

## ILLEGAL MEXICAN BORDER CROSSING

Upon completing their mandatory three years in the Israeli Defense Force, many young Jewish soldiers tour various distant parts of the world...the figure in our story was one of them.

Naftali [not his real name] grew up in a secular Israeli community in Naaveh Ilan, and needed a break after completing his service. He decided to visit his relatives in San Diego, the southernmost city in California. He knew the city was situated alongside of the Pacific Ocean and he enjoyed water activities. So without even notifying them, one sunny day he showed up by their door.

After overcoming their shock, they invited him for dinner and during the meal asked him about the family, his tour of duty and other points of interest. When they asked his plans, Naftali said he wanted to hang around southern California for a while, and hoped to stay with them.

They told him they would be pleased to have him for some meals. However, they are sorry to say that they have no extra rooms, so there is no way they could accommodate his need for a room, even for a short period of time.

The relatives realized that although he had some money with him, that was intended for his excursions and similar expenses. He hadn't expected to have to pay for room and board. After some thought, they suggested he put on his uniform and go to the local Chabad Center where some Jewish students of the University board, so they might have room for him.

Off he went to the Chabad House. To his delighted surprise, they said "You can stay as our guest. We only ask that you participate in morning services and, put on tefillin on weekdays and not desecrate Shabbat."

To Naftali this was a small price to pay. They were not intruding into his life or making any outlandish demands on him. Their only request was respect for his hosts' lifestyle. "I won't smoke a cigarette in the synagogue on Shabbat or in front of anybody in the house," he said to himself, "but I can continue do so in the privacy of my room or when strolling the streets."

This arrangement continued for a few months, and during that time he befriended a young man, a native Californian who was also taking some time off. One Sunday they decided to cross the border and visit the Mexican town of Tijuana. They remained there until Friday morning, when they decided it was time to return.

However, to his shock, at the border he was refused reentry into the United States. His visa was for a one time visit, and by leaving the States, the visa became no longer valid. Naftali argued with the immigration guard that he still had another few months on his visa, but to no avail.

He then pleaded that the reason he decided to return today is because he keeps the Shabbat, and there is no way to keep the Shabbat in Tijuana. "Therefore, I cannot remain in Mexico. I must get back to the place I was staying in San Diego before sunset."

The border guard again dismissed his words and pleas, and instead directed him to a side room, to await his fate.

As soon as the guard left the room, another agent came over to Naftali and said in a low voice, "I too am Jewish. And while I am not Shabbat observant, I respect a Jew that is. So although I likely will be definitely reprimanded and punished for helping you, with the possibility that I may be dismissed from my job too, I am going to leave through the back door and leave the door slightly ajar. You can then do what you have to do."

True to his words, the door was left ajar and Naftali sprinted across the border.

That night in the privacy of his room in the Chabad center, he stretched out his hand to get a cigarette from the table. But then his conscience stopped him; "The border agent put his livelihood in jeopardy, in order that you can maintain the sanctity of the Shabbat and now you are going to desecrate it and smoke?! Is that how low you will stoop. You will cause a person to lose everything he has, so you can have this little enjoyment and relaxation? Shame on you!"

With these thoughts lingering in his mind throughout the next twenty four hours, he survived that Shabbat without a cigarette, and then decided to honor his benefactor by truly becoming a shomer Shabbat.

Upon his return to Israel, his family noticed that he had some kind of transformation. They realized that not only was he now observing the Shabbos, but he was becoming completely observant of many other commandments too.

Today, Naftali is the husband and father of a beautiful observant family.

CONGREGATION  
מחנה חודש  
**MachaneChodosh**  
**SHAVUON WEEKLY NEWS**

26TH ADAR 5786 3/14/26

PARSHAS VAYAKHEL/PEKUDEI/HACHODESH/CHAZAK

Our **86<sup>th</sup>**  
Anniversary Year

**Rabbi Emeritus**  
Manfred Gans z"l

**Rabbi**  
Yossi Mendelson

**President Emeritus**  
Herbert Jaffe z"l

**President**  
Yehoshua Perl

Please join us following services for  
Shabbos Kiddush and Farbrengen  
in the newly renovated Kent Auditorium



**JOIN US FOR  
PRE-PESACH  
SHABBOS  
DINNER**

**Friday Night, March 27th**

Join together for a pre-Pesach  
Shabbos dinner to help you get your  
kitchen ready for Pesach.

\$45 per person,  
\$20 per child over age 6.  
RSVP by Tuesday, March 24th.  
[www.machanechodosh.org/shabbat](http://www.machanechodosh.org/shabbat)

**Shabbos Lunch, March 28th**  
Open to all

**EARLY BIRD PRICING BY MARCH 17th**  
**RSVP FOR PRE-PESACH FRIDAY NIGHT**  
**SHABBAT DINNER BY MARCH 24th**

CONGREGATION  
MACHANE CHODOSH  
67-29 108th St  
Forest Hills, NY 11375  
718-793-5656  
MachaneChodosh.org

מולד חודש ניסן  
ביום הרביעי 4:34 ו 13 חלקים  
ראש חודש ניסן  
יהיה ביום החמישי הבעל"ט

# SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

## SHABBOS VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI/HACHODESH/CHAZAK

Friday, March 13

Kindle Shabbos Candles .....	6:41 PM
Mincha - Kabbolas Shabbos.....	6:50 PM

**Shabbos, March 14**

Shacharis .....	9:00 AM
Children's Program .....	10:00 AM
Talmud Class .....	5:20 PM
Mincha (and Shalosh Seudos).....	6:20 PM
Shabbos Ends .....	7:42 PM

## WEEKDAY SERVICES

**Shacharis**

Sunday .....	8:00 AM
Monday & Thursday, <b>March 19, Rosh Chodesh Nissan</b> .....	7:05 AM
Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday.....	7:15 AM

**Mincha**

<b>3/15-3/19</b> .....	6:55 PM
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## SCHEDULE OF TORAH CLASSES

Talmud Class .....	<b>Shabbos</b> 1 hr prior to Mincha
Rambam's Mishneh Torah .....	<b>Daily</b> following Shacharis
Practical Halacha.....	<b>Daily</b> between Mincha-Maariv
The Rebbe's Advice ( <i>Zoom only</i> ) .....	<b>Sundays</b> 10:30 AM
Friendship Club, <i>lunch with friends</i> .....	<b>Wednesdays</b> 12:00 PM
Parsha Class at FC <i>in loving memory of Rivka Kogan OB"Y</i> .....	<b>Wednesdays</b> 12:15 PM

## SHABBOS VAYIKRA

Friday, March 20

Kindle Shabbos Candles .....	6:50 PM
Mincha - Kabbolas Shabbos.....	7:00 PM

**Shabbos, March 21**

Shacharis .....	9:00 AM
Children's Program .....	10:00 AM
Talmud Class .....	5:30 PM
Mincha (and Shalosh Seudos).....	6:30 PM
Shabbos Ends .....	7:50 PM

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## PESACH 5786/2026

### PRE PESACH SHABBOS DINNER MARCH 27TH

See the flyer on page 1 for details. RSVP by Monday, March 24th. Early bird pricing ends on March 17th. [MachaneChodosh.org/Shabbat](http://MachaneChodosh.org/Shabbat)

### MATZAH ORDER:

\$25 per lb. Please submit payment to the office by Friday, March 27th.

### SEDEERS:

We are pleased to invite you to join Rabbi Mendelson and family for Pesach Seders. \$120 per seder or \$200 for both. Includes 4 cups of wine, matzah and a gourmet catered Colbeh dinner. RSVP by Friday, March 27th to the office.

### CONTRACT AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CHAMETZ

Please use the form found in the winter edition of Kehillah News or on the Pesach page of the website. This form needs to reach Rabbi Mendelson by Monday, March 30th.

# IN SHUL LIFE

Heartiest mazal tov wishes to Rabbi & Rebbetzin Mendelson on the engagement of their daughter Sarale to Rafael (Fuli) Markel of Pittsburgh. The Mendelsons invite the entire community to join them in thanking Hashem at an engagement party, on Sunday, March 22 7:30 - 9:30 PM at the shul.

# FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE

We are pleased to announce that the Shul office will now be accepting Zelle for donations and payments.

To Zelle the Shul: enter email [ZelleCMC@gmail.com](mailto:ZelleCMC@gmail.com)