



WEEKDAY DAVENING INFORMATION

שבת פרשת מקץ/א דראש חדש טבת
וי דחנוכה

**SHABBAT PARSHAT MIKEITZ
FIRST DAY ROSH CHODESH
SIXTH DAY OF CHANUKAH
29 KISLEV/DECEMBER 8**

Three Sifrei Torah. In the first, six Aliyahs from Mikeitz. Second Sefer Torah is one Aliyah from Parshat Pinchas – Numbers 28:9-15. Maftir is from Parshat Naso (7:42-7:47). Haftorah is Zechariah 2:14-4:7. Do not say either אב הרחמים or צדקתך צדק.

**FRIDAY NIGHT
CANDLE LIGHTING - 4:10 PM
MINCHA - 4:15 PM
TZAIT - 5:13 PM**

**SATURDAY
HASHKAMA - 8:15 AM
SHACHARIT MAIN - 9:00 AM
LAST KRIAT SHEMA - 9:28 AM
MINCHA - 3:55 PM
SHKIA - 4:28 PM
SHABBAT ENDS - 5:13 PM**

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



Children's Chanukah Chagigah is this Monday night, 5:00 PM, no charge, with

yummy treats, a mystery Maccabee game and more. Space is limited so please RSVP to Aliza ASAP at youthdirectoraliza@ahavatachim.org.

	Sunday (12/9)	Monday (12/10)	Tuesday (12/11)	Wednesday (12/12)	Thursday (12/13)	Friday (12/14)
Earliest Talit	6:07 AM	6:08 AM	6:09 AM	6:09 AM	6:10 AM	6:11 AM
Shacharit	8:00 AM	6:10 AM	6:25 AM	6:25 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM
Gedolah	12:12 PM	12:12 PM	12:13 PM	12:13 PM	12:14 PM	12:14 PM
Mincha - Maariv	4:15 PM					4:15 PM
Shkia	4:28 PM	4:28 PM	4:28 PM	4:28 PM	4:29 PM	
Tzait	5:13 PM	5:13 PM	5:13 PM	5:13 PM	5:14 PM	
Maariv Only		8:20 PM	8:20 PM	8:20 PM	8:20 PM	

חנוכה - Chanukah

One should light Chanukah candles as close to 10 minutes after sunset as possible (excepting Shabbat). However, it is preferable for the family to light together rather than have a portion of the family light earlier. Everyone in the household is encouraged to light Chanuka candles. (The matriarch of the household should follow the family custom.) There must be enough oil/wax to last one half hour past the time when the stars appear. If lighting after the appearance of the stars there must still be enough oil to burn for half an hour.

Under extenuating circumstances, one may light even after midnight if any members of the family are awake to see the lights. If the Chanukah lights are accidentally extinguished prior to their having burned the requisite time, one is not obligated by Halacha to rekindle them; it is, however, permissible to rekindle them, but without a Bracha.

There is a custom to give children Chanukah Gelt as part of publicizing the miracle.

In Shemonah Esrei and Bircat HaMazon ועל הנסים (do not repeat if omitted). At Shacharit we recite complete Hallel.

ר' דחנוכה - Sixth Night of Chanukah/Friday Afternoon - Dec. 7 (29 Kislev)

We light the Chanukah Menorah at home before lighting the Shabbat candles. One must be careful to use enough oil (or light a large enough candle) to remain lit until thirty minutes after the appearance of three stars. There is a minhag to daven Mincha before lighting the Menorah, but one should not delay the welcoming of Shabbat because of this. One may not light Chanukah or Shabbat candles earlier than Plag HaMincha (3:30 PM).

מוצאי שבת/Motzei Shabbat

There are two approaches concerning the order of Havdalah and Chanukah Menorah lighting in the home. If one has a family minhag, they should continue to follow that practice, otherwise the psak (ruling) of the Rabbi is to make Havdalah first, and then to light the Chanukah Menorah.

Kiddush Information



- ☆ To sponsor a Kiddush (\$1000/\$613/\$318, plus scotch) email Gail at gplotnick@aol.com.
- ☆ If you are around when the Rabbi says “על המחיה”, your assistance in clean up would be appreciated.

Adult Education



- ☆ GEMARA SHIUR - On Winter Hiatus.
- ☆ DAYTIME TORAH VOYAGES - Thursdays at 1:00 PM.
- ☆ FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT - After Kiddush.
- ☆ PEREK ON THE LAWN, Pirkei Avot Periodic Shiur.

Community Events

- ☆ Dec. 9 – **Chanukah Party**, for kids 3 & up, featuring everybody’s game show “The Dreidel of Fortune.” YIFL, Sunday, 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM. \$10 per child (not more than \$25 per family), RSVP to youth@YIFL.org.

Gita Cooperwasser

Youth Program



- ☆ Youth groups start at 10:00 AM!
- ☆ Contact our Youth Director Aliza Kaplan to discuss our children’s youth programming at youthdirectoraliza@ahavatachim.org.
- ☆ Dec. 9 - Children’s Chanukah Chagiga, with yummy treats, a mystery Maccabee game and more. RSVP to Aliza.

Tot Shabbat

- ☆ 10:40 AM, with the Shabbat reading often featuring a surprise story teller.



Stay & Play

- ☆ Next get together will be in the spring, on April 6. See you then.



Teen Hashkama

- ☆ Dec. 22



Ahavat Achim Future Events

- ☆ Dec. 15 - Reuvain Brenenson Bar Mitzvah
- ☆ Dec. 15 - Suedah Shlishit sponsored by Wigod and Sokoloff families in memory of Ron’s and Cheryl’s parents Leonore (Leah bat Zev) and Benjamin (Boruch Chaim ben Zevulun Aryeh) Sokoloff.
- ☆ Dec. 21 - Friday night Oneg at Betsy & Marty Sonnenblick’s home, 6 Kershner Pl., 7:30 PM, with the Rabbi discussing “Polarizing Topics for the Winter Solstice’: Halachic Questions From The Polar Region”
- ☆ NCSY Friday Night Lights
- ☆ Dec. 22 - Siyum Mesechet Menachot at Suedah Shlishit
- ☆ Feb. 1 - Friday night Oneg/NCSY Friday Night Lights
- ☆ Mar. 1 - Friday night Oneg
- ☆ Mar. 9 - Yachad/Yavneh Shabbaton
- ☆ May 11 - Suedah Shlishit sponsored by Kira & Andrew Wigod in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month
- ☆ June 8 - Suedah Shlishit sponsored by Eli Zefon in memory of Shlomo Ben Eliyahu (שלמה בן אליהו - זון נלב"ע ז סיון תשס"ד)
- ☆ June 22 - Suedah Shlishit sponsored by Eli Zefon in memory of Baroch Mafzir Ben Samuel (ברוך מפציר בן שמואל) - נלב"ע כ"ד סיון תשנ"ט

Points To Ponder

- ☆ 1st aliyah - Shabbat Table Discussion: the passuk says there was no one to interpret the dream (v.8) why would that be? What must Yosef have to interpret the dream?
- ☆ 2nd aliyah - This aliyah presents the Egyptian approach to insight. How do Egyptians view insight?
- ☆ 5th aliyah - What piece of information do we learn about the sale of Yosef in this aliyah? (hint: we discussed this idea in the drasha 2 weeks ago). Bonus: why would the Torah wait until now to tell us these details about the sale?
- ☆ 7th aliyah - What do we learn about the Egyptian view of Jews in this aliyah?

Answers to Points To Ponder

- ☆ Answers:
- ☆ 1st - Yosef must have certainty, presumably Paroah's necromancers could provide theoretical approaches, but they couldn't provide them with certainty
- ☆ 2nd - Paroah says that insight is Divinely inspired (v. 38)
- ☆ 5th - That Yosef cried to his brothers to not kill/sell him and they didn't listen to his cries. We also learn that the brothers feel bad about this.
- ☆ 7th - Even with Yosef's prestige they still won't eat with socially, because he's a Jew (v.32)



Shirley Vann has dedicated this week’s Covenant & Conversation (used with permission of the Office of Rabbi Sacks) in memory of her beloved mother Necha bat Yitzchok.



NEW DATE & TIME

Children's
CHANUKAH
Chagiga

Candle Making, Ultimate Dreidal, Mystery Maccabee

MONDAY - 12.10.18

@ 5:00 P.M.

Congregation Ahavat Achim

18-25 Saddle River Road Fairlawn NJ

Come join us for a Chanukah celebration!

Delicious food and yummy treats will be served.

Please RSVP to youthdirector@ahavatachim.org to participate in Mystery Maccabee!

NEW DATE & TIME

בס"ד

CONGREGATION AHAVAT ACHIM'S

ONEG SHABBAT LECTURE SERIES

Will Continue on Friday, December 21st

At the home of

Betsy & Marty Sonnenblick

6 Kershner Place

At 7:30 PM

Please join us for an enjoyable evening of learning with Rabbi Ely Shestack, friends, and refreshments.

The Rabbi's Topic Will Be:

"Polarizing Topics for the Winter Solstice":
Halachic Questions from the Polar Region



The next Oneg of will be February 1st .

If you are able to host that Oneg,

Please call Lori at 791-1205 or email garfmom@gmail.com



COVENANT & CONVERSATION

THOUGHTS ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA
FROM RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS

בס"ד



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

מקץ תשע"ט
Mikketz 5779

COVENANT & CONVERSATION: FAMILY EDITION

Covenant & Conversation: Family Edition is a new and exciting initiative. Written as an accompaniment to Rabbi Sacks' weekly *Covenant & Conversation* essay, the *Family Edition* is aimed at connecting older children and teenagers with his ideas and thoughts on the *parsha*. To download the accompanying Family Edition to this *Covenant & Conversation* essay, please visit www.RabbiSacks.org/CCFamilyEdition or make sure you are subscribed to Rabbi Sacks' free mailing list via www.RabbiSacks.org/Subscribe and you will receive the link each week in your inbox.

The Universal and the Particular

The story of Joseph is one of those rare narratives in Tanach in which a Jew (Israelite/ Hebrew) comes to play a prominent part in a gentile society – the others are, most notably, the books of Esther and Daniel. I want here to explore one facet of that scenario. How does a Jew speak to a non-Jew about God?

What is particular, and what is universal, in the religious life? In its approach to this, Judaism is unique. On the one hand, the God of Abraham is, we believe, the God of everyone. We are all – Jew and non-Jew alike – made in God's image and likeness. On the other, the religion of Abraham is not the religion of everyone. It was born in the specific covenant God made with Abraham and his descendants. We say of God in our prayers that He "chose us from all the peoples."

How does this work out in practice? When Joseph, son of Jacob, meets Pharaoh, King of Egypt, what concepts do they share, and what remains untranslatable?

The Torah answers this question deftly and subtly. When Joseph is brought from prison to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, both men refer to God, always using the word Elokim. The word appears seven times in the scene¹, always in biblical narrative a significant number. The first five are spoken by Joseph: "God will give Pharaoh the answer He desires ... God has revealed to Pharaoh what He is about to do ... God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do ... The matter has been firmly decided by God, and God will do it soon" (Gen. 41:16-32).

The last two are uttered by Pharaoh himself, after Joseph has interpreted the dreams, stated the problem (seven years of famine), provided the solution (store up grain in the years of plenty), and advised him to appoint a "wise and discerning man" (Gen. 41:33) to oversee the project:

¹ The word appears nine times in Genesis 41, the last two in the later episode in which Joseph gives names to his two sons.

The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and all his officials. So Pharaoh asked them, “Can we find anyone like this man, in whom is the spirit of God?” Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. You shall be in charge of my palace...” (Gen. 41:37–39)

This is surprising. The Egypt of the Pharaohs was not a monotheistic culture. It was a place of many gods and goddesses – the sun, the Nile, and so on. To be sure, there was a brief period under Ikhnaton (Amenhotep IV), when the official religion was reformed in the direction of monolatry (worship of one god without disputing the existence of others). But this was short-lived, and certainly not at the time of Joseph. The entire biblical portrayal of Egypt is predicated on their belief in many gods, against whom God “executed judgement” at the time of the plagues. Why then does Joseph take it for granted that Pharaoh will understand his reference to God – an assumption proved correct when Pharaoh twice uses the word himself? What is the significance of the word Elokim?

The Hebrew Bible has two primary ways of referring to God, the four-letter name we allude to as Hashem (“the name” par excellence) and the word Elokim. The sages understood the difference in terms of the distinction between God-as-justice (Elokim) and God-as-mercy (Hashem). However, the philosopher-poet of the eleventh century, Judah HaLevi, proposed a quite different distinction, based not on ethical attributes but on modes of relationship² – a view revived in the twentieth century by Martin Buber in his distinction between I-It and I-Thou.

HaLevi’s view was this: the ancients worshipped forces of nature, which they personified as gods. Each was known as El, or Eloah. The word “El” therefore generically means “a force, a power, of nature.” The fundamental difference between those cultures and Judaism, was that Judaism believed that the forces of nature were not independent and autonomous. They represented a single totality, one creative will, the Author of being. The Torah therefore speaks of Elokim in the plural, meaning, “the sum of all forces, the totality of all powers.” In today’s language, we might say that Elokim is God as He is disclosed by science: the Big Bang, the various forces that give the universe its configuration, and the genetic code that shapes life from the simplest bacterium to Homo sapiens.

Hashem is a word of different kind. It is, according to HaLevi, God’s proper name. Just as “the first patriarch” (a generic description) was called Abraham (a name), and “the leader who led the Israelites out of Egypt” (another description) was called Moses, so “the Author of being” (Elokim) has a proper name, Hashem.

The difference between proper names and generic descriptions is fundamental. Things have descriptions, but only people have proper names. When we call someone by name we are engaged in a fundamental existential encounter. We are relating to them in their uniqueness and ours. We are opening up ourselves to them and inviting them to open themselves up to us. We are, in Kant’s famous distinction, regarding them as ends, not means, as centres of value in themselves, not potential tools to the satisfaction of our desires.

“When we call someone by name we are engaged in a fundamental existential encounter.”

The word Hashem represents a revolution in the religious life of humankind. It means that we relate to the totality of being, not as does a scientist seeing it as something to be understood and

² Judah HaLevi, Kuzari, book 1v, para. 1.

controlled, but as does a poet standing before it in reverence and awe, addressing and being addressed by it.

Elokim is God as we encounter Him in nature. Hashem is God as we encounter Him in personal relationships, above all in speech, conversation, dialogue, words. Elokim is God as He is found in creation. Hashem is God as He is disclosed in revelation.

Hence the tension in Judaism between the universal and the particular. God as we encounter Him in creation is universal. God as we hear Him in revelation is particular. This is mirrored in the way the Genesis story develops. It begins with characters and events whose significance is that they are universal archetypes: Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah and the Flood, the builders of Babel. Their stories are about the human condition as such: obedience and rebellion, faith and fratricide, hubris and nemesis, technology and violence, the order God makes and the chaos we create. Not until the twelfth chapter of Genesis does the Torah turn to the particular, to one family, that of Abraham and Sarah, and the covenant God enters into with them and their descendants.

“God as we encounter Him in creation is universal. God as we hear Him in revelation is particular.”

This duality is why Genesis speaks of two covenants, the first with Noah and all humanity after the Flood, the second with Abraham and his descendants, later given more detailed shape at Mount Sinai in the days of Moses. The Noahide covenant is universal, with its seven basic moral commands. These are the minimal requirements of humanity as such, the foundations of any decent society. The other is the richly detailed code of 613 commandments that form Israel’s unique constitution as “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:6).

So there are the universals of Judaism – creation, humanity as God’s image, and the covenant with Noah. There are also its particularities – revelation, Israel as God’s “firstborn child,” and the covenants with Abraham and the Jewish people at Sinai. The first represents the face of God accessible to all humankind; the second, that special, intimate and personal relationship He has with the people He holds close, as disclosed in the Torah (revelation) and Jewish history (redemption). The word for the first is Elokim, and for the second, Hashem.

We can now understand that Genesis works on the assumption that one aspect of God, Elokim, is intelligible to all human beings, regardless of whether they belong to the family of Abraham or not. So, for example, Elokim comes in a vision to Avimelekh, King of Gerar, despite the fact that he is a pagan. The Hittites call Abraham “a prince of God [Elokim] in our midst.” Jacob, in his conversations with Laban and later with Esau uses the term Elokim. When he returns to the land of Canaan, the Torah says that “the terror of God [Elokim]” fell on the surrounding towns. All these cases refer to individuals or groups who are outside the Abrahamic covenant. Yet the Torah has no hesitation in ascribing to them the language of Elokim.

That is why Joseph is able to assume that Egyptians will understand the idea of Elokim, even though they are wholly unfamiliar with the idea of Hashem. This is made clear in two pointed contrasts. The first occurs in Genesis 39, Joseph’s experience in the house of Potiphar. The chapter consistently and repeatedly uses the word Hashem in relation to Joseph (“Hashem was with Joseph... Hashem gave him success in everything he did” [39:2, 5]), but when Joseph speaks to Potiphar’s wife, who is attempting to seduce him, he says, “How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against Elokim” (30:9).

The second is in the contrast between the Pharaoh who speaks to Joseph and twice uses the word Elokim, and the Pharaoh of Moses' day, who says, "Who is Hashem that I should obey Him and let Israel go? I do not know Hashem and I will not let Israel go" (Exodus 5:2). An Egyptian can understand Elokim, the God of nature. He cannot understand Hashem, the God of personal relationship.

Judaism was and remains unique in its combination of universalism and particularism. We believe that God is the God of all humanity. He created all. He is accessible to all. He cares for all. He has made a covenant with all.

Yet there is also a relationship with God that is unique to the Jewish people. It alone has placed its national life under His direct sovereignty. It alone has risked its very existence on a divine covenant. It testifies in its history to the presence within it of a Presence beyond history.

As we search in the twenty-first century for a way to avoid a "clash of civilisations," humanity can learn much from this ancient and still compelling way of understanding the human condition. We are all "the image and likeness" of God. There are universal principles of human dignity. They are expressed in the Noahide covenant, in human wisdom (hokhma), and in that aspect of the One God we call Elokim. There is a global covenant of human solidarity.

But each civilisation is also unique. We do not presume to judge them, except insofar as they succeed or fail in honouring the basic, universal principles of human dignity and justice. We as Jews rest secure in our relationship with God, the God who has revealed Himself to us in the intimacy and particularity of love, whom we call Hashem.

The challenge of an era of conflicting civilisations is best met by following the example of Abraham, Sarah and their children, as exemplified in Joseph's contribution to the economy and politics of Egypt, saving it and the region from famine. To be a Jew is to be true to our faith while being a blessing to others regardless of their faith. That is a formula for peace and graciousness in an age badly in need of both.

"To be a Jew is to be true to our faith while being a blessing to others regardless of their faith."

Shabbat shalom

Jonathan Sacks



www.rabbisacks.org     @rabbisacks

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

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