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Parshat Ki Tetze 5769

SHANA ALEF ARRIVES MONDAY NIGHT!!!

Snapshot

Last Friday:

- A special Rosh Chodesh "Netiv style" davening with Rav Tzvi Bina and Rav Chanan Bina, at the home of David (5743) and Marcia Kreinberg, and their son Yitzy (5769). Davening was followed by breakfast and a shiur by Rav Tzvi.

Motzei Shabbat:

- A Melave Malke with Rav Ron, hosted by Joel Feldman (5765-66).

Monday:

- Shana Bet kicked off the year.
- Rav Tzvi Bina gave a shiur on Shalom Bayit for Alumni at the home of Michael Weinblatt (5763-64).

HAKARAT HATOV:

The Yeshiva would like to thank the Kreinberg and Weinblatt families, as well as Joel Feldman for hosting these events. They should have continued bracha v'hatzlacha in all of their endeavors.

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HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Ki Tetze

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon

DEFEATING THE *YETZER HARA*



FIGHTING TWO ENEMIES SIMULTANEOUSLY

Parshat Ki Tetze begins with the *pasuk*: "*ki tetze lamilchama al oyvecha*" "when you will go out to war against your enemies" (*Devarim* 21:10). The word *oyvecha* is written in full form - with a *yud* after the *vav* and after the *bet*, implying that there are two enemies. The *pasuk* continues: "*unetano Hashem Elokecha beyadecha veshavita shivyo*" "and Hashem your G-d will deliver him into your hand, and you will capture its people as captives". This time the word *beyadecha* is written with only one *yud*, implying that Hashem will only deliver one enemy into your hand. If there are two enemies we are fighting against, why will Hashem only deliver one enemy into our hand?

I would venture to say that the two enemies we are fighting are the physical external enemy and the internal enemy - the *yetzer hara*. The Torah continues with the concept of the *yefat toar*: "and you will see among its captivity a woman who is beautiful of form, and you will desire her, and you will take her to yourself for a wife." Although the Torah permits marrying a woman under such circumstances, we must keep in mind that it is only a *heter*, it is not an ideal situation. As Chazal teach us regarding the *yefat toar* - "*lo dibra Torah ela keneged yetzer hara*" "the Torah spoke only against the drive toward evil." (Rashi citing *Kiddushin* 21b) Had the *yetzer hara* not been so strong, there would have been no need to permit a person to marry the *yefat toar* during this period of war.

FREE TO SERVE HASHEM

The world-at-large mistakenly associates freedom with being allowed to follow the dictates of the *yetzer hara*. Their understanding could not be farther from the truth. What is the true difference between a slave and a free man? A slave is subordinate to the will of his master. Even should the master be kind and considerate and not overburden the slave with hard labor the way Pharaoh did, in the final analysis it is the master who determines the course of the slave's life, not the slave himself. A free man, on the other hand, dictates his own path in life, he does as he wishes and is not subjugated to the wishes of anyone else. According to this, we can say that one who follows the dictates of his *yetzer hara* is nothing more than a slave. It may appear to him that he is a free man, but in truth he is a slave. Why? Because what my *yetzer hara* wants is not necessarily what I want. My *yetzer hara* is not "me", rather another entity - outside of "me". My soul, the G-dliness in me, is the true "me". What my soul wants is the opposite of what my *yetzer hara* wants. Therefore, if I allow my *yetzer hara* to dictate my life, I am nothing more than a slave to it, and it is my master. On the other hand, if my actions follow the dictates of my soul and not those of my *yetzer hara*, then I am not a slave but I am a free man in control of my actions.

THE *YETZER HARA* IS THE BIGGEST ENEMY

The *Chovot Halevavot* (*Shaar Yichud Hamaase* 5) writes that a person must understand that the *yetzer hara* is his biggest enemy. When you are asleep it is awake (you may not notice him, but he is waiting to trip you up), you may ignore

him but he certainly does not ignore you, he dresses up in the garments of friendship (he pretends to be your friend, as if he loves you). The truth is that he is your biggest enemy and he is only masquerading as your friend.

In my humble opinion, the *Chovot Halevavot* has not carried this idea out fully. We can explain this by means of an analogy - if someone undertakes a mission to spy on another nation (Syria for example), in his attempt to uncover Syrian military secrets, he may disguise himself as a good friend of the Syrian President or Chief of Staff. The spy may succeed in convincing the president that he is indeed his good friend, yet there is one thing he will never succeed in convincing him - that he (the spy) is the real President of Syria.

THE YETZER HARA IS NOT THE TRUE YOU

This is the best a human spy can hope for. The *yetzer hara*, however, has far more sophisticated methods - it not only disguises itself as someone else who loves you, but disguises himself as YOURSELF. He tries very hard to persuade you that he is YOU! What "he" wants is what "you" want. The truth is, however, that what "he" wants is not at all what "you" want. What does the *yetzer hara* desire? He wishes to remove you from the world - not only from the Next World but from this world as well. Chazal point out that if we were to leave a goat or a small lamb beside a snake or scorpion, no harm will befall them, for the goat knows to beware of them. If, however, one would, G-d forbid, leave a baby near them, the baby, out of curiosity would try to touch the snake or scorpion and will end up being bitten, G-d forbid. Similarly, leaving a goat or lamb near an open pit will not result in any grave consequences. Should one, however, leave a baby near an open pit, heaven forbid what can result from this!

What accounts for this distinction? Because "man's inclination is evil from his youth" (*Bereishit* 8:21) - "from the time that he stirs to go out of his mother's insides, the urge to do evil is put in him" (Rashi). At this ripe age, the *yetzer hara* is already pushing man into acting in a way that places his life in danger. The *yetzer hara* has no such desire when it comes to the lamb, but the baby it does wish to kill. We see that the *yetzer* wishes to take us not only from the Next World but from this world as well.

How many people do we know who, fully aware of the associated dangers, continue to smoke? Who is not aware of the damage drugs can cause, yet people continue to use them? Why is this so? This is the *yetzer hara's* attempt to hasten man's departure from this world. If he does not succeed in removing us from this world, then he tries to at least make sure we do not enter the Next World. The *yetzer hara* is our biggest enemy, and we should take care not to mistake his identity for our own.

OUR SOULS HAVE NO DESIRE FOR THIS WORLD

While the *yetzer hara* draws us into sinning, our souls have the opposite aspirations. All souls originate from under the Throne of Glory (see *Zohar chelek* 3, 29b). This is especially true of Jewish souls which come from a lofty and holy place, and as such have no interests at all in the aspirations of the *yetzer hara*. Chazal explain the *pasuk* "yet his wants are never satisfied" (*Kohelet* 6:7) using the following parable. There was once a simple city dweller who married a princess. He could shower her with all the gifts this world has to offer and it would have no meaning to her. Why? Because as the king's daughter she grew up with whatever she desired. On the same note, if we were to offer our souls all the

delicacies of the world, it would have no meaning. Our soul comes from way up above and has no interest in physical things such as food (see *Kohelet Rabba* 6:1). If a princess were to marry a simple villager, she would derive no pleasure from the country lifestyle. What is in it for her - some onions and garlic? In the king's palace she was accustomed to fatted geese ducks, roasted doves, and other royal delicacies.

This is precisely how the soul feels in this world. The soul was carved from under the Throne of Glory, and is accustomed to spiritual delicacies - Torah and mitzvot are its source of nourishment. What does it get in this world? Fish and meat! What does a soul need fish and meat for? Nothing! Meat and fish may be eaten in honor of the Shabbat or in order to strengthen one's body to be healthy and better able to serve Hashem. This then is a mitzvah and the soul derives benefit from it. However, eating food for pleasure's sake alone is of no value to the soul. Why? Because it originated in lofty places and is nourished from spiritual things only, not from the physical fish and meat.

MY BODY IS NOT ME

As we mentioned, man's "self" is his soul and not his *yetzer hara*. We can add that man's body is also not his "self". Cells are being replaced constantly - within a month all the cells have died and new ones are generated in their place. In the space of a month we have a totally new body. Yet, we still feel the same "self". Obviously this points to the fact that my "self" is not my body but my soul. (Based on this, I have difficulty understanding the *bracha* we recite each morning - "*Elokai neshama shenatata bi tehora hee*" "My G-d the soul that You placed within me is pure". What does it mean "the soul that You placed within ME" - is the soul itself not "me"? How then can we speak of placing the soul within "me").

If the body is not "me", then how do we view the body? The body is the clothing for the "self", to house the soul that Hashem sent down to this world. The body provides the tools with which to observe mitzvot and perform good deeds. Had it not been for the body, the soul would have no means with which to carry out its task in this world.

My soul has been given other tools to assist it in fulfilling its mission as well. My mind, for example, is not "me" - it is another tool used to assist the soul in its work. One of the Rishonim defined the mind as "the messenger that is the go-between between man and his G-d". I can use my intellect as a means of better knowing and serving Hashem. This, in no way implies that my mind is "me". The only "self" is my soul.

Our parents, spouses, and children are also tools to aid us in serving Hashem. When a man, G-d forbid, dies without children, the deceased's brother has a mitzvah to perform *yibum*. This is because the deceased's wife was given to him to enable him to father children. Because he did not merit this, his *tikkun* is that his brother will father children through her. Similarly, monetary possessions are also tools to assist in serving Hashem. When the daughters of Tzafchad demanded their father's inheritance they did not claim "why should our share be diminished", but rather "why should the name of our father be omitted from among his family" (*Bamidbar* 27:4). The next of kin inheriting the father's possessions is a *tikkun* for his soul, when there is no heir this *tikkun* is lacking. Their wish was to provide a *tikkun* for their father's soul by inheriting his share of the Land of Israel and all his other material possessions he had in the desert. We see that material wealth is also a means of assisting us to better serve Hashem.

Just as I am fully aware that my material possessions are not "me", and my wife is not "me", so too my body and my mind are not "me" either.

Avraham and Sarah made souls in Haran - what defines one's soul? We recite daily in Kriat Shma "You shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart, with all your soul ('*nafshecha*')" (*Devarim* 6:5). Chazal tell us "with all your soul - even if he takes your soul" (*Brachot* 61b). This explanation is fitting for times when one is required to give up his life in an effort to sanctify Hashem's Name. What about when a person does not need to give his life but can live? How then does he love Hashem "with all his soul ('*nefesh*')"? The Rishonim (Rashi, Ramban, Sforno) interpret the *pasuk* "*im yesh et NAFSHECHEM likbor et meiti milefanai*" (*Bereishit* 23:8), to mean "if it is truly YOUR WILL to bury my dead before me". The "*nefesh*" is a person's will and desire. We can now explain that loving Hashem "*bechol nafshecha*" implies with your entire will. When Avraham and Sarah made souls in Haran, they "made their will for them" - they transformed so that their desires were no longer to follow the dictates of their *yetzer hara*, but their true desire was what their soul wished - to serve Hashem. This is how they "made souls". The people during that time may not have been Jewish, but the internal desire of even a non-Jew is to serve Hashem. When it is possible to convert them, we must do so. When this is not a possibility, we should at least influence them to accept upon themselves the seven Noachide laws.

KILLING THE YETZER HARA

The Gemara writes: "in the future time, Hashem, will bring the evil inclination and slaughter it in the presence of the righteous and in the presence of the wicked" (*Sukkah* 52a). Whether or not Hashem actually slaughters it, He will at the very least limit its influence, or increase the power of the *yetzer tov*.

We are not told how Hashem will do so, but we are promised that in the end, the entire nation will repent. What this means is that a person's free choice is within the limits of a particular framework. Pharaoh was given the choice whether or not to enslave the Jewish people, but only within prescribed limits. Later on he is forced to send them free, whether he wishes to or not. On the one hand, it is too late for him to repent, on the other hand he does free the Jewish people - this, however, is regardless of whether he wishes to do so. The same may be said for all evil people - they are given the option of acting in a way contrary to the will of Hashem, this option, however, is not without its limitations. We see that Haman's desired decree was rescinded and within three days he was hanging from a tree fifty *amot* high! All free choice is within a prescribed framework.

Chazal teach us "The words of Torah are not retained except by one who kills himself over it" (*Shabbat* 83b). This cannot be taken literally, for even one who is ill, let alone dead, will have difficulty learning. Chazal's intention was to the "killing" of one's *yetzer hara*, one's desire for the vanities of this world, and the strengthening of one's quest for spiritual greatness. We must do our best to study yet another page of Gemara, to *daven* more, perform still more mitzvot and acts of *chesed*. This is the true way to defeat our *yetzer hara*.

Staff Dvar Torah

by Rav Yitzchak Korn, Shana Alef Rebbe and Rosh Beit Midrash

One of the many mitzvot found in *Parshat Ki Tetze* is the mitzvah of returning lost objects (*Hashavat Aveida*). Many of us fondly recall learning the intricacies of this Mitzva when we studied Bava Metziah. I would like to discuss two areas of the Mitzva which are not intuitively obvious.



In *Masechet Sanhedrin* we are taught that a Jew is obligated to "return" his friend's health and well being to him. There is an obligation upon the doctor to heal, the lifeguard to save, and the medic to respond to calls of distress. This obligation is part of the mitzvah of *Hashavat Aveida* and extends beyond the general mitzvah of *Lo Ta'amod al Dam Rei'echa* "neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy fellow". One must expend effort and resources, perhaps hire workers, to return a friend's "body".

I would like to now discuss the second point. The Mishna at the end of Bava Batra teaches us that he who seeks wisdom ought to study the laws of torts (*Nezikin*). Indeed, the laws of *nezikin* have a special place in Talmud study, and are emphasized in the classic yeshiva curriculum. We know that the Torah requires the *mazik* to pay for damages incurred, but does that imply that damaging itself, or enabling damages, is a Torah prohibition? Perhaps he is not in violation of *halacha*, nevertheless he is still liable for the consequences of his actions.

The answer may be gleaned from the Mitzva of *Hashavat Aveida*. If we are obligated to return a lost object to a fellow Jew, then we are obviously prohibited from damaging it. With this in mind, the Rashash (Ktivot 18b) understands that causing another monetary loss, even through mere speech, violates the principles of *Hashavat Aveida*. The Talmud goes further and mandates that one must go so far as to prevent oncoming floodwaters from damaging another's field, thereby causing *Aveidat karka* - loss of land.

All too often we see these principles of *Hashavat Aveida* trampled upon. Lack of concern for other people's property is rampant. Ignoring danger to other people's well-being is widespread. The month of Elul is a good time for us to contemplate this, and other cardinal Mitzvot in the realm of *Bein Adam L'chaveiro*.

May we all be inscribed in The Book of Life.

Yitzchak Korn

Student Dvar Torah
by Yonatan Sklar, Shana Bet

The *parsha* opens with: "*ki tetze lamilchama al oyvecha*" "If you will go forth to war against your enemies"

Chazal interpret this "war" as the war we wage everyday - our battle against the *yetzer harah*. Many commentaries discuss strategies on how to win this battle and ultimately defeat the *yetzer harah*. Let us examine a few:



The Baal Shem Tov says that one must employ the *yetzer harah's* own tactics against it. That is, just as the *yetzer harah* is stubborn, and refuses to let up, so should we stubbornly battle the *yetzer hara*, refusing to ease up.

In a similar vein, the Chasam Sofer states that the *yetzer harah* does not cause a person to violate the major sins first, but begins with causing him to violate minor sins eventually working its way towards causing him to stumble further and to violate the greater sins. This is precisely the tactics a person should use in the battle against his *yetzer harah* - begin with battles which are easier to win and then continue onwards to the more difficult ways to change. We can apply this principle when involved in *kiruv* work - teach the newly religious to work their way slowly, to begin with mitzvoth which they find less difficult and to eventually work their way towards full commitment to Torah and mitzvoth.

The Baal HaTurim notes the juxtaposition between the end of *Parshat Shoftim*, which we read last week, and the opening words of our *parsha*. He points out that the last word in *Parshat Shoftim* is the Name of Hashem and this week's *parsha* begins with: "When you go out to war against your enemy..." We can derive from this connection that Hashem is always with us in the eternal battle against our *yetzer hara*. The opening *pasuk* concludes:

"...Hashem will place them in your hands, you may take them as captives."

The Baal HaTurim offers a beautiful commentary that "*ki tetze lamilchama*" - when we go out in battle Hashem will come to our assistance - "*unetano Hashem Elokecha b'yadecha*), and we will ultimately defeat the enemy ("*v'shavita shivyo*").

HaRav Yissachar Frand offers an alternative method for defeating the *yetzer hara*. In his discussion of *Parshat Vayishlach*, he poses the following question regarding the story of Yaakov and his fight with the angel. Yaakov struggles the entire night with the angel of Esav. Yaakov emerges victorious. As morning arrives the angel asks Yaakov to release him. Yaakov refuses to release the angel unless he first blesses him. The angel then informs Yaakov that his name will be changed to Yisrael. We then read of Yaakov asking the angel what his name is to which the angel responds with a very puzzling question: "Why do you ask me my name?"

Rav Frand asks what the meaning behind this dialogue is.

He answers in the name of Chazal that the angel of Esav was actually the Satan, AKA the *yetzer harah*. Rav Leib Chasman explains that since the name of a person or being reflects his essence, when Yaakov asked the angel for his name he was actually trying to discover his essence. He was in effect asking: "What are you all about, *yetzer hara*? What makes you tick? What is the secret of your power over people?"

Rav Frand quotes Rav Chaim Dov Keller, Rosh Yeshivah of Telshe in Chicago, who offers a different interpretation of the dialogue between Yaakov and the angel, along the lines of Rav Chasman. Yaakov was trying to understand the essence of the *yetzer hara* to forewarn and prepare his descendants against this entity. The angel responded: "My mission is to test people, and the only way I can accomplish this is to change my form in every generation. The situations change, the temptations change, and I change. In one generation, the temptation may be idol worship, the next - illicit relations, and nowadays, perhaps internet and cell phones. These areas are where I focus my concentration. Your efforts to learn my

mission are useless, as it changes in every generation. Therefore, "*why do you ask me my name?*" To defeat the *yetzer hara* we must be cognizant of the form it is taking in our generation.

We all know how difficult this war is. We find ourselves falling and turning back often... but what if we could only understand that Hashem guarantees success if we only set out on the right path and make the effort. When it states in our *Parasha*: "When we go to war..." we are referring to life ... When we go out to life...

Throughout Shana Alef, Rav Bina made an emphasis on how important it is to understand that we live in a ghetto - we are in the Old City adjacent to the Kotel, we have fantastic Rebbeim, and all the essentials to lead an ideal Torah life. But that's not the litmus test of how we are faring in life. It's how we live outside of the Old City walls. How we live without the Kotel looking at us in the face. How we live life when no one is pushing us to go to Minyan, learning, and the amazing *chesed* activities which the Yeshiva offers us an opportunity to be involved in. How are we going to fight the war - the war of life - the war of the *yetzer hara*. *Baruch Hashem* the Torah gives us the solution - simply try, put in the effort of wanting, put in our effort and Hashem will provide us with victory. He will allow us and push us to succeed.

I would like to add one final point - the *Baal Haturim* notes that "if you will go forth" implies that Moshe is saying, "Go out against them; do not allow them to come against you". In other words, if you are not making an advance towards conquering your *yetzer hara*, then you are necessarily going downhill. We can compare this to a bicycle climbing a steep hill, if you're not moving forward, then you must be moving backwards.

May we always be aware of the *yetzer hara* and make a conscious effort to defeat it to become the best we can be.

Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List Announcements from the Yeshiva

Josh Goldman (5759-60) cordially invites all Netiv alumni to add to the Simcha of his wedding to Karen Wisotsky, this Sunday, August 30th at Sephardic Temple in Cedarhurst, NY. Come drop in for the Chassan's Tisch at 3:30 PM and dancing at 8:00 PM!

NOTE ABOUT YAMIM NORAIM:

In order to adequately accommodate all of the alumni who plan to stay at Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh for the Yamim Noraim, please register with Dina by clicking [here](#).

Please inform us as to the length of your stay, dates of arrival and departure, whether you will need a bed at the dorm and how many seats to save for davening (in case family is visiting).

Luksenberg Travel is attempting to organize a group flight with reduced fares for our alumni who wish to come to Israel for Yom Kippur. The current price is around \$1000. (This initiative is the sole responsibility of Luksenberg Travel.) If you are

interested, please contact Tzipi at 718-887-9790 or tzipi@lxt.co.il.

Mazal Tov

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh wishes a Mazal Tov to:

- [David](#) Garber on making Aliyah.
- [Jeffrey](#) (5738) and Brandie Geizhals on the [engagement](#) of their daughter, Racheli, to Shimmie Bachrach.
- [Ari](#) (5749) and Jody Storch on the Bar Mitzva of their son, Kenny.
- [Shimon](#) (5761-62, 65, Kolllel) and Esther Peretz on the birth of a son.
- [Daniel](#) Mendelsohn (5767-68) on his marriage to Shoshana Krug, daughter of [Rabbi Dr. John](#) and Phyllis Krug.
- [Mark](#) (5741) and Naomi Nevies on the Bar Mitzva of their son, Gideon Eliyahu.
- [Joel](#) Markin (5767-68) on his engagement to Leah Schweitzer.
- [Etan](#) Kestenbaum (5767-68) on his [engagement](#) to Elana Friedman.
- [Jesse](#) (5756-57, 5760) and Ilana Mendelson on the birth of a baby boy.
- [Shmueli](#) (Steven) (5753-54) and Amy Farkas on the birth of a baby girl.
- David (5743) and Hope Taragin on the Bar Mitzva of their son Benjamin.

Visitors

The following people have visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- David S. Mann (5754)
- Jay Nathanson (5760)
- Michael Cahane (5766)
- Michael Sterman (5767)
- Neil Nevies (5767)
- Ben Schwartz (5762-63)
- Adam Azoulay (5767-68)
- Dan Myers (5742)
- Mitchell Taragin (5754)
- Ari Finkel (5765)

Baruch Dayan Emet

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh regrets to inform you on the passing of:

- Esther Davis, the grandmother of [Daniel](#) (5756-57) [Michael](#) (5759-60), [Steven](#) (5767-68), and [Jonathan](#) (Shan Alef) Davis.
- Arnold Berman, father of [Robert](#) Berman (5745) and grandfather of [Edwin](#) (Eli) Steinfeld (5769-70) and [Michael](#) Steinfeld (Shana Alef).

Hamakom Yenachem Otam B'toch Sha'ar Aveilei Tzion V'Yerushalayaim.

Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Taube Yehudit bat Temma Gasia

- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanvel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel
- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly bat Yaerah
- Miriam Naomi bat Sarah
- Yehudis Sara bas Esther
- Dov Eliyahu ben Mindel Hudis
- Rahamim ben Miriam
- Hinda bat Sara Leah
- Rivka Zelda bat Bracha
- Dovid Ben Miriam
- Yaackov Chaim Meir ben Miriam
- Avraham ben Leah
- Chaim Naftali Yaakov ben Shifra Shaulah
- Michael Yosef ben Tzipora
- Gidon Shlomo ben Esther
- Haya Rebecca Rivka bat Jeanne Yaffa
- Temima Adina bat Keren Ronit
- Avraham ben Meela
- Bracha Sara bat Rivka Zelda
- Ita Blima bat Malka Fraidel
- Eliyahu ben Victoria

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, [let our office know](#) so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - [let us know!](#) We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh | Western Wall Plaza | One Hakotel Street | POB 32017 | Jerusalem | 91319 | Israel