



נא לא לדבר בשעת התפילה
PLEASE NO CONVERSATION DURING SERVICES



WEEKDAY DAVENING INFORMATION

| | Sunday (4/30) | Monday (5/1) | Tuesday (5/2) | Wednesday (5/3) | Thursday (5/4) | Friday (5/5) |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Earliest Talit | 4:54 AM | 4:52 AM | 4:51 AM | 4:49 AM | 4:48 AM | 4:46 AM |
| Shacharit | 8:15 AM | 6:15 AM | 6:25 AM | 6:25 AM | 6:15 AM | 6:25 AM |
| Gedolah | 1:29 PM | 1:29 PM | 1:29 PM | 1:29 PM | 1:29 PM | 1:29 PM |
| Mincha (Sun/Fri) - Maariv | 7:35 PM | 7:35 PM | 7:35 PM | 7:35 PM | 7:35 PM | 7:00 PM |
| Shkia | 7:52 PM | 7:53 PM | 7:54 PM | 7:55 PM | 7:57 PM | |
| Tzait | 8:37 PM | 8:38 PM | 8:39 PM | 8:40 PM | 8:42 PM | |

שבת פרשת תזריע-מצורע
SHABBAT PARSHAT TAZRIA-METZORA
3 IYAR/APRIL 29
Haftorah is Kings II 7:3-20. Pirkei Avot Chapter 2.

FRIDAY NIGHT
MINCHA - 7:00 PM
CANDLE LIGHTING - 7:32 PM
TZAIT - 8:35 PM

SATURDAY
HASHKAMA/YOUTH - 8:20 AM
SHACHARIT MAIN - 9:00 AM
LAST KRIAT SHEMA - 9:26 AM
GEMARA SHIUR: 6:30 PM, "BUT I'M NOT CHANGING YOUR DIAPERS: TORAH OBLIGATIONS ON FATHERS TO THEIR CHILDREN"
MINCHA - 7:20 PM
SHKIA - 7:51 PM
MAARIV/HAVDALAH - 8:36 PM

BULLETIN INFORMATION
TO REQUEST A BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT (BY 7:00 PM WEDNESDAY) OR DEDICATE A BULLETIN FOR \$36 (\$54 W/PHOTO), EMAIL SEPLOTNICK@GMAIL.COM.

CONGREGATION AHAVAT ACHIM
18-25 SADDLE RIVER ROAD
FAIR LAWN, NJ 07410-5909
201-797-0502
WWW.AHAVATACHIM.ORG



Jewish National Fund Yom Ha'atzmaut Mega Event, April 30, 12:15 PM, taking place at Fair Lawn Jewish Center. Guest speaker Avnet Kleiner at 1:30 PM (from Aleh Negev, a rehabilitation village in Israel's Negev providing severely disabled children and adults a comprehensive framework for life). Celebrate Israel's Birthday in unity and solidarity. The event is cosponsored by Anshei Lubavitch, Darchei Noam, Fair Lawn Jewish Center/Congregation Bnai Israel, Congregation Ahavat Achim, Shomrei Torah and

Young Israel Fair Lawn. Registration is FREE. Sign up here: <http://www.jnf.org/about-jnf/events/2017/yom-haatzmaut-family-fun-day.html>.

In addition to our special recognition pages to recognize your appreciation for Rabbi & Chana (for \$18), to memorialize those that have departed (\$10 per name), and to schep nachas by listing children and grandchildren (\$5 per name), we will have a special "In Memoriam" page for Howie Komet^{ת"ע} with the cost to acknowledge Howie of \$18. If you wish to simply repeat your special listings from last year, or add a listing for Howie or any of the other special listings, email AhavatAchimDinner@gmail.com as soon as possible. **Journal dinner is less than a month away**, on Sunday, May 21, 5:00 PM, at Rinat in Teaneck. Please email ahavatachimdinner@gmail.com with your ads or to RSVP to the dinner. **No time to waste getting those ads in.**



Fair Lawn Shul Events

- ☆ New JLI Course: "**SURVIVAL OF A NATION**", beginning Sunday, May 21, ANSHEI LUBAVITCH; six sessions discussing fervent patriotism while remaining realistic and morally anchored. For more information email RabbiBergstein@FLChabad.com.

Kiddush Information

- ☆ If you are in attendance when the Rabbi says "על המחיה", your assistance in clean up would be appreciated.
- ☆ Kiddush setup for this Shabbat: Farajan, Kirschenbaum, Levine
- ☆ Kiddush setup for next Shabbat: Borsuk, Kwestel, Smedresman
- ☆ To sponsor a Kiddush (\$1000/\$613/\$318 plus scotch) send an email to gplotnick@aol.com.

Gita Cooperwasser ע"ה

Youth Program

- ☆ Groups for children ages 3-12 begin at 10:15 AM, meeting in the Beit Midrash.
- ☆ Youth leaders this Shabbat are Ben Shanblatt & Giselle Zimmerman.
- ☆ Children under 13 are welcome at Youth Group. Parents, please ensure that your children are in groups or with you at all times.

Adult Education



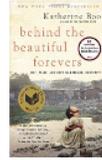
- ☆ CHUMASH CLASS - Shabbat morning before Shacharit.
- ☆ RETIREES' SHIUR - Mondays, at 1:00 PM.
- ☆ WEEKNIGHT GEMARA SHIUR - On Summer Hiatus
- ☆ FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT - After Kiddush (On Hiatus This Week).

Ahavat Achim Future Events

- ☆ May 20 - Kiddush sponsored by Joyce Heller
- ☆ May 21 - Journal Dinner; 5:00 PM, at Rinat in Teaneck
- ☆ May 23 - Board Meeting (tentative)
- ☆ May 27 - Suedah Shlishit is sponsored by Eli Zefon in memory of שלמה בן אליהו זון נלב"ע ז סיון תשס"ד
- ☆ Jun 17 - Suedah Shlishit is sponsored by Eli Zefon in memory of ברוך מפציר בן שמואל נלב"ע כ"ד סיון תשנ"ט
- ☆ June 20 - Membership Meeting (TBD)

Book Club News

- ☆ Next book will be Behind the Beautiful Forevers, by Katherine Boo, May 20, 5:00 PM, at Shelly's house.



Welcome back as members Tamar & Joe Smith.



Also, please welcome as Associate Members Josh & Ariella Lustiger and their children Tamara, Shira and Shaya.

Friday Evening, April 28



Saturday Evening, April 29



Sunday Evening, April 30



Monday Evening, April 31



Tuesday Evening, May 1



Wednesday Evening, May 2



Thursday Evening, May 3





RSVP
REQUIRED

DIETARY
LAWS
OBSERVED

NO COST
TO
ATTEND

FAMILY
PROGRAM
OFFERED

Jewish National Fund Invites the Fair Lawn Community to Our

YOM HA'ATZMAUT JNF FAMILY FUN DAY

Sunday, April 30, 2017

12:30 pm - Family Program; 1:30 pm - Guest Speaker Presentation

Fair Lawn Jewish Center

10-10 Norma Ave, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

RSVP by April 26, 2017 at jnf.org/njyomhaatzmaut



Featuring Guest Speaker

Avnet Kleiner

Director of Development ALEH Negev-Nahalat Eran

Avnet has devoted his skills and experience to the development of ALEH Negev-Nahalat Eran, a pioneering rehabilitation village in Israel's Negev that provides severely disabled children and adults a comprehensive framework for life.

More Information
Rebekah Adelson,
Israel Programs
Admissions Director,
radelson@jnf.org,
973.593.0095 x828.


fair lawn jewish center
congregation b'nai israel

EVENT HOSTS*: Rabbi Eli Belizon, Young Israel of Fair Lawn; Rabbi Jeremy Donath, Congregation Darchai Noam; Rabbi Andrew Markowitz, Congregation Shomrei Torah; Rabbi Levi Neubort, Anshei Lubavitch; Rabbi Ronald Roth, Fair Lawn Jewish Center, Congregation B'nai Israel; Rabbi Ely Shestack, Congregation Ahavat Achim;

*In formation



**JEWISH
NATIONAL
FUND**

Your Voice in Israel

jnf.org
800.JNF.0099

 JEWISHNATIONALFUND

 JNPUA

 JNFUSA

COVENANT & Conversation

A STUDY OF THE PARSHA WITH RABBI SACKS



www.rabbisacks.org

[f /rabbisacks](https://www.facebook.com/rabbisacks)

[@rabbisacks](https://twitter.com/rabbisacks)

[@rabbisacks](https://www.instagram.com/rabbisacks)

I am deeply touched that Covenant & Conversation has been generously sponsored by The Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation in memory of Maurice and Vivienne Wohl ז"ל. Maurice was a visionary philanthropist on a vast scale, driven throughout his life by a sense of Jewish responsibility. Vivienne was a woman of the deepest humanity and compassion, who had a kind word for everyone. Together, they were a unique partnership of dedication and grace, for whom living was giving. Through their Charitable Foundation, they continue to bring blessings to Jewish communities around the world.

— RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS



THE MAURICE WOHL
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Is there such a thing as Lashon Tov?

Tazria-Metsorah 2017 / 5777

The Sages understood tsara'at, the theme of this week's parsha, not as an illness but as a miraculous public exposure of the sin of lashon hara, speaking badly about people. Judaism is a sustained meditation on the power of words to heal or harm, mend or destroy. Just as God created the world with words, so we create, and can destroy, relationships with words.

The Rabbis said much about lashon hara, but virtually nothing about the corollary, lashon tov, "good speech." The phrase does not appear in either the Babylonian Talmud or the Talmud Yerushalmi. It figures only in two midrashic passages where it refers to praising God. But lashon hara does not mean speaking badly about God. It means speaking badly about human beings. If it is a sin to speak badly about people, is it a mitzvah to speak well about them? My argument will be that it is, and to show this, let us take a journey through the sources.

In Mishnah Avot, Ethics of the Fathers (2:10-11), we read the following:

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai had five (pre-eminent) disciples, namely Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, Rabbi Joshua ben Chananya, Rabbi Yose the Priest, Rabbi Shimon ben Netanel, and Rabbi Elazar ben Arakh.

He used to recount their praise: Eliezer ben Hyrcanus: a plastered well that never loses a drop. Joshua ben Chananya: happy the one who gave him birth. Yose the Priest: a pious man. Shimon ben Netanel: a man who fears sin. Elazar ben Arakh: an ever-flowing spring.

“If it is a sin to speak badly about people, is it a mitzvah to speak well about them?”

However, the practice of Rabban Yochanan in praising his disciples seems to stand in contradiction to a Talmudic principle:

Rav Dimi, brother of Rav Safra said: Let no one ever talk in praise of his neighbour, for praise will lead to criticism. (Arakhin 16a)

Rashi gives two explanations of this statement. Having delivered excessive praise [yoter midai], the speaker himself will come to qualify his remarks, admitting for the sake of balance that the person of whom he speaks also has faults. Alternatively, others will point out his faults. For Rashi, the crucial consideration is, is the praise judicious, accurate, true, or it is overstated? If the former, it is permitted; if the latter, it is forbidden. Evidently Rabban Yochanan was careful not to exaggerate.

Rambam, however, sees matters differently. He writes: “Whoever speaks well about his neighbour in the presence of his enemies is guilty of a secondary form of evil speech [avak lashon hara], since he will provoke them to speak badly about him” (Hilkhos Deot 7:4). According to the Rambam the issue is not whether the praise is moderate or excessive, but the context in which it is delivered. If it is done in the presence of friends of the person about whom you are speaking, it is permitted. It is forbidden only when you are among his enemies and detractors. Praise then becomes a provocation, with bad consequences.

Are these merely two opinions or is there something deeper at stake? There is a famous passage in the Talmud which discusses how one should sing the praises of a bride at her wedding:

Our Rabbis taught: How should you dance before the bride [i.e. what should one sing]? The disciples of Hillel hold that at a wedding you should sing that the bride is beautiful, whether she is or not. Shammai’s disciples disagree. Whatever the occasion, don’t tell a lie. “Do you call that a lie?” the Hillelites respond. “In the eyes of the groom at least, the bride is beautiful.” What’s really at stake here is not just temperament – puritanical Shammaites versus good-natured Hillelites – but two views about the nature of language. The Shammaites think of language as a way of making statements, which are either true or false. The Hillelites understand that language is about more than making statements. We can use language to encourage, empathise, motivate and inspire.

Or we can use it to discourage, disparage, criticise and depress. Language does more than convey information. It conveys emotion. It creates or disrupts a mood. The sensitive use of speech involves social and emotional intelligence. Language, in J. L. Austin's famous account, can be performative as well as informative.

The argument between Hillel and Shammai is similar to that between Rambam and Rashi. For Rashi, as for Shammai, the key question about praise is: is it true, or is it excessive? For Rambam as for Hillel, the question is: what is the context? Is it being said among enemies or friends? Will it create warmth and esteem or envy and resentment?

We can go one further, for the disagreement between Rashi and Rambam about praise may be related to a more fundamental disagreement about the nature of the command, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). Rashi interprets the command to mean: do not do to your neighbour what you would not wish him to do to you (Rashi to Sanhedrin 84b). Rambam, however, says that the command includes the duty "to speak in his praise" (Hilkhos Deot 6:3). Rashi evidently sees praise of one's neighbour as optional, while Rambam sees it as falling within the command of love.

We can now answer a question we should have asked at the outset about the Mishnah in Avot that speaks of Yochanan ben Zakkai's disciples. Avot is about ethics, not about history or biography. Why then does it tell us that Rabban Yochanan had disciples? That, surely, is a fact not a value, a piece of information not a guide to how to live.

However, we can now see that the Mishnah is telling us something profound indeed. The very first statement in Avot includes the principle: "Raise up many disciples." But how do you create disciples? How do you inspire people to become what they could become, to reach the full measure of their potential? Answer: By acting as did Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai when he praised his students, showing them their specific strengths.

"How do you create disciples? How do you inspire people to become what they could become, to reach the full measure of their potential?"

He did not flatter them. He guided them to see their distinctive talents. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, the "well that never loses a drop", was not creative but he had a remarkable memory – not unimportant in the days before the Oral Torah was written in books. Elazar ben Arakh, the "ever-flowing spring," was creative, but needed to be fed by mountain waters (years later he separated from his colleagues and forgot all he had learned).

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai took a Hillel-Rambam view of praise. He used it not so much to describe as to motivate. And that is lashon tov. Evil speech diminishes us, good speech helps us grow. Evil speech puts people down, good speech lifts them up. Focused, targeted praise, informed by considered judgment of individual strengths, and sustained by faith in people and their potentiality, is what makes teachers great and their disciples greater than they would otherwise have been. That is what we learn from Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai.

So there is such a thing as lashon tov. According to Rambam it falls within the command of “Love your neighbour as yourself.” According to Avot it is one way of “raising up many disciples.” It is as creative as lashon hara is destructive.

“Focused, targeted praise, sustained by faith in people and their potentiality, is what makes teachers great and their disciples greater than they would otherwise have been.”

Seeing the good in people and telling them so is a way of helping it become real, becoming a midwife to their personal growth. If so, then not only must we praise God. We must praise people too.



For more material from Rabbi Sacks, or to join his mailing list, please visit www.rabbisacks.org

The Office of Rabbi Sacks, PO Box 72007, London, NW6 6RW
+44 (0)20 7286 6391 • info@rabbisacks.org • www.rabbisacks.org

© Rabbi Sacks • All rights reserved
The Office of Rabbi Sacks is supported by The Covenant & Conversation Trust