the music for the November Shabbat

CHANUKAH

Idie & David Weinsoff and Leslie & Oren Harari for organizing the great Chanukah party
The “Gan HaLev Klezmer Orchestra” (Michael Pelz Sherman, Lenny Levy, Dan Harris, and Jake Weinsoff)
Our teachers, Elana Eytan, Sandra Killen, Reb Shula, and Susan Tacherra for their participation in the Chanukah festivities. . . and to all the children for their help to tell the Chanukah story and to Lenny for his kugel!
Elana Eytan and Suzanne Sadowsky for the Chanukah Blessings at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center Holiday Festival

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

To all the parents who have helped in class so far this year:
Renee Emunah, Suze Lipman, David Kaplow, Nancy Masters, Michael Pelz-Sherman, Margie Schwartz, Lenny Levy, Al Weiler, Susan Witt, Ilene Wolff, and Jane Woodside

MISCELLANEOUS

Susan, Philp, and Joshua Witt for Newsletter labeling
Dahlia Kamesar for attending the Faiths Initiative quarterly meeting and helping to carry out the Faiths Initiative grant project, as well as serving on the Board of Directors of the San Geronimo Valley Community Center
Jerome Rubin for serving on the Board of Directors of the San Geronimo Valley Community Center
BJE for first installment of the 2004–05 School Enhancement Plan
Sara Tolchin, and daughter, Jesse for helping to wrap presents for Valley Toys & Joys. To the Penina Maier Children’s School for the Valley Toys & Joys gift wrapping project
Judy Voets for volunteering for the Healthy Community Collaborative
Thelma Weiss for serving on the local School Board
Veronica Buros for her work at the SGVCC Holiday Art Faire
Dave Cort & Suzanne Sadowsky for their continued work throughout the year for the Food Bank and the holiday distribution of food and gifts

DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM

Congregation Ner Shalom, Cotati in honor of Shir Halev
Mayflower Community Chorus in honor of Andreas Wittenstein for his music composition
Congregation members and friends for the Williams Family Fund
Carol Friedman
Roz & Fred Seiden
Michael & Susan Lipman
Eva Seligman-Kenard

Yes, I support Gan HaLev!

I wish to become a member of the Congregation (Annual dues are 1% of adjusted gross income)

I wish to make a donation in the amount of:

- \$1000 \$500 \$360 \$180
 \$100 \$50 \$36 other \$ _____
 \$ _____ per month for one year

I plan to make an online donation through CharityBox.com

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Administrative Aide

WELCOME JULIE VOGT TO OUR STAFF! Julie will be working with Laurie to carry out all administrative matters for the Congregation and the Penina Maier Children's School. Come by during Sunday School to meet her!

Julie holds a Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Arts from the University of California at Berkeley. She has spent much of her career thus far in the field of human resources in a variety of industries, including government, as well as public and privately held companies. Currently, Julie helps people buy and sell houses with her partner, Mitch Todd. Together they have five children (ages 5-11) and live in Forest Knolls. ☺

Condolences to the Knepler-Koenig family on the recent loss of Catherine Koenig—mother, mother-in-law, and grandmother.

Candlelighting Time and Parsha

JANUARY	PARSHA	TIME
21	Beshalach Exodus 13:17-17:15	5:04pm
28	Yitro Exodus 18:1-20:23	5:12pm
February 4	Mishpatim Exodus 21:1-24:18	5:20pm
11	Terumah Exodus 25:1-27:19	5:28pm
18	Tetzaveh Exodus 27:20-30:10	5:35pm
25	Ki Tisa Exodus 30:11-34:34	5:43pm
March 4	Vayakhel Exodus 35:1-38:20	5:50pm

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The Triumph of Eve

COME HEAR AUTHOR MATT BIERS-ARIEL discuss his new book, *The Triumph of Eve*, at a potluck brunch at Suzanne Sadowsky's, 60 Rockridge, Woodacre. You will never think about Bible stories the same way again. Matt Biers-Ariel has rewritten some of the best known Bible stories to encourage readers to grapple with issues and questions that are hidden in the original texts. These new versions of old favorites are witty, sometimes hilarious, and always profound.

What was it like to be in Joseph's sandals as his brothers sold him into Egyptian slavery? How did Esther use her pretty face as a tool to save the Hebrew people? And what in the name of—well, you know who—happened to the unicorns included on the ark's original passenger manifest?

Come find out on Saturday, February 26, 2005 at 10:30 A.M., and discuss these new interpretations with the author.

Directions: Railroad Ave. to Carson, turn right to Rockridge, turn left on Rockridge and follow to #60, 488-4861. ☺

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Data Entry Project: for San Geronimo Disaster Council (about 75-100 entries).

Help Needed: for Congregation Administrator's office.

We need to get rid of some equipment which was donated in the past and is no longer being used, such as a copier and some old computer monitors, etc. Please call 488-8827 if you can help.

Call Dahlia Kamesar, 488-1919 to volunteer or to learn about other opportunities.

Let us hear from you!

Send your input for this Newsletter by the 15th to:

P.O. Box 280 Woodacre CA 94973

e-mail: shalom@ganhalev.org.

A subscription to the Newsletter is included in the membership fee. Subscriptions for non-members are available with a minimum donation of \$36 per year.

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Long-range Congregation Calendar – 2005

FOLLOWING IS A CONGREGATION CALENDAR with school dates and projected congregation activities through June, 2005. Events are subject to change and more will be added, so be sure to check your current Newsletter or bi-weekly email for updated information. Many of our planned events include toddlers and families, as well as the Sunday School students. All Congregation members and friends are invited and welcome to attend all events.

	EVENT	NOTES	LOCATION & TIME	
January	2	Sunday School	Toddlers welcome	
	9	Sunday School		
	16	No School/MLK wkend	Board Meeting	Michael Pelz-Sherman's 10:15 A.M.–12:15 P.M.
	21	Friday	Shabbat gathering with Bernie Robinson	Patti Breitman's 6 P.M.
	23	Sunday School		
	28	Friday	Music Shabbat	CC: 7 P.M.
February	30	Sunday School	Tu B'Shevat Gathering	Kaplows' 10:30 A.M.
	6	Sunday School	Toddlers welcome	
	11	Friday	Shabbat Service—Reb Shula	Raders' 6:30 P.M.
	13	Sunday School		
	20	No School/Pres. Day Wkend.	Board Meeting	CC: 10:15 A.M.–12:15 P.M.
	26	Saturday	Book reading Matt Biers-Ariel	Suzanne Sadowsky's 10:30 A.M.–1 P.M.
March	27	Sunday School		
	4	Friday	Shabbat Discussion	Bob Cahn's 6:30 P.M.
	6	Sunday School	Toddlers welcome	
	11	Friday	Music Shabbat	CC: 7 P.M.
	13	Sunday School		
	20	Sunday School	Board Meeting	CC: 10:15 A.M.–12:15 P.M.
	26	Saturday	Hammentaschen Baking	CC: 3 P.M.
April	26	Saturday	Purim Party	CC: 6 P.M.
	27	No School		
	1	Friday	Shabbat Service-Reb Shula	CC: 7 P.M.
	3	Sunday School	Toddlers welcome	
	10	Sunday School		
	17	Sunday School	Board Meeting	CC: 10:15 A.M.–12:15 P.M.
	24	No School	Community Seder	CC: 6 P.M.
May	1	Sunday School	Toddlers welcome	
	8	Sunday School	Board Meeting	CC: 10:15 A.M.–12:15 P.M.
	15	Sunday School		
	20	Friday	Music Shabbat	CC: 7 P.M.
	22	Sunday School	Lag B'Omer Gathering	Susan Tacherra's 10:30 A.M.
	29	No School	Memorial Day Weekend	
June	3	Friday	Shabbat Discussion	Bob Cahn's 6:30 P.M.
	5	Sunday School	Toddlers welcome	
	12	Sunday School	Commencement celebration	

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 10:15 AM-12:15 PM – Board of Directors Meeting at the home of Michael & Dori Pelz-Sherman. All members welcome. Call 444-0822 for directions.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21, 2005, 6 PM – Shabbat Gathering with Rabbi Bernie Robinson at the home of Patti Breitman and Stan Rosenfeld. Vegan pot-luck dinner at 6 P.M. sharp followed by services at 7 P.M. sharp. Call Patti for directions: 459-1666. 12 Rally Court, Fairfax.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 2005, 7 PM – All Music Shabbat Everyone is invited to attend. Oneg Shabbat (refreshments following the service). Please call Veronica Buros 488-0940 if you would like to bring a dessert and share in hosting.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 30, 2005, 10:30 AM – 2nd annual Tu B'Shevat Celebration at David & Roanne Kaplow's. In lieu of Sunday School. Children and adults all invited. Pot-luck lunch to follow. 2710 Chileno Valley Road, Petaluma. Call 707-769-9114 to RSVP or for directions.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2005, 6:30 PM – Shabbat Service with Rabbi Shula Stevens at the home of Shanna & Andy Rader. Call 488-0320 for directions.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2005, 10:15 AM-12:15 PM – Board of Directors Meeting at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center. All members welcome.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2005, 10:30 AM – Morning Shabbat book reading, *The Triumph of Eve* with author, Matt Biers-Ariel at the home of Suzanne Sadowsky. Pot-luck brunch. Call 488-4861 for directions.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2005, 3 PM – Annual David Sobel Hammentaschen Baking Party at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center kitchen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2005, 6 PM – Purim Party at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center.

PENINA MAIER CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

SUNDAY'S, JANUARY 23, 30

FEBRUARY 6, 13, AND 27

NO SCHOOL FEBRUARY 20

All classes at the San Geronimo Upper Campus, except as noted. 10 A.M.-12:30 P.M.

CLASSES RUN THRU EARLY JUNE 2005. CALL 488-4524 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

Except as noted, Congregation events are held at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center (SGVCC), 6350 Sir Francis Drake Blvd., San Geronimo (5 miles west of Fairfax). Sunday School classes are held on the upper campus of the Lagunitas School District.

גן הלב Gan HaLev



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