



וּיִפְתַּח ה' אֶת פִּי הָאֲתוֹן

שבת פרשת בלק  
**SHABBAT PARSHAT BALAK**  
 17 TAMMUZ - JULY 20  
 Haftorah is Micah 5:6-6:8. Pirkei Avot Chap. 6.

**FRIDAY NIGHT**  
**EARLIEST CANDLES - 6:52 PM**  
**MINCHA/MAARIV - 7:00 PM**  
**CANDLE LIGHTING - 8:07 PM**  
**TZAIT - 9:10 PM**

**SATURDAY**  
**HASHKAMA - 8:15 AM**  
**SHACHARIT MAIN - 9:00 AM**  
**LAST KRIAT SHEMA - 9:21 AM**  
**GEMARA SHIUR - 7:00 PM**  
**MINCHA - 7:55 PM**  
**MAARIV/HAVDALAH - 9:09 PM**

תענית שבעה עשר בתמוז (נדחה)  
**SHIVA ASAR B'TAMUZ (POSTPONED)**  
 18 TAMUZ/JULY 21  
 A Public Fast Day. See page 4 for details.

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

**Rabbi Ely Shestack**

**WEEKDAY DAVENING INFORMATION**

	Sunday (7/21)	Monday (7/22)	Tuesday (7/23)	Wednesday (7/24)	Thursday (7/25)	Friday (7/26)
<b>Fast Begins</b>	<b>4:30 AM</b>					
<b>Earliest Talit</b>	<b>4:36 AM</b>	<b>4:37 AM</b>	<b>4:38 AM</b>	<b>4:39 AM</b>	<b>4:41 AM</b>	<b>4:42 AM</b>
<b>Shacharit</b>	<b>8:00 AM</b>	<b>6:15 AM</b>	<b>6:25 AM</b>	<b>6:25 AM</b>	<b>6:15 AM</b>	<b>6:25 AM</b>
<b>Gedolah</b>	<b>1:39 PM</b>	<b>1:39 PM</b>	<b>1:39 PM</b>	<b>1:39 PM</b>	<b>1:39 PM</b>	<b>1:39 PM</b>
<b>Mincha - Maariv</b>	<b>7:50 PM</b>	<b>8:05 PM</b>	<b>8:05 PM</b>	<b>8:05 PM</b>	<b>8:05 PM</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
<b>Shkia</b>	<b>8:23 PM</b>	<b>8:22 PM</b>	<b>8:21 PM</b>	<b>8:21 PM</b>	<b>8:20 PM</b>	
<b>Fast Ends</b>	<b>9:03 PM</b>					
<b>Tzait</b>	<b>9:08 PM</b>	<b>9:07 PM</b>	<b>9:06 PM</b>	<b>9:06 PM</b>	<b>9:05 PM</b>	



Suedah Shlishit is sponsored by Barry Weinraub and Steven Plotnick in honor of their siyum on Mesechet Arachin.



Thank you to Rabbi & Chana Shestack for hosting the Billiards tournament. Congrats to the victor, Steve Plotnick, and to those families that predicted Steve's victory: Agress, Heller, Plotnick and Winchester.



Thanks to all the players and our on-line viewing audience.



**Kiddush Information**



- ☆ To sponsor a Kiddush (\$1000/\$613/\$318, plus scotch) email [gplotnick@aol.com](mailto: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 - Shabbat afternoon (45 minutes before Mincha), learning Beitzah.
- ☆ DAYTIME TORAH VOYAGES - Tuesdays at 1:00 PM.
- ☆ FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT - After Kiddush.
- ☆ PEREK ON THE LAWN, Pirkei Avot Periodic Shiur.
- ☆ BEGINNER TALMUD CLASS - Mondays at 8:45 PM. Men and women are welcome. Please speak to Eli Greenbaum, Elliot Greene or Betsy Sonnenblick if you are interested.

**Gita Cooperwasser ע"ה Youth Program**

- ☆ Youth groups are on summer hiatus. See you in the fall!
- ☆ Tot Shabbat, 10:40 AM!
- ☆ Kira & Andrew are excited to become the new Chairs of the Youth Committee! Over the next few weeks and months they'll be introducing new programs and welcome feedback on how to engage your kids. Email them at [kira.batist.msw@gmail.com](mailto:kira.batist.msw@gmail.com).
- ☆ Aug 3 - Parent/Child Learning, studying Eichah, 6:40 PM
- ☆ Oct. 12 - Parent/Child Learning, studying Kohelet



**Stay & Play**

- ☆ Next Date is August 3.



**Pirkei Avot Teen Learning**

- ☆ Teens Pirkei Avot Shiur at 10:40 AM.
- ☆ For info email Ben at [benjamin.greenbaum@frisch.org](mailto:benjamin.greenbaum@frisch.org).



**Ahavat Achim Future Events**

- ☆ Aug. 17 - Judah Levine Bar Mitzvah
- ☆ Sept. 7 - Andy Freund's Aufruf
- ☆ Sep. 14 - Aspiring Member Shabbaton
- ☆ Oct. 12 - Youth Taking Over, Sharsheret Pink Sudeah Shlishit, sponsored by Kira & Andrew Wigod
- ☆ October 15 - Kiddush is sponsored by the Winchester family on the Yahrtzeit of Steve's mother, Helen Winchester, Miriam Hendl bas Shimon ע"ה
- ☆ Nov. 10 - Coat Drive
- ☆ Nov. 16 - David Kor's Aufruf
- ☆ Dec. 7 - Yehuda Farajun Bar Mitzvah
- ☆ Feb. 8 - Eden Riskin Bat Mitzvah
- ☆ Feb. 22 - Yachad Shabbaton

**Community Events**

- ☆ N/A

**Perek on the Lawn**

- ☆ July 27 - Solomon Home
- ☆ Sept. 14
- ☆ Email Larry at [lardavbern@gmail.com](mailto:lardavbern@gmail.com) to host.



**Welcome**

- ☆ Welcome to our new Associates Michal & Eli Lesser, and their children Akiva (8), Asher (6), Nava (4) and Yehoshua (3).

**Points To Ponder**

- ☆ (1st) What nation was Balak king of Moav or Midian? Who initiated the alliance against Israel?
- ☆ (3rd) Our Sages understand Bilaam's activities to be undertaken with excitement and anticipation. What in this aliyah serves as a proof for that theory? Whose action are echoed in the language used to describe Bilaam?
- ☆ (6th) What blessing immediately follows the famous verse "Ma tovu ohalecha yaakov", How wonderful are your tents, O Jacob?
- ☆ (7th) How does Hashem want the idolatry and harlotry to be dealt with?

**Answers to Points To Ponder**

- ☆ (1st) Balak was king of Moav. They initiated the alliance with Midian.
- ☆ (3rd) Bilaam got up early in the morning and saddled his own donkey. This echoes Avraham's devotional preparation for Akedat Yitzhak.
- ☆ (6th) The encampment stretches out like gardens by a brook, like cedars from the water.
- ☆ (7th) Hashem seems to indicate that Moshe and the leadership should kill all those who have committed the treachery.



**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 ע"ה.**



## The Three Weeks

(From the Ezras Torah Luach)

The period between the Seventeenth of Tamuz until after Tisha B'Av is called "בין המצרים" — "between the straits" (based upon the verse in Lamentations 1:3) because of the multiple tragedies that have occurred to the Jewish people throughout the ages during these three weeks. Among the worst of the tragedies are the destruction of both Holy Temples, the end of Jewish Sovereignty for almost 2,000 years, and the exile from Eretz Yisroel. The custom is for us to manifest some signs of mourning during this period. Therefore, we do not make weddings or take haircuts during these three weeks. Because it is a time of national catastrophe, we do not make the Bracha **שהחיינו** (so as to avoid the Bracha **שהחיינו** we do not eat a new fruit [unless that fruit would be unobtainable afterward] or purchase an expensive article of clothing that would require the Bracha **שהחיינו**, during these three weeks [the custom is to make the Bracha on Shabbat].



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

- Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Ahavat Achim.
- Amazon Smile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.



## SUPPORT YOUR SHUL

### Donate a Sefer, etc.

The shul has Siddurim & Machzorim (\$36) and Chumashim (\$54) available to be donated. Please contact Jeff Safier at [robysafier@gmail.com](mailto:robysafier@gmail.com) for details.

### Yahrzeit Plaques

Memorialize a loved one with a plaque for \$300 (for members, or \$450 for non-members). We will endeavor to send you written notice of an upcoming yahrzeit, mention his or her name during the public Yizkor and list the yahrzeit in the bulletin once a year. For more information, email Larry at [lardavbern@gmail.com](mailto:lardavbern@gmail.com).

### Men's Club

Please contact Elliot Greene at [MensClub@AhavatAchim.Org](mailto:MensClub@AhavatAchim.Org) to join the Men's Club.

### Scrip

Scrip is available from Men's Club. Email David at [dmgarfunkel@gmail.com](mailto:dmgarfunkel@gmail.com). Pay using Paypal ([treasurer@ahavatachim.org](mailto:treasurer@ahavatachim.org)) or use Discover, MasterCard or Visa - email [treasurer@ahavatachim.org](mailto:treasurer@ahavatachim.org) for details.

### Mishebayrach

Contributions to the shul after a Mishebayrach can be via Paypal to [treasurer@ahavatachim.org](mailto:treasurer@ahavatachim.org), or via MasterCard, Visa or Discover by sending info to Steve Winchester (contact him at [treasurer@ahavatachim.org](mailto:treasurer@ahavatachim.org)). If by check indicate on its face "Aliyah Donation."

### Honoraria

The available Honoraria list will be provided upon request by contacting Steven Plotnick at [seplotnick@gmail.com](mailto:seplotnick@gmail.com).

### David Schwitzer<sup>ע"ה</sup> Social Hall

Please contact Ben Lang at [bmmnpl@aol.com](mailto:bmmnpl@aol.com) to book the David Schwitzer<sup>ע"ה</sup> Social Hall for an event or special occasion. \$250 per simcha (members)/\$325 for Associates/\$400 paid in advance for non-members, plus the cost of any additional clean up (plus a \$150 security/cleaning deposit refunded when the social hall is returned in the condition it started in). Private caterers must be approved in advance by the Rabbi.

### Mitzvah Cards

Want mitzvah cards, contact Eita Latkin at 791-8940 or [parentsof3@aol.com](mailto:parentsof3@aol.com). Cost is \$3 per card. Also can be ordered in bulk - ten cards for \$25, which you send out yourself privately.

## SUPPORT YOUR SHUL

## **The 17th of Tammuz (From OU.org)**

The 17th day in the Jewish month of Tammuz, Jews the world over fast and lament to commemorate the many calamities that have befallen our people on this ominous day. The purpose of such fasts in the Jewish calendar is, according to Rabbi Eliyahu Kitov's Book of Our Heritage, "to awaken hearts towards repentance through recalling our forefathers' misdeeds; misdeeds which led to calamities..."

Going all the way back to Biblical times, Moses descended Mount Sinai on this day and, upon seeing the Golden Calf broke the first set of Tablets carrying the Ten Commandments (Shemot 32:19, Mishna Taanit 28b). In the First Temple Era: The priests in the First Temple stopped offering the daily sacrifice on this day (Taanit 28b) due to the shortage of sheep during the siege and the next year 3184 (586 BCE), the walls of Jerusalem were breached after many months of siege by Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian forces.

In Melachim II 21:7 we find that King Menashe, one of the worst of the Jewish kings, had an idol placed in the Holy Sanctuary of the Temple, according to tradition on this date. The Talmud, in Masechet Taanit 28b, says that in the time of the Roman persecution, Apostomos, captain of the occupation forces, did the same, and publicly burned the Torah - both acts considered open blasphemy and desecration. These were followed by Titus and Rome breaching the walls of Jerusalem in 3760 (70 CE) and Pope Gregory IX ordering the confiscation of all manuscripts of the Talmud in 4999 (1239). In later years this day continued to be a dark one for Jews. In 1391, more than 4,000 Jews were killed in Toledo and Jaen, Spain and in 4319 (1559) the Jewish Quarter of Prague was burned and looted. The Kovno ghetto was liquidated on this day in 5704 (1944) and in 5730 (1970) Libya ordered the confiscation of Jewish property.

Other interesting occurrences on this day include Noach sending out the first dove to see if the Flood waters had receded, (Bereishit 8:8) in 1650 (2100 BCE); Moshe Rabbeinu destroying the golden calf, (Shemot 32:20, Seder Olam 6, Taanit 30b - Rashi) and then ascending back up Har Sinai for the second time where he spent the next forty days pleading for forgiveness for the sin of the golden calf, (Shemot 33:11, Rashi). The Mishna in Ta'anit 4:8 associates the 17th of Tammuz as the "Fast of the Fourth Month" mentioned by the prophet Zechariah. According to this Mishna, the 17th of Tammuz will be transformed in the messianic era in a day that "shall be joy to the House of Judah" full of "gladness and cheerful feasts".

The fast of the 17th of Tammuz is observed from the break of dawn until night (as defined by halacha), one of four Jewish fasts to be observed in this manner - 3 Tishrei, 10 Tevet, 13 Adar and 17 of Tammuz. Expecting or nursing mothers and those who are ill are expected to observe the fast but with lenience, refraining from meat, luxurious food and hard liquor. Minors that are old enough to understand, though exempt from fasting, should also be fed only simple foods as a manner of education. Unlike the two Jewish fast days Yom Kippur and Tisha B'Av, washing and wearing leather are permitted on this day. Special prayers (vayechal and anenu) are added to the morning and afternoon prayers. Ashkenazim add the latter only in the afternoon service (mincha). This day is the beginning of the Three Weeks, an annual period of mourning over the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Ahavat Achim Membership/ Hospitality**

Contact Arnie at [aspier@verizon.net](mailto:aspier@verizon.net) for membership details. For Shabbat hospitality contact Sara at [saraG51@yahoo.com](mailto:saraG51@yahoo.com).

### **Bikkur Cholim/Chesed Committee**

If someone needs a visit/assistance, contact Sara at [saralevine06@gmail.com](mailto:saralevine06@gmail.com) or Mary Lisa at [kenkatter541@gmail.com](mailto:kenkatter541@gmail.com).

### **Personal Announcements**

Various life cycle events related to members are announced in the bulletin (e.g., births, bar and bat mitzvahs, weddings and deaths, as well as travel to/from Israel to study). We also welcome new members. Other personal announcements are not appropriate except as part of the bulletin's dedication (a \$36 cost - \$54 with photo).

### **Numbers & Info**

- ☆ ERUV – To subscribe for updates, email [fairlawneruv@groups.io](mailto:fairlawneruv@groups.io). Check status at <https://groups.io/g/fairlawneruv> or call 201-254-9190.
- ☆ MIKVAH – 201-796-0350. At Shomrei Torah, 9 PM–10:30 PM, Motzei Shabbat from 1¼ hours after Shabbat ends for 1½ hours. Kaylim Mikvah: Sun. 10 AM-3 PM
- ☆ TWITTER: AhavatAchimFL
- ☆ FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/groups/ahavat.achim/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ahavat.achim/)
- ☆ INSTAGRAM: [instagram.com/ahavatachimfl/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/ahavatachimfl/?hl=en)
- ☆ FLICKR: [flickr.com/photos/ahavatachim/albums](https://www.flickr.com/photos/ahavatachim/albums)

### **Shul Calendar**

- ☆ To add events to the shul calendar email Larry at [lardavbern@gmail.com](mailto:lardavbern@gmail.com).



# COVENANT & CONVERSATION

THOUGHTS ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA  
FROM RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS

בס"ד

בלק תשע"ט  
Balak 5779



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

## COVENANT & CONVERSATION: FAMILY EDITION

*Covenant & Conversation: Family Edition* is a new and exciting accompaniment to Rabbi Sacks' weekly *Covenant & Conversation* essay, 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](http://www.RabbiSacks.org/CCFamilyEdition) or subscribe to Rabbi Sacks' free mailing list via [www.RabbiSacks.org/Subscribe](http://www.RabbiSacks.org/Subscribe).

## Not Reckoned Among the Nations

The year is 1933. Two Jews are sitting in a Viennese coffee house, reading the news. One is reading the local Jewish paper, the other the notoriously antisemitic publication *Der Stürmer*. "How can you possibly read that revolting rubbish?" says the first. The second smiles. "What does your paper say? Let me tell you: 'The Jews are assimilating.' 'The Jews are arguing.' 'The Jews are disappearing.' Now let me tell you what my paper says: 'The Jews control the banks.' 'The Jews control the media.' 'The Jews control Austria.' 'The Jews control the world.' My friend, if you want good news about the Jews, always read the antisemites."

An old and bitter joke. Yet it has a point and a history and it begins with this week's *parsha*. Some of the most beautiful things ever said about the Jewish people were said by Bilaam: "Who can count the dust of Jacob ... May my final end be like theirs! ... How beautiful are your tents, Jacob, your dwelling places, Israel! ... A star will come out of Jacob; a sceptre will rise out of Israel."

Bilaam was no friend of the Jews. Having failed to curse them, he eventually devised a plan that worked. He suggested that Moabite women seduce Israelite men and then invite them to take part in their idolatrous worship. 24,000 people died in the subsequent plague that struck the people (Num. 25, 31:16). Bilaam is numbered by the rabbis as one of only four non-royals mentioned in the Tanach who are denied a share in the World to Come (Sanhedrin 90a).

Why then did God choose that Israel be blessed by Bilaam? Surely this contradicts the principle *Megalgelim zechut al yedei zakai*, which means that "Good things come about through good people" (Tosefta Yoma 4:12). Why did this good thing come about through a bad man? The answer lies in the principle stated in Proverbs (27:2): "Let someone else praise you, and not your own mouth; an outsider, and not your own lips." Tanach is perhaps the least self-congratulatory national literature in history. Jews chose to record for history their faults, not their virtues. Hence it was important that their

praise come from an outsider, and one not known to like them. Moses rebuked the people. Bilaam, the outsider, praised them.

**“Jews chose to record for history their faults, not their virtues.”**

That said, however, what is the meaning of one of the most famous descriptions ever given of the people Israel: “It is a nation dwelling alone, not reckoned among the nations.” (Num. 23:9)? I have argued (in my book, *Future Tense*) against the interpretation that has become popular in modern times, namely that it is Israel’s destiny to be isolated, friendless, hated, abandoned and alone, as if antisemitism were somehow written into the script of history. It isn’t. None of the prophets said so. To the contrary, they believed that the nations of the world would eventually recognise Israel’s God and come to worship Him in the Temple in Jerusalem. Zechariah (8:23) foresees a day when “ten people from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, ‘Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.’” There is nothing fated, predestined, about antisemitism.

What then do Bilaam’s words mean? “It is a nation dwelling alone, not reckoned among the nations.” Ibn Ezra says they mean that unlike all other nations, Jews, even when a minority in a non-Jewish culture, will not assimilate. Ramban says that their culture and creed will remain pure, not a cosmopolitan mix of multiple traditions and nationalities. The Netziv gives the sharp interpretation, clearly directed against the Jews of his time, that “If Jews live distinctive and apart from others they will dwell safely, but if they seek to emulate ‘the nations’ they ‘will not be reckoned’ as anything special at all.”

There is, however, another possibility, hinted at by another noted antisemite, G. K. Chesterton<sup>1</sup>, who we have already mentioned in *Beha’alotecha*. Chesterton famously wrote of America that it was “a nation with the soul of a church” and “the only nation in the world founded on a creed.” That is, in fact, precisely what made Israel different – and America’s political culture, as historian Perry Miller and sociologist Robert Bellah pointed out, is deeply rooted in the idea of biblical Israel and the concept of covenant. Ancient Israel was indeed founded on a creed, and was, as a result, a nation with the soul of a religion.

We discussed in *Beha’alotecha* how Rabbi Soloveitchik broke down the two ways in which people become a group, be it a camp or a congregation. Camps face a common enemy, and so a group of people bands together. If you look at all other nations, ancient and modern, you will see they arose out of historical contingencies. A group of people live in a land, develop a shared culture, form a society, and thus become a nation.

Jews, certainly from the Babylonian exile onward, had none of the conventional attributes of a nation. They did not live in the same land. Some lived in Israel, others in Babylon, yet others in Egypt. Later they would be scattered throughout the world. They did not share a language of everyday speech.

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<sup>1</sup> That Chesterton was an antisemite is not my judgment but that of the poet W. H. Auden). Chesterton wrote: “I said that a particular kind of Jew tended to be a tyrant and another particular kind of Jew tended to be a traitor. I say it again. Patent facts of this kind are permitted in the criticism of any other nation on the planet: it is not counted illiberal to say that a certain kind of Frenchman tends to be sensual.... I cannot see why the tyrants should not be called tyrants and the traitors traitors merely because they happen to be members of a race persecuted for other reasons and on other occasions.” (G.K. Chesterton, *The Uses of Diversity*, London, Methuen & Co., 1920, p. 239). On this Auden wrote, “The disingenuousness of this argument is revealed by the quiet shift from the term nation to the term race.”

There were many Jewish vernaculars, versions of Yiddish, Ladino and other regional Jewish dialects. They did not live under the same political dispensation. They did not share the same cultural environment. Nor did they experience the same fate. Despite all their many differences though, they always saw themselves and were seen by others as one nation: the world's first, and for long the world's only, global people.

What then made them a nation? This was the question R. Saadia Gaon asked in the tenth century, to which he gave the famous answer: "Our nation is only a nation in virtue of its laws (*torot*)." They were the people defined by the Torah, a nation under the sovereignty of God. Having received, uniquely, their laws before they even entered their land, they remained bound by those selfsame laws even when they lost the land. Of no other nation has this ever been true.

**“ Having received their laws before they even entered their land, they remained bound by those laws even when they lost the land.”**

Uniquely then, in Judaism religion and nationhood coincide. There are nations with many religions: multicultural Britain is one among many. There are religions governing many nations: Christianity and Islam are obvious examples. Only in the case of Judaism is there a one-to-one correlation between religion and nationhood. Without Judaism there would be nothing (except antisemitism) to connect Jews across the world. And without the Jewish nation Judaism would cease to be what it has always been, the faith of a people bound by a bond of collective responsibility to one another and to God. Bilaam was right. The Jewish people really are unique.

Nothing therefore could be more mistaken than to define Jewishness as a mere ethnicity. If ethnicity is a form of culture, then Jews are not one ethnicity but many. In Israel, Jews are a walking lexicon of almost every ethnicity under the sun. If ethnicity is another word for race, then conversion to Judaism would be impossible (you cannot convert to become Caucasian; you cannot change your race at will).

What makes Jews "a nation dwelling alone, not reckoned among the nations," is that their nationhood is not a matter of geography, politics or ethnicity. It is a matter of religious vocation as God's covenant partners, summoned to be a living example of a nation among the nations made distinctive by its faith and way of life. Lose that and we lose the one thing that was and remains the source of our singular contribution to the heritage of humankind. When we forget this, sadly, God arranges for people like Bilaam and Chesterton to remind us otherwise. We should not need such reminding.

Shabbat Shalom

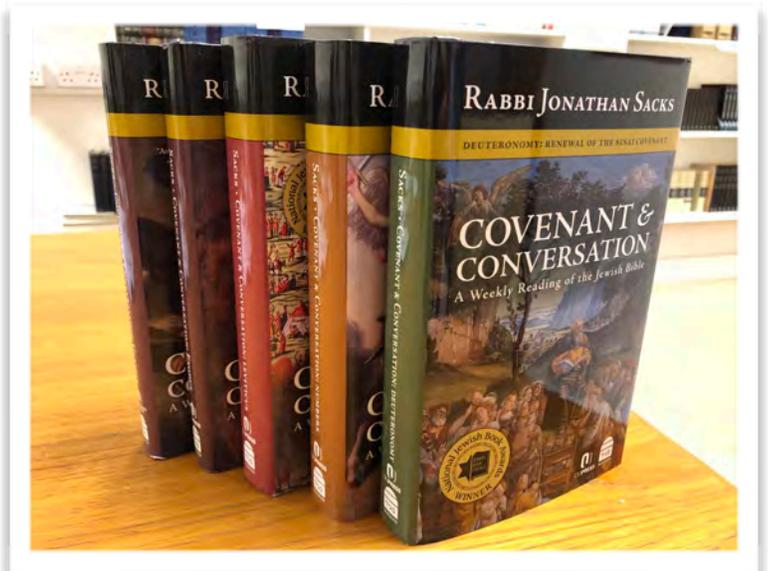


**“Jews are summoned to be a living example of a nation made distinctive by its faith and way of life.”**

# \*\* OUT NOW - “DEUTERONOMY: RENEWAL OF THE SINAI COVENANT” \*\*

Maggid Books, the division of contemporary Jewish thought of Koren Publishers Jerusalem, is proud to announce the completion of Covenant & Conversation: A Weekly Reading of the Jewish Bible by Rabbi Sacks.

In “**Deuteronomy: Renewal of the Sinai Covenant**”, the 5th and final installation of the series, Rabbi Sacks writes: “With the book of Deuteronomy, the entire biblical project becomes lucid and reaches its culmination. Deuteronomy is the last act of the Jewish people’s drama before becoming a nation in its own land, and it forms the context of all that follows... [it] is, in essence, a programme for the creation of a moral society in which righteousness is the responsibility of all. The good society was to be, within the limits of the world as it was thirty-three centuries ago, an inclusive if not an entirely egalitarian one. Time and again we are told that social joy must embrace the widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the Levite, people without independent status or means. It is to be one nation under God.”



Matthew Miller, Publisher of Maggid Books, says, “We are thrilled that this series is now complete. Since the release of Genesis, we have heard from people around the globe how Rabbi Sacks’ writings have deepened their appreciation of the Jewish Bible and of Judaism as a whole. Now every Shabbat can be inspired by Rabbi Sacks’ brilliant insights.”

Rabbi Sacks says, “I am delighted to have finished this work on the Covenant & Conversation series. I called this series Covenant & Conversation because this, for me, is the essence of what Torah learning is – throughout the ages, and for us, now. The text of Torah is our covenant with God, our written constitution as a nation under His sovereignty. The interpretation of this text has been the subject of an ongoing conversation that began at Sinai thirty-three centuries ago and has not ceased since. Every age has added its commentaries, and so must ours. I hope by reading this series, people are inspired to participate in that conversation because that is a major part of what it is to be a Jew.”



[www.rabbisacks.org](http://www.rabbisacks.org)     @rabbisacks

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