



שבת קודש/ד' דחול המועד  
**SHABBAT CHOLHAMOED**  
**20 TISHREI/SEPTEMBER 29**

Sefer Kohelet (Ecclesiastes). Seven Aliyot from Ki Tisah (Exodus 33:12-34:26) from ראה אתה to בחלב אמו. Maftir is from Pinchas, Numbers 29:26-31. Haftorah is Ezekiel 38:18 - 39:16 Do not say either אב הרחמים or צדק צדק.

**FRIDAY NIGHT**  
**CANDLE LIGHTING - 6:26 PM**  
**MINCHA - 6:30 PM**  
**TZAIT - 7:29 PM**

**SATURDAY**  
**HASHKAMA - 8:15 AM**  
**SHACHARIT MAIN - 9:00 AM**  
**LAST KRIAT SHEMA - 9:49 AM**  
**GEMARA SHIUR - 5:10 PM**  
**MINCHA - 6:10 PM**  
**SHKIA - 6:42 PM**  
**SHABBAT ENDS - 7:27 PM**

שמיני עצרת/שמחת תורה  
**SHEMINI ATZERET/SIMCHAT TORAH**  
**22 /23 TISHREI, OCTOBER 1/2**

**SUNDAY NIGHT**  
**CANDLE LIGHTING - 6:23 PM**  
**MINCHA - 6:25 PM**  
**TZAIT - 7:26 PM**

**MONDAY**  
**HASHKAMA - 8:15 AM**  
**SHACHARIT MAIN - 8:45 AM**  
**LAST KRIAT SHEMA - 9:49 AM**  
**MINCHA - 6:20 PM**  
**SHKIA - 6:39 PM**  
**MAARIV - 7:05 PM**  
**CANDLES - NOT BEFORE 7:24 PM**

**TUESDAY**  
**SHACHARIT - 8:45 AM**  
**LAST KRIAT SHEMA - 9:50 AM**  
**MINCHA - 6:20 PM**  
**SHKIA - 6:37 PM**  
**MAARIV/HAVDALAH - 7:22 PM**

נא לא לדבר בשעת התפילה  
 PLEASE NO CONVERSATION DURING SERVICES



**WEEKDAY DAVENING INFORMATION**

	Sunday (9/30)	Monday (10/1)	Tuesday (10/2)	Wednesday (10/3)	Thursday (10/4)	Friday (10/5)
<b>Earliest Talit</b>	5:48 AM			5:51 AM	5:52 AM	5:54 AM
<b>Shacharit</b>	7:30 AM			6:25 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM
<b>Gedolah</b>	1:16 PM			1:14 PM	1:14 PM	1:13 PM
<b>Mincha (Only Sun/Fri) - Maariv</b>	6:25 PM			8:20 PM	8:20 PM	6:20 PM
<b>Shkia</b>				6:36 PM	6:34 PM	
<b>Tzait</b>				7:21 PM	7:19 PM	



Seudat Shilishit is sponsored by the Brooks family in memory of Michele's father, צבי בן יהודה, Herman Plotnik ע"ה. May his neshama have an aliyah.

Please assist with Simchat Torah kiddush setup. Thanks to our sponsors: **Platinum:** Bernstein, Garfunkel, Heller, Plotnick, Spier & Winchester; **Sponsor:** Agress, Baron, Borsuk, Brenenson, Brooks, Dubin, Goldberg, Goldgur, Greenbaum/Goldman, Greene, Katter, Kor, Lang, Lewis, Lewisohn, Racenstein, Rein, Riskin, Rojas, Smedresman, Sokoloff, Sonnenblick, Strich, Wasserman, Wechsler, K&A Wigod, S. Wigod & Zezon.



**Atah Harayta Auction!** On Shemini Atzeret, after Mincha, we auction "אתה הראת" and other honors of Simchat Torah such as Chatan Torah, Chatan Breishit, and "כל הנערים".

20th Annual Children's Hakafot in the Sylvia Latkin סוקה Sukkah, 4:30 PM, Shemini Atzeret, Mon, Oct. 1 (inside if raining). Singing, dancing, treats and divrei Torah by a human-sized leviathan, with the "Farewell to Sukkah" Yehei Ratzon. A PEANUT-FREE EVENT!



Mazel tov to Robin & Evan Fineman (and big brother Ezra) on the birth of a daughter, Sybil Eden.

גדלוה לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים  
 May they raise her to Torah, chupah and good deeds.

Simchat Beit Hashoeva in the Sukkah, 4th-10th graders. Food, music, & rockin' with Rabbi Shestack. Motzei Shabbat 8-9 PM.



## Kiddush Information

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

## Adult Education



- ☆ GEMARA SHIUR - One hour before Mincha, through the first Shabbat in November.
- ☆ DAYTIME TORAH VOYAGES - Thursdays at 2:00 PM.
- ☆ FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT - After Kiddush.
- ☆ PEREK ON THE LAWN, Pirkei Avot Periodic Shiur.

## Men's Club

- ☆ October 28 (Sunday) - Avraham Groll from JewishGen.Org will discuss "History of Jews in Poland".

## Gita Cooperwasser ע"ה

### Youth Program

- ☆ Youth groups start at 10:00 AM!
- ☆ Oct. 14 - Apple picking, petting zoo and hayride extravaganza, meeting at 10:30 AM at Demarest Farms, Hillsdale, NJ. For more info, email [programmingaa@gmail.com](mailto:programmingaa@gmail.com).



### Tot Shabbat/Tot Shemini

#### Atzeret

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



#### Play & Stay

- ☆ Oct. 6, 4:00 PM. at the Gorelik home, 17-06 Radburn Rd.



## Ahavat Achim Future Events

- ☆ Oct. 12 - Oneg Shabbat series in memory of Jonathan Garfunkel ע"ה resumes at the Garfunkel home, 8:30 PM.
- ☆ Oct. 13 - Suedah Shlishit sponsored by David & Lori Garfunkel in memory of Jonathan ע"ה, and Betsy & Marty Sonnenblick on Yahrzeit of Betsy's father חיים יהודה בן ירמיהו Perlmutter ע"ה
- ☆ Oct. 27 - Youth Taking Over, Sharsheret Pink Seudat Shelishit, sponsored by Kira & Andrew Wigod.
- ☆ Dec. 15 - Reuvain Brenenson Bar Mitzvah
- ☆ Mar. 9 - Yachad/Yavneh Shabbaton

## Community Events

- ☆ Oct. 14 - **Hilchot Nidda Refresher Course**, to be given by Yoetzet Shira Donath. Sunday night, 8:00 – 9:30 PM, at Darchei Noam. \$5 suggested donation per participant, can be paid online at [Donate](#). To submit questions anonymously, go to [Nidda](#).
- ☆ Oct. 20 – **Beer Tasting & Sale**, with a beer spectrum from Pilsners to Stouts. All tasting beers will be available for sale at a discount. \$20 ticket includes \$5 towards beer purchases (in association with B&B Liquors). Sat. night, 8:30 PM, at Darchei Noam. RSVP at [Beer Tasting](#).
- ☆ Oct. 28 – **Thrive Women's Mentorship Program**, is offering an informational session over coffee with Aliza Strassman to learn more about the program. Sunday, anytime between 9:00 – 10:15 AM at Darchei Noam, or contact Aliza at [alizariem@gmail.com](mailto:alizariem@gmail.com).



Volunteers are needed to take down the Shul's Succah (if it is dry) tomorrow, Sunday, October 7, after Shacharit (around 9:00 AM), weather permitting. Please assist!



Welcome to our Torah Tourists, Elianna Sharvit, Daniel Guttman, Yael Feder, Moshe Pahmer and Judah Goldfeder. Thanks to those that opened your homes and are providing meals.



 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.
- AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

## Points To Ponder

- ☆ Hiatus for Chol Hamoed.

## Answers to Points To Ponder

V/N ☆

## Ahavat Achim's Second Annual Fine Food Auction!

We will auction off the dishes during kiddush on Simchat Torah! All proceeds will go the shul. Buyer and seller will agree on a date for delivery within 3 months of Simchat Torah. If you're planning to be away for Yom Tov, but something tickles your fancy, you can delegate bidding to someone else on your behalf so there's no need to miss out! Bidding starts at \$10/dish!

Questions? Contact Randi Spier ([randi.spier@gmail.com](mailto:randi.spier@gmail.com) or 201-777-0731) or Beth Wechsler ([beth.berman@aya.yale.edu](mailto:beth.berman@aya.yale.edu) or 201-835-4657).



Sisterhood Annual Coat Drive, for Center For Hope and Safety, will be Sunday, November 4 (Mitzvah Day in Bergen County), 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, 36-02 Hale Pl., Fair Lawn. Gently worn, not torn, outer garments for all ages. For more info, contact Audrey at [bickelar@aol.com](mailto:bickelar@aol.com).



The Sisterhood is looking for vibrant dedicated women to take over its leadership reins, shape it in accordance with their vision, and prepare it to serve the next generation of women in the shul. Please step up, speak to Aryeh, and let's keep the momentum going!

**Please be mindful when you bring candies to the Simchat Torah celebration that there are children in our shul with serious nut allergies. Please act accordingly.**

**Please do not bring dairy candies for the children on Simchat Torah morning, as the kiddush consists of meat products and maintaining the Kashrut becomes difficult.**

## 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 and \$450 for non-members. We will also endeavor to send you written notice of an upcoming yahrzeit, mention your loved one's 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).

### 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

If you've made a Mishebayrach you've pledged to give Tzedakah on behalf of those for whom you asked Hashem's blessing. Contributions to the shul are appropriate and can be made 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."

### David Schwitzer<sup>TM</sup> Social Hall

Please contact Ben Lang at [bmmnpl@aol.com](mailto:bmmnpl@aol.com) to book the David Schwitzer<sup>TM</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.

### Men's Club

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

### Honoraria

Contributions to acquire honoraria in memory or honor of a loved one are welcome. The available Honoraria list will be provided upon request by contacting Steven Plotnick at [seplotnick@gmail.com](mailto:seplotnick@gmail.com).

### 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

## חול המועד CHOL HAMOED

If one forgets to say יעלה ויבא, but remembers before מודים, say it before מודים. If one began מודים and then remembers that he forgot ויבא, he returns to the beginning of רצה. If one steps backward after Shemonah Esrei [or even if he had only said the second: "יהי לרצון אמרי פי" before moving his feet], he repeats Shemonah Esrei. By Birkat HaMazon, if one omitted ויבא and remembered after concluding the third Bracha ("בונה ירושלים"), but did not begin the fourth Bracha ("האל-אבינו") he should say the compensatory Bracha: "אשר נתן...". If he began the fourth Bracha, on Yom Tov he must begin again because of the omission of ויבא, except on Chol HaMoed when one does not have to repeat Birkat HaMazon if he forgot ויבא.

According to Nusach Sefard & Vilna Gaon, Tefillin is not worn during Chol HaMoed. If you wear Tefillin do so without Brachot (some say the Brachot inaudibly).

## הושענא רבה/ערב שמיני עצרת HOSHANA RABBA/EREV SHEMINI ATZERET

Many extra prayers are added to the service on Hoshana Rabba as the judgment concerning the fate of our water supply is finalized, and the conclusion of any period of judgement is our last chance to influence the Divine Judgement. When we get to "תענה אמונים" during Hashanos we put the Four Species down and we take the special Aravot of Hoshana Rabba (the custom is to take five stems that are bound together) into our hands (anything that invalidates the Arovot of the Four Species during Succot invalidates these Arovot on Hoshana Rabba); at the end of the Hoshanos we beat the Arovot against the floor five times according to custom.

As with every Erev Yom Tov, we bathe (many immerse in a Mikveh), and make preparations in honor of Yom Tov. It is customary for candles to be lit in the Succah with Brachot "להדליק נר של יום טוב" and "שהחינו".

## שמיני עצרת SHEMINI ATZERET

It is customary to make the Yom Tov Kiddush, with שהחינו, in the Succah; however, we do not make the Bracha "לישב בסוכה", and we eat in the Succah both the night and day of Shemini Atzeret, again, without making the Bracha "לישב בסוכה". During Yizkor, we make pledges to Tzedakah as a means of elevating the souls of the departed. The Shammash announces "משיב הרוח ומוריד" before the congregation begins the silent Shemonah Esrei of Mussaf, so that the congregation will add it in their silent Shemonah Esrei. From then, if one forgot to say "משיב הרוח" but remembered before he began "אתה קדוש" then he may say "משיב הרוח" there; if not he must begin the Shemonah Esrei again. During the repetition, גשם, תפילה (Gesheim).

## שמחת תורה SIMCHAT TORAH

Prior to Maariv we auction "אתה הראת" and other honors of Simchat Torah such as Chatan Torah, Chatan Breishit & "כל הנערים". Remember that one should refrain from wanton foolishness and levity, but rather one should engage only in celebration that is for the sake of Heaven.

## DISPOSAL OF LULAV & ETROG

You may dispose of a Lulav in any way that is not degrading. For example, you may drop it into a field or put it on a lawn, unless animals might eat it or step on it or if it will be subject to poor treatment before it decays. Don't dispose of a lulav or etrog directly into the garbage. Burn, bury, or wrap them in a bag or one layer of plastic and then you may throw it into normal garbage.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Ahavat Achim Membership/ Hospitality

Contact Arnie at [aspier@verizon.net](mailto:aspier@verizon.net) for membership details. For Shabbat hospitality contact Melanie at [mkwestel@gmail.com](mailto:mkwestel@gmail.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](https://twitter.com/AhavatAchimFL)

☆ FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/groups/ahavat.achim/](https://facebook.com/groups/ahavat.achim/)

☆ INSTAGRAM: [instagram.com/ahavatachimfl/?hl=en](https://instagram.com/ahavatachimfl/?hl=en)

☆ FLICKR: [flickr.com/photos/ahavatachim/albums](https://flickr.com/photos/ahavatachim/albums)

### Shul Calendar

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

# Tot Shabbat Parents & Me:

For kids 5 and under  
Starting at 10:40 AM

STORY TIME, TEFILLAH, SHABBAT SONGS  
AND FREE PLAY



Special  
Story Time  
with  
Surprise  
Guests!

קהילת  
אהבת אחים  
Congregation  
Ahavat Achim  
Fair Lawn, NJ

Info: [totshabbataa@gmail.com](mailto:totshabbataa@gmail.com)

SHABBOS  
DAY

PARENTS AND ME

# PLAY & STAY

Congregation Ahavat Achim



Kids 10 and  
Under are  
Welcome!

October 6  
@ 4:00 PM

Gorelik Home  
17-06 Radburn Road



info: programmingaa@gmail.com

קהילת  
אהבת אחים  
Congregation  
Ahavat Achim



Join us for a family fun  
Sunday of apple picking, a  
petting zoo and a hayride

Sunday, October 14, 2018  
Meeting at the farm 10:30 AM

Demarest Farms  
244 Wierimus Rd,  
Hillsdale, NJ 07642



# COVENANT & CONVERSATION

LIFE-CHANGING IDEAS IN THE PARSHA WITH RABBI SACKS



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

@rabbisacks    

*I am deeply touched that Covenant & Conversation has been generously sponsored by The Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation in memory of Maurice and Divienne Wohl ז"ל. Maurice was a visionary philanthropist on a vast scale, driven throughout his life by a sense of Jewish responsibility. Divienne 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



## unfinished symphony

vezot Habracha 2018 / 5779

Each year, as we near the end of the Mosaic books and Moses' life, I find myself asking: Did it really have to end that way, with Moses denied the chance to even to set foot on the land to which he led the people for forty tempestuous years? In the Heavenly Court, could Justice not have yielded to Mercy for the few days it would have taken Moses to cross the Jordan and see his task fulfilled? And for what was Moses being punished? One moment's anger when he spoke intemperately to the Israelites when they were complaining about the lack of water? Can a leader not be forgiven for one lapse in forty years? In the words of the sages: Is this the Torah and this its reward?<sup>1</sup>

The scene in which Moses climbs Mount Nebo to see in the distance the land he would never enter is one of the most poignant in all Tanakh. There is a vast midrashic literature that turns Moses' request "Let me cross over to see the good land beyond the Jordan" (Deut. 3:25) into high drama, with Moses mounting argument after argument in his defence only to be met by unbending refusal from Heaven: "Enough from you; do not speak to me of this matter again". (Deut. 3:26) Why?

This is the man who, eighteen times in Tanakh, is called "God's servant." No one else is so described except Joshua, twice. His own obituary in the Torah reads: "Never again did there arise in Israel a prophet like Moses" (Deut. 34:10). Why was he treated so seemingly harshly by God among whose attributes are forgiveness and compassion?

Clearly the Torah is telling us something fundamental. What, though, is it? There are many explanations, but I believe the most profound and simplest takes us back to the beginning of beginnings: "In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth." There is Heaven and there is Earth, and they are not the same.

<sup>1</sup> Berakhot 61b.

In the history of civilisation, one question has proved hardest of all. In the words of Psalm 8: “What is man that you are mindful of him?” What is it to be human? We are an infinitesimal speck in an almost infinite universe of a hundred billion galaxies each with a hundred billion stars. We know that our lives are like a bare microsecond set against the almost-eternity of the cosmos. We are terrifyingly small. Yet we are also astonishingly great. We dominate the planet. We have ever-increasing control over nature. We are the only life form thus far known capable of asking the question, ‘Why?’

Hence the two temptations that have faced Homo sapiens since the beginning: to think of ourselves as smaller than we actually are, or greater than we actually are. How are we to understand the relationship between our mortality and fallibility and the almost-infinities of space and time?

Civilisations have regularly blurred the line between the human and the divine. In myth, the gods behave like humans, arguing, fighting and contending for power, while some humans – the heroes – are seen as semi-divine. The Egyptians believed that pharaohs joined the gods after death; some were seen as gods even during their lifetime. The Romans declared Julius Caesar a god after his death. Other religions have believed that God has taken human form.

It has proved exceptionally difficult to avoid worshipping the human founder of a faith. In the modern age, the blurring of boundaries has been democratised. Nietzsche argued that we would have to become like gods to vindicate our dethroning of God Himself. The anthropologist Edmund Leach began his Reith Lectures with the words, “Men have become like gods. Isn’t it about time that we understood our divinity?” As Jews we believe that this is too high an estimate of our, or anyone’s, humanity.

In the opposite direction humans have been seen, in myth and more recently in science, as next-to-nothing. In King Lear, Shakespeare has Gloucester say, “As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods. They kill us for their sport.” We are the easily discarded playthings of the gods, powerless in the face of forces beyond our control. As I pointed out in an earlier essay, some contemporary scientists have produced secular equivalents of this view. They say: there is nothing qualitatively to distinguish between Homo sapiens and other animals. There is no soul. There is no self. There is no freewill.

Voltaire spoke of humans as “insects devouring one another on a little atom of mud.” Stephen Hawking said that “the human race is just a chemical scum on a moderate size planet, orbiting round a very average star in the outer suburb of one among a billion galaxies.” Philosopher John Gray wrote that “human life has no more meaning than that of slime mould.” In Homo Deus, Yuval Harari states that, “Looking back, humanity will turn out to be just a ripple within the cosmic data flow.”<sup>2</sup>

Judaism is humanity’s protest against both ideas. We are not gods. And we are not chemical scum. We are dust of the earth, but there is within us the breath of God. What is essential is never to blur the boundary between Heaven and Earth. The Torah speaks only obliquely about this. It tells us that there was a time, prior to the Flood, when “the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were lovely, and they married whomever they chose” (Gen. 6:2). It also tells us that, after the Flood, humans gathered in a plain in Shinar and said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower that reaches heaven,

**“What is essential is never to blur the boundary between Heaven and Earth.”**

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<sup>2</sup> Covenant and Conversation, Chukkat 5778.

and make a name for ourselves” (Gen. 11:4). Regardless of what these stories mean, what they speak of is a blurring of the line between Heaven and Earth – “sons of God” behaving like humans and humans aspiring to live among the gods.

When God is God, humans can be human. First, separate, then relate. That is the Jewish way.

For us as Jews, humanity at its highest is still human. We are mortal. We are creatures of flesh and blood. We are born, we grow, we learn, we mature, we make our way in the world. If we are lucky we find love. If we are blessed, we have children. But we also age. The body grows old even if the spirit stays young. We know that this gift of life does not last forever because in this physical universe, nothing lasts forever, not even planets or stars.

For each of us, therefore, there is a river we will not cross, a promised land we will not enter and a destination we will not reach. Even the greatest life is an unfinished symphony. Moses’ death on the far side of the Jordan is a consolation for all of us. None of us should feel guilty or frustrated or angry or defeated that there are things we hoped to achieve but did not. That is what it is to be human.

Nor should we be haunted by our mistakes. That, I believe, is why the Torah tells us that Moses sinned. Did it really have to include the episode of the water, the stick, the rock and Moses’ anger? It happened, but did the Torah have to tell us it happened? It passes over thirty-eight of the forty years in the wilderness in silence. It does not report every incident, only those that have a lesson for posterity. Why not, then, pass over this too in silence, sparing Moses’ good name? What other religious literature has ever been so candid about the failings of even the greatest of its heroes?

Because that is what it is to be human. Even the greatest human beings made mistakes, failed as often as they succeeded, and had moments of black despair. What made them great was not that they were perfect but that they kept going. They learned from every error, refused to give up hope, and eventually acquired the great gift that only failure can grant, namely humility. They understood that life is about falling a hundred times and getting up again. It is about never losing your ideals even when you know how hard it is to change the world. It’s about getting up every morning and walking one more day toward the Promised Land even though you know you may never get there, but knowing also that you helped others get there.

Maimonides writes in his law code that, “Every human being can become righteous like Moses our teacher or wicked like Jeroboam.”<sup>3</sup> That is an astonishing sentence. There only ever was one Moses. The Torah says so. Yet what Maimonides is saying is clear. Prophetically, there was only one Moses. But morally, the choice lies before us every time we make a decision that will affect the lives of others. That Moses was mortal, that the greatest leader who ever lived did not see his mission completed, that even he was capable of making a mistake, is the most profound gift God could give each of us.

**“Learn from every error, refuse to give up hope, and eventually acquire the great gift that only failure can grant, namely humility.”**

Hence the three great life changing ideas with which the Torah ends. We are mortal; therefore make every day count. We are fallible; therefore learn to grow from each

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<sup>3</sup> Hilkhhot Teshuvah 5:2.

mistake. We will not complete the journey; therefore inspire others to continue what we began.

Shabbat Shalom



### LIFE-CHANGING IDEA #49

We are mortal; therefore make every day count. We are fallible; therefore learn to grow from each mistake. We will not complete the journey; therefore inspire others to continue what we began.

## LIFE-CHANGING IDEAS IN SEFER DEVARIM

- **DEVARIM:** If you seek to change someone, make sure that you are willing to help them when they need your help, defend them when they need your defence, and see the good in them, not just the bad.
- **VA'ETCHANAN:** To make love undying, build around it a structure of rituals.
- **EIKEV:** Listening is the greatest gift we can give to another human being.
- **RE'EH:** Never define yourself as a victim. There is always a choice, and by exercising the strength to choose, we can rise above fate.
- **SHOFTIM:** To lead is to serve. The greater your success, the harder you have to work to remember that you are there to serve others; they are not there to serve you.
- **KI TEITSE:** Never be in too much of a rush to stop and come to the aid of someone in need of help.
- **KI TAVO:** Make sure the story you tell is one that speaks to your highest aspirations, and tell it regularly.
- **NITZAVIM:** Don't wait for the world to get better. Take the initiative yourself. The world is waiting for you.
- **VAYELECH:** Whatever your achievements, there is always a second mountain to climb, and it may turn out to be your greatest legacy to the future.
- **HA'AZINU:** If you want to change lives, speak to people's feelings, not just to their minds.
- **VEZOT HABRACHA:** We are mortal; therefore make every day count. We are fallible; therefore learn to grow from each mistake. We will not complete the journey; therefore inspire others to continue what we began.



Jonathan Sacks  
The Office of Rabbi Sacks

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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Jewish Federation presents

# ISRAEL FILM FESTIVAL



## October 31 - November 18, 2018

Tickets and Information

[www.jfnnj.org/filmfestival](http://www.jfnnj.org/filmfestival)

Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door

[joyceg@jfnnj.org](mailto:joyceg@jfnnj.org) • 201-820-3907

**Committee** Suzette Diamond (Chair), Lauri Bader, Susan Benkel, Ariella Drori, Nancy Eichenbaum, Etti Inbal, Nina Kampler, Donna Kissler, Joan Krieger, Lynn Karpo-Lantz, Gail Loewenstein, Jo Resnick Rosen, Marian Salamon, Ava Silverstein, Wendy Zuckerberg



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Transforming  
Lives Together

This program is made possible in part by a grant administered by the Bergen County Division of Cultural & Historic Affairs from funds granted by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.



### SCAFFOLDING

פיגומים

Wednesday, October 31

Teaneck Cinemas



### OUTDOORS

בית בגליל

Monday, November 5

Wayne YMCA



### HEADING HOME

PLUS SHORT FILM

### GETTING SERIOUS

אוברדוס

Tuesday, November 6

Warner Theater, Ridgewood



### THE TESTAMENT

העדות

Thursday, November 8

Teaneck Cinemas



### BENEATH THE SILENCE

הלומים

PLUS SHORT FILM

### STANDUP

סטנד-אפ

Tuesday, November 13

Teaneck Cinemas



### SHELTER

מסתור

Wednesday, November 14

Warner Theatre, Ridgewood

Thursday, November 15

United Synagogue of Hoboken



### THE CAKEMAKER

האופה מברלין

Sunday, November 11

Hamilton House, Jersey City

Sunday, November 18

Kaplan JCC on the Palisades, Tenafly

All films begin at 7:30 pm

Tickets and Information [www.jfnnj.org/filmfestival](http://www.jfnnj.org/filmfestival)

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Jewish Federation presents

# **FED**Talks:Israel

## **Nitsana Darshan-Leitner**

Named by **Israeli Forbes** magazine as one of the  
"50 most influential Israeli women"

**Monday**

**October 29**

7:30 pm

**Jewish Federation**

**50 Eisenhower Drive, Paramus**

Light Refreshments

**Register Today!**

**[www.jfnnj.org/fedtalks](http://www.jfnnj.org/fedtalks)**

\$10

Nitsana Darshan-Leitner is an Israeli attorney, human rights activist and the founder of Shurat HaDin Israeli Law Center. She has been leading the legal fight against terror financing, the anti-Israel boycott campaigns (BDS) and combating the multitude of lawfare tactics utilized against the Jewish State by its enemies. Ms. Darshan-Leitner assisted in blocking the Gaza Flotilla and terminated efforts to indict IDF soldiers for war crimes.

**Ariella Noveck**

**[AriellaN@jfnnj.org](mailto:AriellaN@jfnnj.org)**

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