



Shabbat Announcements

Parshat Va'etchanan/Shabbat Nachamu

August 1, 2020 11 Av, 5780

The Great Neck Synagogue building is closed due the covid-19 pandemic. To contact the clergy or office staff, please do so using the following information.

Rabbi Polakoff: dpolakoff@gns.org/516.637.3674
Rabbi Lichter: ilichter@gns.org/516.859.5123
Chazzan Spinner: yspinner@gns.org/732.991.6606
Mark Twersky: mtwersky@gns.org/516.527.9076
Jim Frisch: jfrisch@gns.org/516.840.5202

CLASS/EVENT SCHEDULE

Shacharit M-F 7:45 am/Sunday 8:30 am
 Mincha/Maariv this week 7:55 pm

Sunday

9:15 am: Midrash Class

Monday - Thursday

9:00 am: Kollel Scholars' Class

Friday

7:00 pm: Mincha

7:53 pm: Candle Lighting

Shabbat

Shacharit: 9:00/9:15 am

*Kiddush Bag sponsored by
 Joyce Swartz, Ron & Jill Swartz, and Lisa & Alan Adler,
 in honor of the 3rd yahrzeit of Arnold Swartz z"l,
 Avraham Moshe ben Reuven,
 and the aufruf of his grandson, Sol Adler.*

Mincha: 7:45 pm

Shabbat Ends : 8:59 pm

Havdalah w/Chazzan Yitzy Spinner on zoom: 9:15 pm

MAZAL TOVS & COMMUNITY NEWS

Mazal Tov to Irene & Paul Marcus on the engagement of their son **Raffi** to **Erica Herzberg** on Cherry Hill, NJ.

Mazal Tov to Lisa & Alan Adler on the marriage of their son **Sol** to **Hailey Siller**. Mazal Tov as well to grandmother **Joyce Swartz**.

Mazal Tov to Paul & Drora Brody on the birth of a grandson, born to their children **Judah & Tali Spector**.

GNS BIKUR CHOLIM COMMITTEE

We invite you to sponsor Rosh Hashanah flowers (\$18/each) that will be delivered to our ill/elderly members. We will be delivering flowers to approximately 30 people. Please contact Diane Rein at drein@verizon.net if you are interested in this chesed opportunity. Thank you!

SHARSHERET EVENT

Please join Sharsheret on **Monday, July 27th at 8:00 pm** for a community-wide event, Midsummer Miracles: Sharsheret's Chain of Lifesaving Work, featuring special guest Fran Drescher, to pay tribute to the women and families in our community who have been touched by breast and ovarian cancer Register, donate and watch at www.MidsummerMiracles.com.

SHALOM TASK FORCE

Shalom Task Force hotline is 888-883-2323, and is available to help anyone who is feeling fearful of physical or emotional harm or abuse. It is free and completely confidential.

YAHRTZEITS

Monday, 6 Av

Michelle Rutta for Leon Birnbaum

Tuesday, 7 Av

Stanley Fischer for Harry Fischer

Alan Levy for William Levy

Dassie Barth for Roslyn Orenstein

Harry Lumerman for Chaya Leah bat Reb Aryeh

Grant Reichlin for Richard Reichlin

Wednesday, 8 Av

Paul Brody for Bea Brody

Sheila Bachman for Max Gur

Israel Rosenzweig for Evelyn Rosenzweig

Steven Rosenzweig for Evelyn Rosezweig

Thursday, 9 Av

Trudy Jettelson for Sol Sirota

Friday, 10 Av

Sanford Brand for Frieda Brand

Marilyn Freedman for Anna Cohen

Rhonda Lipsky for Frieda Krauss

Billy Liss-Levinson for Sylvia Levinson

Nechama Liss-Levinson for Sylvia Levinson

Claire Behar for Patricia Winston Marback

Jerrald Weinstein for Philip Weinstein

Saturday, 11 Av

Charles Berlin for Helen Berlin

Sharon Goldwyn for Rabbi Joseph Skolnick

Joyce Swartz for Arnold Swartz

Lisa Adler for Arnold Swartz

Ron Swartz for Arnold Swartz

Steven Swartz for Arnold Swartz

Sunday, 12 Av

Yehoshua Gilad for Shmuel Greenberger

Larry Horn for Morris Horn

Janet Pomerantz for Nathan Siegel

RABBI SACKS ON THE PARSHA

Near the end of Va'etchanan is a statement with such far-reaching implications that it challenges the impression that has prevailed thus far in the Torah. This remark gives an entirely new complexion to the biblical image of the people Israel: "The Lord did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you are the fewest of all peoples" (Deut. 7:7). This is not what we have heard thus far. In Genesis, God promised the patriarchs that their descendants would be like the stars of the heaven, the sand on the seashore, the dust of the earth, uncountable. Abraham will be the father, not just of one nation but of many. At the beginning of Exodus we read of how the covenantal family, numbering a mere seventy when they went down to Egypt, were "fertile and prolific, and their population increased. They became so numerous that the land was filled with them" (Ex. 1:7). Three times in the book of Deuteronomy, Moses describes the Israelites as being "as many as the stars of the sky" (1:10; 10:22; 28:62). King Solomon speaks of himself as being part of "the people You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number" (I Kings 3:8). The prophet Hosea says that "the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted" (Hos. 2:1). In all these texts and others it is the size, the numerical greatness,

RABBI JONATHAN SACKS ON THE PARSHA

of the people that is emphasized. What then are we to make of Moses' words that speak of its smallness?

Targum Yonatan interprets it not to be about numbers at all but about self-image. He translates it not as "the fewest of all peoples" but as "the most lowly and humble of peoples." Rashi gives a similar reading, citing Abraham's words, "I am but dust and ashes" (Gen. 18:27), and Moses and Aaron's, "Who are we?" (Ex.16:7). Rashbam and Chizkuni give the more straightforward explanation that Moses is contrasting the Israelites with the seven nations they would be fighting in the land of Canaan/Israel. God would lead the Israelites to victory despite the fact that they were outnumbered by the local inhabitants. Rabbeinu Bachya quotes Maimonides, who says that we would have expected God, King of the universe, to have chosen the most numerous nation in the world as His people, since "the glory of the King is in the multitude of people" (Prov. 14:28). God did not do so. Thus, Israel should count itself extraordinarily blessed that God chose it, despite its smallness, to be His *am segula*, His special treasure. Rabbeinu Bachya finds himself forced to give a more complex reading to resolve the contradiction of Moses, in Deuteronomy, saying both that Israel is the smallest of peoples and "as many as the stars of the sky" (Gen. 22:17). He turns it into a hypothetical subjunctive, meaning: God would still have chosen you, even if you had been the smallest of the peoples. Sforno gives a simple and straightforward reading: God did not choose a nation for the sake of His honor. Had He done so He would undoubtedly have chosen a mighty and numerous people. His choice had nothing to do with honor and everything to do with love. He loved the patriarchs for their willingness to heed His voice; therefore, He loves their children.

Yet there is something in this verse that resonates throughout much of Jewish history. Historically Jews were and are a small people – today, less than 0.2 per cent of the population of the world. There were two reasons for this. First is the heavy toll taken through the ages by exile and persecution, directly by Jews killed in massacres and pogroms, indirectly by those who converted – in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Spain and nineteenth-century Europe – in order to avoid persecution (tragically, even conversion did not work; racial antisemitism persisted in both cases). The Jewish population is a mere fraction of what it might have been had there been no Hadrian, no Crusades, and no antisemitism. The second reason is that Jews did not seek to convert others. Had they done so they would have been closer in numbers to Christianity (2.4 billion) or Islam (1.6 billion). In fact, Malbim reads something like this into our verse. The previous verses have said that the Israelites were about to enter a land with seven nations, Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. Moses warns them against intermarriage with the other nations, not for racial but for religious reasons: "They will turn your children away from following Me to serve other gods" (Deut. 7:4). Malbim interprets our verse as Moses saying to the Israelites: Do not justify out-marriage on the grounds that it will increase the number of Jews. God is not interested in numbers.

Notwithstanding all these interpretations and explanations, Tanach itself offers one extraordinary episode that sheds a different light on the whole issue. It occurs in the seventh chapter of the book of Judges. God has told Gideon to assemble an army and do battle with the Midianites. He gathers a force of 32,000 men. God tells him, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against Me, 'My own strength has saved me'" (Judges 7:2). God tells Gideon to say to the men: Whoever is afraid and wishes to go home may do so. Twenty-two thousand men leave. Ten thousand remain. God tells Gideon, "There are still too many

men." He proposes a new test. Gideon is to take the men to a river and see how they drink the water. Ninety-seven hundred kneel down to drink and are dismissed. Gideon is left with a mere three hundred men. "With the three hundred men that lapped [the water] I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands," God tells him (Judges 7:1–8). By a brilliant and unexpected strategy, the three hundred put the entire Midianite army to flight.

The Jewish people are small but have achieved great things to testify in themselves to a force beyond themselves. It has achieved things no other nation its size could have achieved. Its history has been living testimony to the force of Divine Providence and the impact of high ideals. That is what Moses meant when he said: Ask now about the former days, long before your time, from the day God created human beings on the earth; ask from one end of the heavens to the other. Has anything so great as this ever happened, or has anything like it ever been heard of? Has any other people heard the voice of God speaking out of fire, as you have, and lived? Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by tests, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? (Deut. 4:32–34) Israel defies the laws of history because it serves the Author of history. Attached to greatness, it becomes great. Through the Jewish people, God is telling humankind that you do not need to be numerous to be great. Nations are judged not by their size but by their contribution to human heritage. Of this the most compelling proof is that a nation as small as the Jews could produce an ever-renewed flow of prophets, priests, poets, philosophers, sages, saints, halachists, aggadists, codifiers, commentators, rebbes, and *rashei yeshivot*. It has also yielded some of the world's greatest writers, artists, musicians, filmmakers, academics, intellectuals, doctors, lawyers, businesspeople, and technological innovators. Out of all proportion to their numbers, Jews could and can be found working as lawyers fighting injustice, economists fighting poverty, doctors fighting disease, teachers fighting ignorance, and therapists fighting depression and despair.

You do not need numbers to enlarge the spiritual and moral horizons of humankind. You need other things altogether: a sense of the worth and dignity of the individual, of the power of human possibility to transform the world, of the importance of giving everyone the best education they can have, of making each feel part of a collective responsibility to ameliorate the human condition. Judaism asks of us the willingness to take high ideals and enact them in the real world, unswayed by disappointments and defeats.

This is still evident today, especially among the people of Israel in the State of Israel. Traduced in the media and pilloried by much of the world, Israel continues to produce human miracles in medicine, agriculture, technology, and the arts, as if the word "impossible" did not exist in the Hebrew language. Israel remains a small nation, surrounded, as in biblical times, by "nations larger and stronger than you" (Deut. 7:1). Yet the truth remains, as Moses said: "The Lord did not set His affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you are the fewest of all peoples." This small people has outlived all the world's great empires to deliver to humanity a message of hope: you need not be large to be great. What you need is to be open to a power greater than yourself. It is said that King Louis XIV of France once asked Blaise Pascal, the brilliant mathematician and theologian, to give him proof of the existence of God. Pascal is said to have replied, "Your Majesty, the Jews!"

TISHA B'AV SCHEDULE

Wednesday Night Schedule

7:00 pm *Mincha @ GNS followed by Seudah HaMafseket at home*

8:13 pm *Fast Begins*

8:15 pm *Maariv @ GNS to be followed by Eicha & Kinnot*

[Click here to join Zoom](#)

Thursday Schedule

8:00 am – 10:00 am *Shacharit with explanatory Kinnot with Rabbis Polakoff & Lichter*

[Click here to join Zoom](#)

10:00 am – 12:00 pm *Live Kinnot Explanations*

Rabbi Yaakov Glasser, David Mitzner Dean, YU Center for the Jewish Future

[Click here for Webcast](#)

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm *Aleph-Beta Video - Tisha B'av and the Power of Rachel's Tears*

[Click Here for Video](#)

1:01 pm Chatzot; 1:40 pm Mincha @ GNS [Click here to join Zoom](#)

Yeshiva University Live Tisha B'av Webcasts Schedule – Mourning for Jerusalem 2020

1:15 – 2:15 pm **Rabbi Dr. Jacob J. Schacter**

The Tragedy We Commemorate on Tisha B'Av is Not – Really – the Destruction of the Beit Hamikdash

[Click Here](#)

2:15 – 3:00 pm **Rabbi David Fohrman, Founder/CEO, Aleph Beta Academy**

Jeremiah's Dilemma

[Click Here](#)

3:00 – 3:45 pm **Rabbi Meir Goldwicht**

Building a Life of Bracha & Simcha in Every Situation

[Click Here](#)

3:45 – 4:30 pm **Mrs. Michal Horowitz**

The Road to Redemption: Holding Fast To G-d

[Click Here](#)

4:30 – 5:15 pm **Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz**

Eis Lilchom: When Machlokes is Worth It

[Click Here](#)

5:45 – 7:00 pm **Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation Video**

Rabbi Yissocher Frand, Rabbi Yosef Elefant, Charlie Harary, Dr. David Lieberman

[Click Here](#) with code: eVudu

7:45 pm *Mincha* [Click here to join Zoom](#)

8:40 pm *Ma'ariv*

8:50 pm *Fast ends*

LAWS OF THE NINE DAYS & TISHA B'AV

Beginning with sunset before Rosh Chodesh Av, (Tuesday evening, July 21) the Nine-Day period commences.

HALACHOT OF NINE DAYS

MEAT & WINE

Except for Shabbos, one may not eat meat or poultry, or consume any food containing meat or poultry. Food cooked in a clean meat pot may be eaten, even if the pot had been used for meat within the last 24 hours. At a Siyum Mesechta, all participants who would normally be invited to such a Siyum would be permitted to eat meat. A Siyum may be made throughout the Nine Day period until Erev Tisha B'Av. Wine or grape juice may not be consumed during this period except for Shabbos or at a Seudat Mitzvah.

BATHING

During the Nine Days a person may not shower or bathe for pleasure, even in cold water. Swimming or using a sauna is likewise forbidden. If, however, a person is perspired or dirty, he may shower or bathe in lukewarm water and even use soap or shampoo if he or she will not become clean otherwise. Under any circumstance, washing one's hands, face and feet in cold water is permitted.

LAUNDRY, CLOTHING & CLEANING

One is permitted to polish silver or wash one's car during this period; however, shampooing rugs would be prohibited. It is forbidden to wash or dry clean one's clothing & linen during the Nine Days, even if it is done by a non-Jew. Ironing clothing is also prohibited. Even giving garments to a dry cleaner during the Nine Days to be picked up after the Nine Days is not allowed. However, one may give clothing to the cleaners before Rosh Chodesh if he picks them up after Tisha B'Av. Small children's clothing may be washed during the Nine Days. One may not wear new or freshly laundered clothing or linen during the Nine Days except for undergarments. It is preferable to wear all shirts briefly before the Nine Days commence. Purchasing new clothing is forbidden during the Nine Days, even if they will be worn after the Nine Days. This prohibition includes all types of clothing, even those upon which a She'hecheyanu is not recited. However, Tisha B'Av sneakers may be bought if one was unable to buy them previously. It is permissible to go window shopping during the Nine Days, even if you derive pleasure from this activity. It is permissible to purchase clothing, furniture, appliances, etc. during the Nine Days if they are on sale or you'll suffer a substantial loss if you will delay the purchase. Included in this category would be an individual who finds himself in a particular locale during the Nine Days where these items can be found but are not readily available in their neighborhood. Exchanges during the Nine Days of items that were purchased prior to Rosh Chodesh may be done even though you are receiving a new item in return. It is permissible to sew a tear or to sew on a button. Although knitting and crocheting are forbidden, needlepoint is permissible.

MISCELLANEOUS

Any form of home decorating should not be done during the Nine Days including planting trees or flowers in the garden. It is, however, permissible to water, mow the lawn or prune trees during this period of time.

HALACHOT OF TISHA B'AV

EATING & DRINKING

All eating and drinking is forbidden. This includes rinsing the mouth and brushing teeth.

BATHING & WASHING

All bathing for pleasure is prohibited even in cold water including the hands, face and feet. Ritual washing upon waking and after using the bathroom after touching covered parts of the body or before praying is permitted, but only up to the knuckles. One may wash dirty or sullied portions of the body (including cleaning the eyes of glutinous material). Washing for cooking or for medical reasons is permitted.

ANOINTING

Anointing for pleasure is prohibited including oil, soap, alcohol, cream, ointment, perfume, etc. Anointing for medical reasons is permitted, as well as using deodorant to remove bad odor.

MARITAL RELATIONS

Since cohabitation is prohibited, a husband and wife should not come in contact during the night of Tisha B'Av.

WEARING LEATHER SHOES

Even shoes made partially of leather are prohibited. Shoes made of cloth, rubber or plastic are permitted. Wearing leather shoes is permitted for medical reasons.

LEARNING TORAH

Since the heart rejoices in the study of Torah, it is prohibited to learn topics other than those relevant to Tisha B'Av or mourning. One may learn: Lamentations with its midrash and commentaries, portions of the Prophets that deal with tragedy or destruction, the third chapter of Moed Katan (which deals with mourning), the story of the destruction (in Gittin 56b-58a, Sanhedrin 104, and in Josephus), and the halachot of Tisha B'Av and mourning.

ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS

One should deprive himself of some comfort in sleep. Some reduce the number of pillows, some sleep on the floor. Pregnant women, the elderly and the ill are exempt. Sitting on a normal chair is forbidden until midday. One may sit on a low bench or chair, or on a cushion on the floor. Greeting someone with "good morning" and the like is prohibited. One who is greeted should answer softly and, if possible, inform the person of the prohibition. One should not give a gift except to the needy. The custom is to refrain until midday from any time-consuming work that diverts one from mourning.

In merit of our sincere observance of this time of mourning, may we merit the fulfillment of our hopes and prayers for the rebuilding of Yerushalayim.

**SALLY & SEYMOUR OLSHIN
ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM
GNS SUMMER 2020
LEARNING PROGRAM**

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Edward Reichman

**Precedented Times: The Rabbinic Response
to Pandemics Through the Centuries**



Edward Reichman is an Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine and Associate Professor of Philosophy and History of Medicine at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (AECOM) of Yeshiva University, where he teaches Jewish medical ethics. He received his rabbinic ordination from the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University and writes and lectures widely in the field of Jewish medical ethics. He is the recipient of a Kornfeld Foundation Fellowship and the Rubinstein Prize in Medical Ethics. He is a past member of the advisory board of the Institute for Genetics and Public Policy. His research is devoted to the interface of medical history and Jewish law.

**Tuesday, August 4
8:30 pm
following Mincha
at 7:50 pm**

[Join on Zoom HERE](#)

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Moshe Peretz ben
Bella Golda**

**516.487.6100
mtwersky@gns.org**



**26 Old Mill Road
Great Neck, NY 11023**

Great Neck Synagogue

★★★★★ Men's Club Presents ★★★★★

Wednesday, August 19th, 2020 at 8:00 pm



RABBI EVAN HOFFMAN

THE ORIGINS AND
HISTORICAL
DEVELOPMENT
OF THE
HIGH HOLIDAY SEASON

JOIN ON ZOOM [CLICK HERE](#)
ID: 807 751 748 PW: 5780

Rabbi Evan Hoffman is the Spiritual Leader of Congregation of Anshei Sholom in New Rochelle, NY. He previously served as Assistant Rabbi of Park East Synagogue in Manhattan. A graduate of Yeshiva College (summa cum laude), he received Semikhah from RIETS, earned an M.A. in Modern Jewish History from the Bernard Revel Graduate School and did advanced graduate research in American Jewish History. For many years, he has taught adult Jewish education courses in Jewish Theology and Jewish History in synagogues around the metro area.

Rabbi Hoffman is the author of a widely disseminated weekly essay series titled "Thoughts on the Parashah."

Rabbi Hoffman was raised in Great Neck, NY and is an avid fan of the New York Mets. Rabbi Hoffman and his wife, Sari, are the proud parents of Eliyahu and Elana.

High School Girls

PIRKEI AVOT SERIES

Shoshana Lunzer

TUESDAY EVENINGS

1 hour before Mincha
GNS Mender Auditorium (Gym)

Pizza will be served

The one-time registration form required to
be filled out can be found [here](#)