



AHAVAT ACHIM
 קהלת אהבת אחים
 THE FAMILY SHUL

BESHALACH | JAN 14 - JAN 21, 2022 | 12 SHEVAT - 19 SHEVAT | CANDLE LIGHTING 4:34 PM | HAVDALAH 5:38 PM

SHABBAT

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14	
CANDLE LIGHTING	4:34 PM
MINCHA/KABBALAT SHABBAT	4:40 PM
TZAIT	5:32 PM
SATURDAY, JANUARY 15	
HASHKAMA	8:15 AM
SHACHARIT—Mask required	9:00 AM
LAST KRIAT SHMA	9:43 AM
MINCHA	4:30 PM
MAARIV/HAVDALAH	5:38 PM

אב הרחמים *is recited at Mussaf*
 צדקתך צדק *is recited at Mincha*

SHIURIM SCHEDULE

The beginner Talmud class, "Talmud 4 All" meets *Monday night at 8:15pm* on Zoom.

Zoom Shiurim link:
<https://zoom.us/j/7291311899>
 Password: 112233

IN OUR FAMILY

We regret to inform you of the passing of Morris Bader, beloved father of Sheree Kor and Seth Bader. May the family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Yerushalayim.

THIS SHABBAT

Starting last Shabbat, children ages 3-12 years old will have the opportunity to earn tickets for coming to minyan (Friday night and/or Shabbat day), asking the rabbi questions on Shabbat or attending parent child learning programs! Tickets can be redeemed for exciting prizes over time!

Youth groups this Shabbat commence at 10:15 am.

Please join us this Shabbat at 3:45pm for the first in a periodical 5-Part Shiur Series on "The mitzvah of honoring parents in Concept and Practice": Through the lens of Talmudic methodology, gain the insight and perspective of our sages on a complex, central and meaningful mitzvah. By R' Shua Katz"

THIS WEEK

We are really excited to invite all children and grandchildren to a cupcake decorating and fruit skewer creating event in honor of TuB'shvat and parent child learning! Design your culinary masterpieces with all kinds of fun toppings and treats! The fun will take place on January 15th at 6:15 PM! RSVP to kira.batist.msw@gmail.com.

The final time for the sanctification of the New Moon of Shevat, is the night following Monday, Jan. 17 until 8:45 p.m. (16 Shevat).

Monday, January 17th is Tu B'Shevat. We do not say Tachanun. The custom is to eat fruits that grow on trees, for Tu B'Shevat is the "New Year of the Trees".

IN OUR COMMUNITY

Join the Fair Lawn community for snow tubing at Campgaw on 1/24/22. Please see the attached flyer for more details!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming sessions of Parent-Child Learning which will take place on *January 15 and February 12*. More details to follow soon! Email any questions to kira.batist.msw@gmail.com.

Given the important conversations taking place related to child sexual abuse prevention and education, we have placed a bulk order of Let's Stay Safe, a children's book addressing child safety. Books are available for purchase for \$5 each. If you would like to order a book, please pay through the shul's PayPal account and send [Kira an email](mailto:kira.batist.msw@gmail.com) letting her know that you have placed an order.

ZEMANIM

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	1/16	1/17	1/18	1/19	1/20	1/21
Shacharit	8:00 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM	6:25 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM
Mincha/ Maariv	4:42 PM	4:43 PM	4:45 PM	4:46 PM	4:47 PM	4:45 PM
Earliest Talit	6:20 AM	6:19 AM	6:19 AM	6:19 AM	6:18 AM	6:18 AM
Gedolah	12:30 PM	12:31 PM	12:31 PM	12:32 PM	12:32 PM	12:32 PM
Shkia	4:54 PM	4:55 PM	4:57 PM	4:58 PM	4:59 PM	
Tzait	5:34 PM	5:35 PM	5:37 PM	5:38 PM	5:39 PM	5:40 PM





SHABBAT YOUTH

Shabbat morning youth groups beginning at 10:15 am each week:

- Children under 4 years old meet in the youth room to the right upon entry to the kiddush hall. This will be a parent led group.
- Children ages 4-7 meet in the youth room to the left upon entry to the kiddush hall. This group will be run by our wonderful youth leaders. Parents are encouraged to drop their children off.
- Older elementary aged children and pre-teens meet in the Beit Midrash.

Please do not send children over 2 years old to groups with snacks. If you need to feed a child over 2, please step outside of the group room to do so.

REVISED COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

Given the current uptick in COVID due to the increasing transmission of the Omicron variant, effective immediately we are temporarily updating our COVID protocols as follows:

Shabbat:

- Shacharit:
 - On Shabbat morning, we will be offering both fully masked and masks-optional minyanim alternatives. Mask wearing will be required in the main sanctuary for Shacharit davening. Mask wearing at the hashkama minyan will continue to be optional as an alternative to the mask-only requirements of the main minyan.
- Kabbalat Shabbat and Mincha / Maariv:
 - Mask wearing at Kabbalat Shabbat and Mincha / Maariv will continue to be strongly recommended, but optional, given the ability to provide a larger and more social-distant davening.

Weekday Minyanim:

- Mask wearing at weekday minyanim will continue to be recommended, but optional, given the ability to provide a larger and more social-distant davening space.

General Policy and Protocols:

In addition to the specific updated protocols described above, the following continue to apply:

- Anyone unvaccinated, including children from age 2 and above must wear a mask at all times in shul.
- If you feel the slightest bit ill with any COVID-19 like symptoms, you should stay home.
- At all minyanim, everyone at the Bima must wear a properly fitting mask.
- At all masks-optional minyanim, an area on both the men's and the women's side is designated as a "mask only" section.
- During Kiddush and Seudat Shlishit, unvaccinated persons 12 years old and above must continue to wear a mask at all times.

In those situations where masking remains optional, we strongly recommend that for the benefit of the community as a whole, all attendees wear masks whenever practical.

We further encourage everyone to be in touch with their primary care physician to discuss the most prudent approach for their individual situation.

Have an upcoming simcha, refuah, or life cycle event to add to the bulletin? [Use our bulletin submission form!](#) (also available on our [website](#)).



Cupcake Decorating
&
Fruit Skewer Creating
in honor of Tu'Bshvat

Following family Havdalah,
singing & Parent Child Learning

January 15th at 6:15 PM
David Schwitzer Kiddush Hall

RSVP to kira.batist.msw@gmail.com by 1/10

Want to
sponsor this
event? Reach
out to Kira!



30 for 30
PARENT-CHILD
LEARNING

Join us 30 minutes after Havdalah
for 30 minutes of learning!

Motzei Shabbos
December 18th @ 5:45 PM

January 15th

February 12th

In the Beit Midrash

Fun prizes & treats to go!

Bring your own learning materials
or use what's supplied.

RSVP to kira.batist.msw@gmail.com by 12/15

Sponsorship
available.
Reach out to
Kira for more
information





CONGREGATION
DARCHEI NOAM
OF FAIR LAWN, NJ



FAIR LAWN YOUTH
COMMITTEES PRESENT...



Yeshiva Break Snow Tubing!



- **What?** Join us as the shuls of Fair Lawn unite for a day of fun snow tubing at Campgaw!
 - **When?** January 24th at 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.
 - **Where?** Campgaw Mountain (Mahwah, NJ)
 - **Cost?** \$18 per rider (minimum height 42")
- Registration closes 01/20. Sign up below:
yifl.org/event/campgaw



To sponsor a celebration for your child's birthday at Shabbat groups email kira.batist.msw@gmail.com!

\$25
per
family



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THE FAMILY SHUL





With thanks to **Wohl Legacy** for their generous sponsorship of *Covenant & Conversation*. Maurice was a visionary philanthropist. Vivienne was a woman of the deepest humility. Together, they were a unique partnership of dedication and grace, for whom living was giving.

The Face of Evil

Beshallach

After 9/11, when the horror and trauma had subsided, Americans found themselves asking what had happened and why. Was it a disaster? A tragedy? A crime? An act of war? It did not seem to fit the pre-existing paradigms. And why had it happened? The question most often asked about Al Qaeda was, “Why do they hate us?”

In the wake of those events an American thinker Lee Harris wrote two books, *Civilization and its Enemies* and *The Suicide of Reason*¹ that were among the most thought-provoking responses of the decade. The reason for the questions and the failure to find answers, said Harris, was that we in the West had *forgotten the concept of an enemy*. Liberal democratic politics and market economics create a certain kind of society, a specific way of thinking and a characteristic type of personality. At their heart is the concept of *the rational actor*, the person who judges acts by their consequences and chooses the maximal option. Such a person believes that for every problem there is a solution, for every conflict a resolution. The way to achieve it is to sit down, negotiate, and do on balance what is best for all.

In such a world there are no enemies, merely conflicts of interest. An enemy, says Harris, is simply “a friend we haven’t done enough for yet.” In the real world, however, not everyone is a liberal democrat. An enemy is “someone who is willing to die in order to kill you. And while it is true that the enemy always hates us for a reason, it is his reason, not ours.” He sees a different world from ours, and in that world we are the enemy. Why do they hate us? Answers Harris: “They hate us *because we are their enemy*.”²

Whatever the rights and wrongs of Harris’s specifics, the general point is true and profound. We can become mind-blind, thinking that the way we – our society, our culture, our civilisation – see things is the only way, or at least that it is the way everyone would choose if given the chance. Only a complete failure to understand the history of ideas can explain this error, and it is a dangerous one. When

¹ Lee Harris, *Civilization and Its Enemies: The Next Stage of History*, New York: Free Press, 2004. *The Suicide of Reason*, New York: Basic Books, 2008.

² *Ibid.*, xii–xiii.

Montezuma, ruler of the Aztecs, met Cortes, leader of the Spanish expedition in 1520, he assumed that he was meeting a civilised man from a civilised nation. That mistake cost him his life, and within a year there was no Aztec civilisation anymore. Not everyone sees the world the way we do, and, as Richard Weaver once said: “The trouble with humanity is that it forgets to read the minutes of the last meeting.”³

This explains the significance of the unusual command at the end of this week’s parsha. The Israelites had escaped the seemingly inexorable danger of the chariots of the Egyptian army, the military high-tech of its day. Miraculously the sea divided, the Israelites crossed, the Egyptians, their chariot wheels caught in the mud, were unable either to advance or retreat and were caught by the returning tide.

**“Not everyone
sees the world the
way we do.”**

The Israelites sang a song and finally seemed to be free, when something untoward and unexpected happened. They were attacked by a new enemy, the Amalekites, a nomadic group living in the desert. Moses instructed Joshua to lead the people in battle. They fought and won. But the Torah makes it clear that this was no ordinary battle:

Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven.’ Moses built an altar and called it The Lord is my Banner. He said, ‘The hand is on the Lord’s throne. The Lord will be at war with Amalek for all generations.’ (Ex. 17:14-16)

This is a very strange statement, and it stands in marked contrast to the way the Torah speaks about the Egyptians. The Amalekites attacked Israel during the lifetime of Moses just once. The Egyptians oppressed the Israelites over an extended period, oppressing and enslaving them and starting a slow genocide by killing every male Israelite child. The whole thrust of the narrative would suggest that if any nation would become the symbol of evil, it would be Egypt.

But the opposite turns out to be true. In Deuteronomy the Torah states, “*Do not abhor an Egyptian, because you were a stranger in his land*” (Deut. 23:8). Shortly thereafter, Moses repeats the command about the Amalekites, adding a significant detail:

Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were *weary and worn out*, they met you on your journey and attacked all who were *lagging behind*; they had no fear of God... You shall blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget! (Deut. 25:17-19)

We are commanded not to hate Egypt, but never to forget Amalek. Why the difference? The simplest answer is to recall the Rabbis’ statement in *The Ethics of the Fathers*: “If love depends on a specific cause, when the cause ends, so does the love. If love does not depend on a specific cause, then it never ends.”⁴ The same applies to hate. When hate depends on a specific cause, it ends once the cause disappears. Causeless, baseless hate lasts forever.

The Egyptians oppressed the Israelites because, in Pharaoh’s words, “The Israelites are becoming too numerous and strong for us” (Ex. 1:9). Their hate, in other words, came from fear. It was not irrational. The Egyptians had been attacked and conquered before by a foreign group known as the Hyksos, and the memory of that period was still acute and painful. The Amalekites, however, were not being threatened by the Israelites. They attacked a people who were “weary and worn out,” specifically those who were “lagging behind.” In short: *The Egyptians feared the Israelites because they were strong. The Amalekites attacked the Israelites because they were weak.*

³ Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 176.

⁴ Mishnah Avot 5:16.

In today's terminology, the Egyptians were rational actors, the Amalekites were not. With rational actors there can be negotiated peace. People engaged in conflict eventually realise that they are not only destroying their enemies: they are destroying themselves. That is what Pharaoh's advisers said to him after seven plagues: "Do you not yet realise that Egypt is ruined?" (Ex. 10:7). There comes a point at which rational actors understand that the pursuit of self-interest has become self-destructive, and they learn to co-operate.

It is not so, however, with non-rational actors. Emil Fackenheim, one of the great post-Holocaust theologians, noted that towards the end of the Second World War the Germans diverted trains carrying supplies to their own army, in order to transport Jews to the extermination camps. So driven were they by hatred that they were prepared to put their own victory at risk in order to carry out the systematic murder of the Jews of Europe. This was, he said, evil for evil's sake.⁵

The Amalekites function in Jewish memory as "the enemy" in Lee Harris' sense. Jewish law, however, specifies two completely different forms of action in relation to the Amalekites. First is the physical command to wage war against them. That is what Samuel told Saul to do, a command he failed fully to fulfil. Does this command still apply today?

The unequivocal answer given by Rabbi Nachum Rabinovitch is 'No'.⁶ Maimonides ruled that the command to destroy the Amalekites only applied if they refused to make peace and accept the seven Noahide laws. He further stated that the command was no longer applicable since Sennacherib, the Assyrian, had transported and resettled the nations he conquered so that it was no longer possible to identify the ethnicity of any of the original nations against whom the Israelites were commanded to fight. He also said, in *The Guide for the Perplexed*, that the command only applied to people of specific biological descent. It is not to be applied in general to enemies or haters of the Jewish people. So the command to wage war against the Amalekites no longer applies.

However, there is a quite different command, to "remember" and "not forget" Amalek, which we fulfil annually by the reading the passage containing the Amalekites command as it appears in Deuteronomy on the Shabbat before Purim, Shabbat Zachor (the connection with Purim is that Haman the "Agagite" is assumed to be a descendant of Agag, king of the Amalekites). Here Amalek has become a symbol rather than a reality.

By dividing the response in this way, Judaism marks a clear distinction between an ancient enemy who no longer exists, and the evil that enemy embodied, which can break out again at any time in any place. It is easy at times of peace to forget the evil that lies just beneath the surface of the human heart. Never was this truer than in the past three centuries. The birth of Enlightenment, toleration, emancipation, liberalism and human rights persuaded many, Jews among them, that collective evil was as extinct as the Amalekites. Evil was then, not now. That age eventually begat nationalism, fascism, communism, two World Wars, some of the brutal tyrannies ever known, and the worst crime of man against man.

Today, the great danger is terror. Here the words of Princeton political philosopher Michael Walzer are particularly apt:

"It is easy at times of peace to forget the evil that lies just beneath the surface of the human heart."

⁵ Emil L. Fackenheim and Michael L. Morgan, *The Jewish Thought of Emil Fackenheim: A Reader*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987, p. 126.

⁶ Rabbi N. L. Rabinovitch, *Shu"t Melumdei Milchama* (Maale Adumim: Maaliyot, 1993), pp. 22-25.

Wherever we see terrorism, we should look for tyranny and oppression... The terrorists aim to rule, and murder is their method. They have their own internal police, death squads, disappearances. They begin by killing or intimidating those comrades who stand in their way, and they proceed to do the same, if they can, among the people they claim to represent. If terrorists are successful, they rule tyrannically, and their people bear, without consent, the costs of the terrorists' rule.⁷

Evil never dies and - like liberty - it demands constant vigilance. We are commanded to remember, not for the sake of the past but for the sake of the future, and not for revenge but the opposite: a world free of revenge and other forms of violence.

Lee Harris began *Civilization and its Enemies* with the words, "The subject of this book is forgetfulness,"⁸ and ends with a question: "Can the West overcome the forgetfulness that is the nemesis of every successful civilisation?"⁹ That is why we are commanded to remember and never forget Amalek, not because the historic people still exists, but because a society of rational actors can sometimes believe that the world is full of rational actors with whom one can negotiate peace. It is not always so.

Rarely was a biblical message so relevant to the future of the West and of freedom itself. Peace is possible, implies Moses, even with an Egypt that enslaved and tried to destroy us. But peace is not possible with those who attack people they see as weak and who deny their own people the freedom for which they claim to be fighting. Freedom depends on our ability to remember and, whenever necessary, confront "the eternal gang of ruthless men,"¹⁰ the face of Amalek throughout history. Sometimes there may be no alternative but to fight evil and defeat it. This may be the only path to peace.



AROUND THE SHABBAT TABLE

1. What is the difference between the way the Torah commands us to relate to Egypt and Amalek, and why?
2. Does Amalek still exist today?
3. What lessons can we apply to our own time from the biblical message to never forget Amalek?



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⁷ Michael Walzer, *Arguing About War*, Yale University Press, 2004, 64-65.

⁸ Harris, *Civilization*, p. xi.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 216.