

EREV SHABBOS

24 Av 5786

Friday · August 7, 2026

CANDLE LIGHTING

8:15 PM

Friday · Vaughan, ON

SHABBOS ENDS

9:20 PM

Motzaei Shabbos · Sat night

TORAH READING

Re'eh

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 54:11–
55:5

PIRKEI AVOS

Ch. 5

Shabbos Mevorchim Elul

PARSHAS RE'EH · SHABBOS MEVORCHIM ELUL · THIRD OF THE SEVEN CONSOLATIONS

Will These Words Reach You?



Out of the ground. The Warsaw ghetto archive buried by the Oyneg Shabbos group opens at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York on 18 September, eighty years to the day since the first ten tin boxes came up out of a cellar at 68 Nowolipki Street. The exhibition takes its name from a question one of them wrote down.

In the Warsaw ghetto, in German-occupied Poland, as it was being emptied street by street, a group of Jews went round collecting paper. Ration cards and food stamps. Tram tickets. Invitations. Flyers and posters pulled off walls. Press clippings, private letters, drawings, photographs, and the diaries of people who would not survive the month.

They wrote down what they saw for themselves, they interviewed the refugees who had been driven in from the surrounding towns and anyone who had escaped a camp and reached the ghetto, and they did all of it while the trains to Treblinka were running, on the working assumption that not one of them would be alive afterwards to tell anyone what had been done to them. Historians, teachers, journalists, rabbis, artists, youth activists, gathered from 1941 by a historian named Emanuel Ringelblum. They took their codename from their weekly Saturday meetings, and the codename was Oyneg Shabbos.

What they gathered came to about thirty-five thousand pages. When it became clear the ghetto would be liquidated, they packed all of it into ten tin boxes sealed with clay and three milk cans, and buried it in three places in the ground.

All but three members of the group were murdered. Ringelblum himself was killed in March 1944, in the ruins of the ghetto, with his family.

It came out because two of the three who survived, Rachela Auerbach and Hersz Wasser, came back after the war and led the Jewish Historical Commission of Poland to the spot. On 18 September 1946 ten tin boxes came up out of a cellar at 68 Nowolipki Street. On 1 December 1950 two milk cans came up out of the same building, turned over by construction crews levelling the site for new housing. The third cache has never been found.

Three Treasures

The gemara in Pesachim says Yosef hid three treasures in Mitzrayim: one was revealed to Korach, whom the earth then swallowed along with everything that had been standing at his feet, one to Antoninus son of Asveirus, and the third is stored away for the righteous for the time to come. *Ganuz*. Put away, not lost and not destroyed.

Dovid HaMelech asks Hashem to keep his tears in a flask. שִׁמָּה דְּמַעְתִּי בְּנֹאדָה הֲלֹא בְּסִפְרָתָהּ. "Place my tear in Your bottle, are they not in Your book." Nothing spills. The suffering of a Jew is not overflow to be mopped up and forgotten about. It is collected, it is kept, and it is on the books.

And what is kept is answered. Rachel Imeinu, crying over her children, is told מִנְעֵי קוֹלֶךָ מִבְּכֵי וְעֵינֶיךָ מִדְּמָעָה, “*hold your eyes back from tears, because there is a wage for your work, and your children will come back to their own land.*”

That third treasure is the *or haganuz*, the hidden light put away for the *tzaddikim*, the righteous, and it sits inside a person: the soul's own love of Hashem, in deep concealment until our own thinking draws it out.

Why the Parsha Says See

Unearthing the core of your own soul is not done with a shovel. It is done with attention, and that is the instruction the parsha opens with. רְאֵה אֶנְכִּי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרָכָה. “*See, I place before you today a blessing.*”

Sight needs no intermediary. When you are told something you are relying on the person telling you; when you are looking at something you are not relying on anyone. Words in the ground cannot be heard. Nobody digging at Nowolipki Street was listening for anything; the pages had to come up, be unfolded, and be seen. From September they will sit in cases in New York at eye level, and that is when they do their work.

The King Is in the Field

A king is typically in his palace. To reach him you need permission, and an appointment, and the right clothes, and somebody to announce you, and most people never get in at all. Once a year he leaves the capital and goes out to the field. Anyone who happens to be out there when he passes can walk up to him. No permission, no appointment, nobody announcing anyone, in their working clothes. And he receives every one of them with a pleasant face.

That is the parable the Alter Rebbe gives for the month of Elul. Rosh Chodesh Elul falls on Thursday and Friday, which makes this Shabbos the one that blesses the month. The One who hid the treasure inside you is standing in your field: the office, the shop, the van, the ordinary Tuesday, whatever your field actually is.

The chest and the key have been handed over to every single Jew.

The Rebbe said it on the tenth of Av 5751: all the matters have already been finished, and the Beis HaMikdash stands ready above, and so too with regard to everything else — it is already everything ready as if in a closed chest, and the chest and the key have been handed over to every single Jew. The only thing being waited for is that a Jew should let out one more shout: *ad mosaï*, how long?!

Ein ashir ela b'daas. There is no wealth except in *daas*. The Tanya says the word means *hiskashrus*, binding yourself to a thing and staying bound to it, which makes it a question of attention. Seeing is *daas*, and *daas* is clarity. So the wealth is the clarity itself: knowing plainly, and not on somebody else's word, that Hashem is the treasure, and our very life.

Will these words reach you? Ringelblum's group meant the question literally, and answering it took two digs four years apart and a construction crew that had no idea what it had hit. The Torah's words were never buried. They were handed to us, and they say plainly how a *brachah* is received: *re'eh*, look at what is being placed in front of you today. The chest is here and the key is in our hand, and the key is attention. That work can be done today, together, in the field where we are standing.

SOURCES

Devarim 11:26 · Pesachim 119a · Tehillim 56:9 · Yirmiyahu 31:15–16 · Nedarim 41a · Tanya ch. 3 · Torah Ohr, Vayelaket Yosef · Likkutei Torah, Re'eh · Sichos Terumah 5752 and Vayera 5752 · Sefer HaSichos 5751 vol. 2 p. 735 · USHMM Holocaust Encyclopedia, “The Oneg Shabbat Archive” · Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw · Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York.

ON THE HORIZON

Thu–Fri, 30 Av–1 Elul · August 13–14

Rosh Chodesh Elul, two days. Forty days to Yom Kippur, and the first shofar after Shacharis.

Fri, 18 Elul · September 1

Chai Elul, the birthday of the Baal Shem Tov (5458) and of the Alter Rebbe (5505).

RAMBAM STUDY SCHEDULE · SHABBOS, 25 AV · DAY 187

Three chapters a day: Shegagos, chs. 3–5 · **One chapter a day:** Kiddush HaChodesh, ch. 9 · **Sefer HaMitzvos:** Positive 70.

Sefer HaMitzvos, in brief: P 70, the *asham taluy*, the doubtful guilt offering, brought by one who is unsure whether he committed a sin that would call for a sin offering — two pieces of fat before him, one permitted and one forbidden, he ate one and the other was lost.