



שבת פרשת שמות  
**SHABBAT PARSHAT SHEMOT**  
 19 TEVET/JANUARY 6

Haftorah is Isaiah 27:6-28:13, then skipping to 29:22-23

**FRIDAY NIGHT**  
**CANDLE LIGHTING - 4:25 PM**  
**MINCHA - 4:30 PM**  
**TZAIT - 5:28 PM**

**SATURDAY**  
**HASHKAMA/YOUTH - 8:20 AM**  
**CHUMASH SHIUR - 8:30 AM**  
**SHACHARIT MAIN - 9:00 AM**  
**LAST KRIAT SHEMA - 9:42 AM**  
**MINCHA - 4:10 PM**  
**SHKIA - 4:44 PM**  
**MAARIV/HAVDALAH - 5:29 PM**

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

**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.**

נא לא לדבר בשעת התפילה  
 PLEASE NO CONVERSATION DURING SERVICES



**WEEKDAY DAVENING INFORMATION**


	Sunday (1/7)	Monday (1/8)	Tuesday (1/9)	Wednesday (1/10)	Thursday (1/11)	Friday (1/12)
<b>Earliest Talit</b>	6:20 AM	6:20 AM	6:20 AM	6:19 AM	6:19 AM	6:19 AM
<b>Shacharit</b>	<u>8:15 AM</u>	<u>6:15 AM</u>	<u>6:25 AM</u>	<u>6:25 AM</u>	<u>6:15 AM</u>	<u>6:25 AM</u>
<b>Gedolah</b>	12:26 PM	12:27 PM	12:27 PM	12:28 PM	12:28 PM	12:29 PM
<b>Mincha - Maariv</b>	<u>4:30 PM</u>					<u>4:35 PM</u>
<b>Maariv Only</b>		<u>8:20 PM</u>	<u>8:20 PM</u>	<u>8:20 PM</u>	<u>8:20 PM</u>	
<b>Shkia</b>	4:45 PM	4:46 PM	4:47 PM	4:48 PM	4:49 PM	
<b>Tzait</b>	5:30 PM	5:31 PM	5:32 PM	5:33 PM	5:34 PM	

Seudah Shlishit is sponsored by the Wigod and Sokoloff families in memory of Cheryl<sup>ע"ה</sup> and Ron's parents Leonore<sup>ע"ה</sup> (Leah bat Zev) and Benjamin<sup>ע"ה</sup> (Boruch Chaim ben Zevulun Aryeh) Sokoloff. May their neshamot have aliyot.

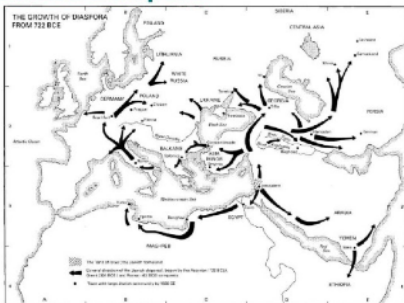
Mazel tov to Amy & Stephen Agress on the birth of a grandson to Max & Hilana.

**יגדלוהו לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים**  
**ויכניסוהו לבריתו בזמנו ובעתו**

May they raise him to Torah, chupah and good deeds, and may he be entered into the covenant of Abraham.



**Jewish Diaspora**



Men's Club presents **Jewish Migration Patterns - Part 2 (Spain & Germany)**, by Avraham Groll, Director of JewishGen.org. Sunday, Jan. 14, 9:00 AM, with a light breakfast. RSVP to Elliot at MensClub@AhavatAchim.org or 201-519-7951 (\$5 charge for attendees that don't RSVP by January 10).

## Kiddush Information

- ☆ If you are around when the Rabbi says “על המחירה”, your assistance in clean up would be appreciated.
- ☆ Kiddush setup for this Shabbat: Banner, Goldgur, Weinraub
- ☆ Kiddush setup for next Shabbat: Lewis, Racenstein, Strich
- ☆ To sponsor a Kiddush (\$1000/\$613/\$318 plus scotch) send an email to [gplotnick@aol.com](mailto:gplotnick@aol.com).

## Adult Education



- ☆ CHUMASH CLASS - Shabbat morning before Shacharit.
- ☆ GEMARA SHIUR - Winter Hiatus.
- ☆ DAYTIME TORAH VOYAGES - Thursdays at 2:00 PM.
- ☆ FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT - After Kiddush.
- ☆ PEREK ON THE LAWN, Pirkei Avot Periodic Shiur.

## Community Events

- ☆ Jan. 6 – **Table Tennis Tournament**, for local Yeshivot. Featured match is Rabbis Markowitz & Donath playing Rabbis Belizon & Shestack. SHOMREI TORAH, Sat. night, 8:00 PM. To play, sponsor a team, or RSVP as to your attendance, click here: [Table Tennis](#).
- ☆ Jan. 7 – **From Biblical Roots to Contemporary Practice**, a text-based study of Taharat HaMishpacha given by Shira Donath. DARCHEI NOAM, Sunday, 8:00 PM. For info contact Shira Donath at [yoetzetshira@gmail.com](mailto:yoetzetshira@gmail.com).
- ☆ Jan. 27 – **Tu B'Shvat Cooking Demonstration**, with Chef Meir Levy (classically trained at Johnson & Wales University). DARCHEI NOAM, Sat. night, 7:30 PM – 10:00 PM. \$30 per person. For info, click here: [Chef Levy](#).
- ☆ Feb. 10 – **Whiskey Tasting**. SHOMREI TORAH, Sat. night, 8:00 PM For info, click here: [Whiskey](#).

## Gita Cooperwasser ר"ע

### Youth Program



- ☆ Please contact Melanie at [mkwstel@gmail.com](mailto:mkwstel@gmail.com) and volunteer to host Chad (our Youth Director) for shabbat and/or meals.
- ☆ Youth groups begin at 10:15 AM. Tot Shabbat in the playroom.
- ☆ Parents, ensure that your children are in groups or with you at all times.
- ☆ NO FOOD DURING GROUPS!

You can help Ahavat Achim's finances and it won't cost you a cent! Just make your regular Amazon purchases via this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/>. After a one-time set up designating Congregation Ahavat Achim of Fair Lawn as your preferred charity, nothing more for you to do except make your regular Amazon purchases.

- Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Ahavat Achim.
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## Ahavat Achim Future Events

- ☆ Jan. 13 - Oneg Shabbat at the Schwitzer home.
- ☆ Jan. 13 - Kiddush sponsored by the Sonnenblicks in honor of Esti's marriage to Orel Cohen and Orel's Shabbat Chatan.
- ☆ Jan. 13 - Siyum Mesechet Shevuos at Suedah Shlishit
- ☆ Jan. 14 - Men's Club Breakfast, 9:00 AM
- ☆ Jan. 23 - Homeless Shelter Volunteers Needed, 6:15 PM - 9:00 PM. RSVP to [eligreenbaum@yahoo.com](mailto:eligreenbaum@yahoo.com)
- ☆ Jan. 31 - Board Meeting (Tentative)
- ☆ Feb. 2 - Oneg Shabbat at Sonnenblick home.
- ☆ Feb. 10 - Yachad Shabbaton
- ☆ Feb. 21 - Board Meeting (Tentative)
- ☆ Mar. 17 - Kiddush sponsored by Agress family in honor of Josh's Aufruf and upcoming marriage to Bronia Goldman
- ☆ Mar. 21 - Board Meeting (Tentative)
- ☆ Apr. 25 - Board Meeting (Tentative)
- ☆ May 23 - Board Meeting (Tentative)

Jewish Federation Super Sunday is Jan. 28. Volunteer, donate or just “answer the call”. Go online at: [www.jfnnj.org/supersunday](http://www.jfnnj.org/supersunday), or contact Laurie Siegel at 201-820-3956 or email her at [lauries@jfnnj.org](mailto:lauries@jfnnj.org).



### Points To Ponder (Answers Below)

- ☆ (2nd Aliyah) Who did Moshe's father take for a wife? How are Moshe's parent's described in this aliyah?
- ☆ (4th aliyah) What burns in this aliyah?
- ☆ (6th aliyah) Where does Moshe go after speaking to God at the burning bush? Where does God next speak to Moshe? Why does Moshe do this?
- ☆ (7th aliyah) What happens between the 6th and 7th aliyah? (read between the lines).

☆ (2nd) "Bat Levi" - either the daughter of Levi or a Levite daughter; Moshe's parents are unnamed in this aliyah

☆ (4th) The angel and the bush

☆ (6th) Moshe goes back to Midian to say goodbye to Yitro; Hashem again tells Moshe to go to Egypt while he's in Midian

☆ (7th) The elders scatter as Moshe and Aaron approach Pharaoh

**Answers to Points To Ponder**

בס"ד

CONGREGATION AHAVAT ACHIM'S

# ONEG SHABBAT LECTURE SERIES

Has Been Changed to Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup>

At the home of Ilana & Nate Schwitzer

17-01 Prospect Avenue

At 7:30 PM

*This Oneg will be in Loving memory of Ilana's Mother  
Rivka Malka Bat Frecha & Yeish*

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



The next Oneg of will be February 2nd.  
At the home of Betsy & Marty Sonnenblick

The Men's Club of Ahavat Achim proudly presents:

## Jewish Migration Patterns – Part 2 (Spain and Germany)

by

Avraham Groll,  
Director of JewishGen.Org

This presentation will explore the patterns of Jewish migration between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, as major Jewish centers emerged in Spain, Germany, France, and Italy. Spain and Germany will be used as case studies to understand the conditions within the Jewish community, setting the stage for the eventual shift toward Eastern Europe.



Both men and women are welcome to attend.

**Date:** Sunday, January 14, 2018

**Time:** 9:00 am

**Place:** Congregation Ahavat Achim  
18-25 Saddle River Road  
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

**Food:** A light breakfast will be served.

**Cost:** FREE if reservation made by January 10th  
\$5.00 for all others

**RSVP:** By Email: [MensClub@AhavatAchim.org](mailto:MensClub@AhavatAchim.org)  
By Phone: 201-519-7951

We encourage you to pay your Men's Club dues if you haven't done so already (\$36 or \$25 if you purchase \$200 worth of scrip).





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Judy Taub Gold | Dr. Bram Alster, Co-Chairs

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*Transforming  
Lives Together*

# COVENANT & CONVERSATION

LIFE-CHANGING IDEAS IN THE PARSHA WITH RABBI SACKS



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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.



THE MAURICE WOHL  
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

— RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS

## God Loves Those Who Argue

Shemot 2018 / 5778

I have become increasingly concerned about the assault on free speech taking place throughout the West, particularly in university campuses.<sup>1</sup> This is being done in the name of “safe space,” that is, space in which you are protected against hearing views which might cause you distress, “trigger warnings”<sup>2</sup> and “micro-aggressions,” that is, any remark that someone might find offensive even if no offence is meant.

So far has this gone that at the beginning of the 2017 academic year, students at an Oxford College banned the presence of a representative of the Christian Union on the grounds that some might find their presence alienating and offensive.<sup>3</sup> Increasingly, speakers with controversial views are being disinvented: the number of such incidents on American college campuses rose from 6 in 2000 to 44 in 2016.<sup>4</sup>

Undoubtedly this entire movement was undertaken for the highest of motives, to protect the feelings of the vulnerable. That is a legitimate ethical concern. Jewish law goes to extremes in condemning *lashon hara*, hurtful or derogatory speech, and the sages were careful to use what they called *lashon sagi nahor*, euphemism, to avoid language that people might find offensive.

<sup>1</sup> I first wrote about this ten years ago in my book, *The Home We Build Together* (2007), in the chapter entitled “The Defeat of Freedom in the Name of Freedom,” 37-48. The situation has become significantly worse since then.

<sup>2</sup> See on this, Mick Hume, *Trigger Warning: Is the Fear of Being Offensive Killing Free Speech?* London, William Collins, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/10/10/oxford-college-bans-harmful-christian-union-freshers-fair>.

<sup>4</sup> Jean M. Twenge, *iGen*, Atria, 2017, 253.

But a safe space is not one in which you silence dissenting views. To the contrary: it is one in which you give a respectful hearing to views opposed to your own, knowing that your views too will be listened to respectfully. That is academic freedom, and it is essential to a free society.<sup>5</sup> As George Orwell said, “*If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.*”

John Stuart Mill likewise wrote that one of the worst offences against freedom is “to stigmatise those who hold the contrary opinion as bad and immoral men.” That is happening today in institutions that are supposed to be the guardians of academic freedom. We are coming perilously close to what Julian Benda called, in 1927, “*The treason of the intellectuals*,” in which he said that academic life had been degraded to the extent that it had allowed itself to become an arena for “the intellectual organisation of political hatreds.”<sup>6</sup>

What is striking about Judaism, and we see this starkly in this week’s parsha, is that *argument and the hearing of contrary views is of the essence of the religious life*. Moses argues with God. That is one of the most striking things about him. He argues with Him on their first encounter at the burning bush. Four times he resists God’s call to lead the Israelites to freedom, until God finally gets angry with him (Ex. 3:1–4:7). More significantly, at the end of the parsha he says to God:

“*Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Why did You send me? Since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and You have not rescued Your people at all.*” (Ex. 5:22-23).

**“Argument and the hearing of contrary views is of the essence of the religious life.”**

This is extraordinary language for a human being to use to God. But Moses was not the first to do so. The first was Abraham, who said, on hearing of God’s plan to destroy the cities of the plain, “*Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justice?*” (Gen. 18:25).

Similarly, Jeremiah, posing the age-old question of why bad things happen to good people and good things to bad people, asked: “*Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all the faithless live at ease?*” (Jer. 12:1). In the same vein, Habakkuk challenged God: “*Why do You tolerate the treacherous? Why are You silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves?*” (Hab. 1:13). Job who challenges God’s justice is vindicated in the book that bears his name, while his friends who defended Divine justice are said not to have spoken correctly (Job 42:7-8). Heaven, in short, is not a safe space in the current meaning of the phrase. To the contrary: *God loves those who argue with Him* – so it seems from Tanakh.

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<sup>5</sup> I salute the University of Chicago, Princeton and other universities, that have taken a strong stand in defence of free speech on campus; and Professor Jonathan Haidt and his colleagues at the Heterodox Academy, founded to promote intellectual diversity in academic life.

<sup>6</sup> Julian Benda, *The Treason of the Intellectuals*, Transaction, 2007, 27.



Equally striking is the fact that the sages continued the tradition and gave it a name: argument for the sake of heaven,<sup>7</sup> defined as debate for the sake of truth as opposed to victory.<sup>8</sup> The result is that Judaism is, perhaps uniquely, *a civilisation all of whose canonical texts are anthologies of arguments*. Midrash operates on the principle that there are “seventy faces” to Torah and thus that every verse is open to multiple interpretations. The Mishnah is full of paragraphs of the form, “Rabbi X says this while Rabbi Y says that.” The Talmud says in the name of God himself, about the conflicting views of the schools of Hillel and Shammai, that “*These and those are the words of the living God.*”<sup>9</sup>

A standard edition of Mikraot Gedolot consists of the biblical text surrounded by multiple commentaries and even commentaries on the commentaries. The standard edition of the Babylonian Talmud has the text surrounded by the often conflicting views of Rashi and the Tosafists. Moses Maimonides, writing his masterpiece of Jewish law, the Mishneh Torah, took the almost unprecedented step of presenting only the halakhic conclusion without the accompanying arguments. The ironic but predictable result was that the Mishneh Torah was eventually surrounded by an endless array of commentaries and arguments. In Judaism there is something holy about argument.

Why so? First, because only God can see the totality of truth. For us, mere mortals who can see only fragments of the truth at any one time, there is an irreducible multiplicity of perspectives. We see reality now one way, now another. The Torah provides us with a dramatic example in its first two chapters, which give us two creation accounts, both true, from different vantage points. The different voices of priest and prophet, Hillel and Shammai, philosopher and mystic, historian and poet, each capture something essential about the spiritual life. Even within a single genre, the sages noted that “*No two prophets prophesy in the same style.*”<sup>10</sup> Torah is a conversation scored for many voices.

**“Only God can see the totality of truth.”**

Second, because justice presupposes the principle that in Roman law is called *audi alteram partem*, “hear the other side.” That is why God wants an Abraham, a Moses, a Jeremiah and a Job to challenge Him, sometimes to plead for mercy or, as in the case of Moses at the end of this week’s parsha, to urge Him to act swiftly in defence of His people.<sup>11</sup> Both the case for the prosecution and the defence must be heard if justice is to be done and seen to be done.

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<sup>7</sup> Mishnah, Avot 5:17.

<sup>8</sup> Meiri to Avot ad loc.

<sup>9</sup> Eruvin 13b.

<sup>10</sup> Sanhedrin 89a.

<sup>11</sup> See Pesachim 87a-b for a remarkable passage in which God criticises the prophet Hosea for not coming to the defence of his people.



The pursuit of truth and justice require the freedom to disagree. The Netziv argued that it was the prohibition of disagreement that was the sin of the builders of Babel.<sup>12</sup> What we need, therefore, is not “safe spaces” but rather, civility, that is to say, giving a respectful hearing to views with which we disagree. In one of its loveliest passages the Talmud tells us that the views of the school of Hillel became law “because they were pleasant and did not take offence, and because they *taught the views of their opponents as well as their own, indeed they taught the views of their opponents before their own.*”<sup>13</sup>

And where do we learn this from? From God Himself, who chose as His prophets people who were prepared to argue with Heaven for the sake of Heaven in the name of justice and truth.

When you learn to listen to views different from your own, realising that they are not threatening but enlarging, then you have discovered the life-changing idea of argument for the sake of heaven.

Shabbat shalom,



### LIFE-CHANGING IDEA #13

When you learn to listen to views different from your own, realising that they are not threatening but enlarging, then you have discovered the life-changing idea of argument for the sake of heaven.

### LIFE-CHANGING IDEAS IN SEFER SHEMOT

- **SHEMOT:** When you learn to listen to views different from your own, realising that they are not threatening but enlarging, then you have discovered the life-changing idea of argument for the sake of heaven.



For more material from Rabbi Sacks, or to join his mailing list, please visit [www.rabbisacks.org](http://www.rabbisacks.org)

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<sup>12</sup> Ha’amek Davar to Gen. 11:4.

<sup>13</sup> Eruvin 13b.