

The Bulletin is sponsored by Saragail Chessin Garpe in memory of her wonderful parents Philip ע"ה & Fannie ע"ה Shapiro Chessin, with unending love, respect and admiration. Wedding Day: November 16, 1930



CANDLE LIGHTING 4:20 PM | 24 MARCHESHVAN | NOVEMBER 15, 2025 | HAVDALA 5:23 PM

שבת פרשת חיי שרה SHABBAT PARSHAT CHAYEI SARAH

Haftorah is Kings I 1:1-31. Do not say אב הרחמים.

FRIDAY EVENING

MINCHA 4:25 PM

SHKIA 4:38 PM

TZAIT HAKOCHAVIM 5:18 PM

SHABBAT

HASHKAMA 7:45 AM

SHACHARIT - MAIN 9:00 AM

POST-HASHKAMA SHIUR 9:10 AM

LAST KRIAT SHEMA 9:13 AM

FUNDAMENTALS SHIUR HIATUS

GEDOLAH 12:06 PM

PRE-MINCHA SHIUR 3:30 PM

MINCHA 4:10 PM

SHKIA 4:38 PM

MAARIV 5:23 PM

החודש הזה לכם

Molad for Kislev is Thursday, Nov. 20, 1:38 PM & 9 Chalokim.

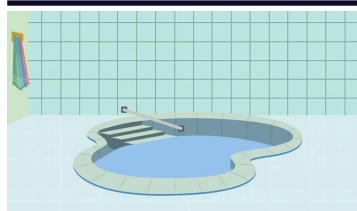
ראש חדש כסלו יהיה ביום שישי הבא
עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה

KIDDUSH

Kiddush is sponsored by Liz & Joel Brauser to celebrate Shalom's Auf Ruf and upcoming marriage to Miri Granik.



SHIUR FOR WOMEN



On Monday, November 24, there will be a special women's program starting at 8:15 PM entitled Living Waters: The Story of Mikvah from Torah to Today, led by Rebbetzin Chana Shestack and special guest Shira Teichman of the Fair Lawn Mikva Association. Please put it in your calendars.

SIGN-UP FOR OUR MIX AND MATCH DINNER

Shuffle the seats and stir up connections! Our Mix & Match Shabbat Dinner is on Friday, November 21. Choose to host or be hosted! Dinners will follow davening, starting around 5:45pm! RSVP by 11/17 here: [Jumble Things Up!](#)



SIGN-UP FOR THANKSGIVING DAY EVENTS



Be part of our flag football and pie giving Thanksgiving Day events by RSVPing here: [Turkey Day](#)



SUNDAY
11/16

MONDAY
11/17

TUESDAY
11/18

WEDNESDAY
11/19

THURSDAY
11/20

FRIDAY
11/21

WEEKDAY MINYANIM AT AHAVAT ACHIM

SHACHARIT	8:00 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM	6:25 AM	6:15 AM	6:00 AM
2ND SHACHARIT MINYON - YISHTABACH AT 7:40 AM		7:25 AM	7:25 AM	7:25 AM	7:25 AM	7:10 AM*
MINCHA/MAARIV	4:25 PM	4:24 PM	4:23 PM	4:23 PM	4:22 PM	4:20 PM

ZMANIM

* YISHTABACH AT 7:25 AM

Earliest Talit	5:48 AM	5:49 AM	5:50 AM	5:51 AM	5:52 AM	5:53 AM
Gedolah	12:06 PM	12:06 PM	12:06 PM	12:06 PM	12:06 PM	12:07 PM
Shkia	4:37 PM	4:36 PM	4:35 PM	4:35 PM	4:34 PM	
Tzait	5:17 PM	5:16 PM	5:15 PM	5:15 PM	5:14 PM	

Rabbi Ely Shestack

President Jay Herman

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 25 - Deadline for Shul's Food Drive.

Nov. 27 - Flag football and pie giving. RSVP here: [Turkey Day](#)

Nov. 29 - Scholar in Residence Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider.

Dec. 6 - Birthday/Anniversary Kiddush.

Dec. 21 - Chanukah musical Hallel, kids activities, and breakfast (no charge).

IN OUR FUTURE

Dec. 6 - Seudah Shlishit is sponsored by Gerry & Howard Kessel on the first yahrtzeit of Gerry's father ד"ר שלמה בן שמואל, Bernard Roth^{נ"י}, and Dina & Elliot Greene to commemorate the Yahrtzeit of Dina's mother, Zelda Rubinowitz^{נ"י} (Zelda bat Tzvi).

BOARD MEETINGS 8:15 PM

Nov. 18 - At shul w/Zoom option.

Dec. 29 (Monday), Jan. 27, Feb. 24, Mar. 24, Apr. 28, May 26, & June 30

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Dec. 6 - The Fair Lawn Mikvah Association's 3rd Annual Women-Only Community Evening of Inspiration, Sat. night, at Shomrei Torah. Click here: [Inspiration](#).

KIDDUSH & SEUDAH SHLISHIT

- Enjoy Scotch at Kiddush, please donate a bottle to the shul from time to time.
- To sponsor a Kiddush (prices start at \$318, plus a bottle of scotch) email dmgarfunkel@gmail.com.
- Want to know the menu for Kiddush? Email dmgarfunkel@gmail.com to be put on the WhatsApp group. To sponsor Seudah Shlishit for \$136 (or in the case of multiple sponsors, \$100 per sponsor), email dmgarfunkel@gmail.com.

BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY KIDDUSH

To add a birthday or anniversary to our December list (next Kiddush on Shabbat, Dec. 6), click here: [SIMCHA](#). Listings/sponsorships are \$36 per family per month. RSVP for the December birthday/anniversary kiddush by Sat. night, Nov. 29.

SHIURIM



- RAV SOLOVEITCHIK ON THE PARSHA, Tuesdays at 1:00 PM (<https://zoom.us/j/7291311899>, PW: 112233).
- TORAH FOR YOUR COMMUTE, via a Whatsapp group, with 3-minute daily Halacha insights. To join email Rabbi Shestack at rabbishestack@gmail.com.
- POST-HASHKAMA SHIUR, alternates between examining the development of Halachot and analyzing Mishlei (Proverbs)
- FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT, after Kiddush, discussing the Political Philosophy of our Patriarchs.
- SHABBAT SHIUR, **Sanhedrin Ch. 8**, 40 minutes prior to mincha.
- TZURBA M'RABANAN w/ Zack Doberman, Wednesdays at 8:30 PM. In-person at the shul and via Zoom.
- MISHNA CHABURAH, w/Jeff Safier, after 7:25 AM Shacharit minyan (≈10 minutes).
- HALACHA SHIUR FOR WOMEN, Monday nights, 8:15 PM. Current topic: Mezuzah.
- SEDER ON THE SIDDUR, at Seudah Shlishit - **Korbonot Part I (R. Donin - p. 199-200, R. Munk - pp. 61-73).**



GITA COOPERWASSER^{נ"י} YOUTH EVENTS

Nov. 17-28 - Bergen County Annual Chanukah Toy Drive.

Dec. 6 - Parent-Child Learning/Chanukah Edition, at 6:00 PM.

Dec. 20 - Children's Seudah Shlishit/Chanukah program at 4:15 PM, followed by a glow-in-the-dark musical havdala! RSVP here: [Youth](#), by 12/14! \$5/child, \$12 family/ max.

Jan. 3 - Parent-Child Learning.

Feb. 7 - Parent-Child Learning.

GITA COOPERWASSER^{נ"י} SHABBAT YOUTH INFO



- **SHABBAT YOUTH LEADERS: 3RD - 5TH GRADE: ISABELLA & ZOE; K - 2ND GR.: ABBY; AND 3 YRS OLD - PRE K: ARNELLA & SOPHIA.**
- Youth group for in 2nd - 5th Graders starts at 9:00 AM (Drop Off) in the Youth Room on left on entering the social hall.
- Youth group for children 4 years old through 1st Grade starts at 9:00 AM (Drop Off) in the Youth Room on the right upon entering the social hall.
- Parent & Me, 9:00 AM in the Beit Midrash.
- Rabbi Meet & Greet, Friday night, kids can come over to the Rabbi after davening to receive a cup of grape juice and a ticket!
- Children earn tickets for coming to minyan (Friday night and/or Shabbat day), asking the rabbi questions or attending parent-child learning programs! Tickets can be redeemed for prizes.
- Children's corner at Seudah Shlishit, 1st to 5th graders will get 10 Torah questions in 10 minutes from Rabbi Shestack, with special snacks, tickets and more.

18-25 Saddle River Road
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410
201.797.0502

<http://www.ahavatachim.org>



NAME	HEBREW DATE	CANDLE EVENING OF	DEDICATOR	RELATIONSHIP
Benjamin Mittelpunkt	1	November 20	Eita Latkin	Grandfather
David Berant Rozenfeld	1	November 20	Zehava Baron	Father
Helen Graber	3	November 22	David Graber	Mother
Abraham Wigod	7	November 26	Seymour Wigod	Father
Solomon Goldfarb	8	November 27	Enid Anziska	Father
Oscar Mueller	8	November 27	Joyce Heller	Father
Roslyn Weinraub	9	November 28	Barry Weinraub	Mother
Seymour Martin Farbstein	10	November 29	Bill Farbstein	Father
Milton Lehner	10	November 29	Steven Plotnick	Dad
Lina Rothschild	11	November 30	Audrey Bickel	Grandparent
Rose Chass	14	December 3	Murray Chass	Mother
Beverly Susan Shimoff	16	December 5	Melanie Kwestel	Sister
Clara Shimoff	17	December 6	Melanie Kwestel	Mother
Karla Spier	20	December 9	Arnie Spier	Mother
Morris J. Kraut	21	December 10	Larry Kraut	Father
Elaine Silver	24	December 13	Evelyn Kraut	Mother
Moses Garfunkel	25	December 14	David Garfunkel	Grandfather
Michaela Leshem-Pozanski	30	December 19	Ayala Adler	Mother

DAVID SCHWITZER ע"ה SOCIAL HALL

Contact Lori at garfmom@gmail.com to book the David Schwitzer ע"ה Social Hall for an event or occasion. \$250 (members), \$325 (Associates), or \$400 paid in advance for non-members, plus the cost of clean up (and a \$150 refundable security/cleaning deposit). Private caterers must be approved by the Rabbi.

CHESED TEAM

If you or someone you know needs assistance, email us at chesed@ahavatachim.org.

YAHRTZEIT PLAQUES

Memorialize a loved one with a plaque, \$300 for members/\$450 for nonmembers. We will strive to send you written notice of upcoming yahrzeit and announce name during public Yizkor. Email Amy at yahrzeit@ahavatachim.org to arrange.

DONATE A SEFER, ETC.

Donate Siddurim & Machzorim (\$40), and Chumashim (\$60). Contact David at dmgarfunkel@gmail.com for details.

MISHEBAYRACH

For a Mishebayerach pledge to give Tzedakah on behalf of those for whom you asked Hashem's blessing, contributions to the shul can be made using Paypal's Giving Fund (with 100% of the proceeds going to the Shul), by clicking here: [Ahavat Achim Donations](#). If by check, please indicate on its face "Aliyah Donation."

HONORARIA

The available Honoraria list will be provided upon request by contacting Steven Plotnick at seplotnick@gmail.com.

SINGLES SHIDDUCH GROUP

Reach out to Rabbi Shestack or Sara Levine (saralevine06@gmail.com) if interested.

SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorships opportunities for Yahrzeits, Refuahs, and Hodahs (thanks), are available for regular shiurim, youth events and similar activities (but not for established honorariums or sponsorship funded events). Cost of sponsorship (shiur or youth event) is \$100 per sponsor. Multiple sponsors for an event will be accepted. Sponsorships will be listed in the bulletin and announced at the event (and, if possible, a placard with the sponsorship will be prepared and displayed at the event).

Sponsorships do not include any extra amenities (such as food). Please contact Steve Plotnick for questions or clarifications.

MEN'S CLUB

Email MensClub@AhavatAchim.Org to join the Men's Club.

הנוכה - CHANUKAH (SUN., DEC. 14 - MON., DEC. 22)

One should light Chanukah candles as close to 10 minutes after sunset as possible (excepting Sat. night). However, it is preferable for the family to light together rather than have a portion of the family light earlier. Everyone in the household is encouraged to light chanuka candles. (The matriarch of the household should follow the family custom.) There must be enough oil/wax to last one half hour past the time when the stars appear. If one is lighting after the appearance of the stars there must still be enough oil to burn for half an hour.

Under extenuating circumstances, one may light even after midnight if any members of the family are awake to see the lights. If the Chanukah lights are accidentally extinguished prior to their having burned the requisite time, one is not obligated by Halacha to rekindle them; it is, however, permissible to rekindle them, but without a Bracha.

There is a custom to give children Chanukah Gelt as part of publicizing the miracle.

In Shemonah Esrei and Bircat HaMazon add ועל הנסים (do not repeat if omitted). At Shacharit we recite the complete Hallel even on Rosh Chodesh.

וי דחנוכה - SIXTH DAY OF CHANUKAH FRIDAY EVENING - DECEMBER 19 (29 KISLEV)

We light the Chanukah Menorah at home before lighting the Shabbat candles. One must be careful to use enough oil (or light a large enough candle) to remain lit until thirty minutes after the appearance of three stars. There is a minhag to daven Mincha before lighting the Menorah, but one should not delay the welcoming of Shabbat because of this. One may not light Chanukah or Shabbat candles earlier than Plag HaMincha (3:33 PM).

מוצאי שבת - MOTZEI SHABBAT

There are two approaches concerning the order of Havdalah and Chanukah Menorah lighting in the home. If one has a family minhag, they should continue to follow that practice, otherwise the psak (ruling) of the Rabbi is to make Havdalah first, and then to light the Chanukah Menorah.

AHAVAT ACHIM MEMBERSHIP/ HOSPITALITY

Email Sara at membership@ahavatachim.org for membership details or Shabbat hospitality.

PERSONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

NUMBERS & INFO

ERUV: To subscribe for updates, email fairlawneruv@groups.io. Check status at <https://groups.io/g/fairlawneruv> or call 201-254-9190.

MIKVAH: 201-796-0350. At Shomrei Torah. Go to <http://www.fairlawnmikvah.org/> for online booking.

TWITTER: AhavatAchimFL

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100091322384429

INSTAGRAM: www.instagram.com/ahavatachim/

FLICKR: flickr.com/photos/ahavatachim/albums

BULLETIN DEDICATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND SHUL CALENDAR

Email seplotnick@gmail.com for an announcement of a simcha, refuah or life cycle event in the bulletin or to dedicate a bulletin for \$36 (\$54 w/Photo).

COMMUNITY SECURITY



To become part of our community security service, email Margo at security@ahavatachim.org.

HOW TO DONATE TO THE SHUL USING PAYPAL

Please do not simply pay the shul using PayPal, as that incurs a 3% service charge that will get charged to the shul. Instead, please use our fee-free dedicated PayPal link <http://paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1444321>. PayPal will email you a receipt for your charitable donation and the shul will receive 100% of your donation. [Make sure you click the "SHARE MY NAME" box so the shul will know who paid so that we can credit your account.]



Mishlei/Proverbs
Post-Hashkama Shiur 9 – Guarding Wisdom and the Paths we Choose

”בְּאַרְחַ רְשָׁעִים אֶל-תִּבְאָה וְאֶל-תְּאֻשָּׁר בְּדֶרֶךְ רָעִים: 14”פְּרָעָהּ אֶל-תַּעֲבָר־בָּהּ שָׁטָה מַעֲלִיו וְעֵבֹר: 15”כִּי לֹא יִשְׁנוּ אִם-לֹא יִרְעוּ וְנִגְזְלָה שְׁנָתָם אִם-לֹא יִכְשֻׁלוּ יִכְשֻׁלוּ: 16”כִּי לִחְמוֹ לָחֵם רָשָׁע וַיֵּין חֲמָסִים יִשְׁתּוּ: 17”וְאַרְחַ צְדִיקִים כְּאֹר גִּגֵּה הוֹלֵךְ וְאֹר עַד-נֶכּוֹן הַיּוֹם: 18”וְיִדְרֹךְ רְשָׁעִים כְּאֶפְלָה לֹא יָדָעוּ בִּמְהָ יִכְשֻׁלוּ: 19”בְּנִי לְדִבְרֵי הַקְּשִׁיבָה לְאָמְרֵי הַטֹּאֲנָה: 20”אֶל-יִלְדֵיּוֹ מַעֲיִינֶה שְׁמֹרֶם בְּתוֹךְ לִבְכָּה: 21”כִּי-חַיִּים הֵם לְמַצְאֵיהֶם וְלִכְלִי-בָשָׂרוֹ מִרְפָּא: 22”מִכָּל-”מִשְׁמַר נֶצֶר לִבָּהּ כִּי-לֹאֲנֻחוֹ תוֹצֵאוֹת חַיִּים: 23”הִסְרָה מִמֶּה עֲקָשׁוֹת פֶּה וּלְזוֹת שְׁפָתַיִם הִרְתֵּק מִמֶּה: 24”עֵינֶיךָ לִנְכַח יִבִּיטוּ וְעַפְעָפִיךָ יִישְׁרוּ נִגְדָּה: 25”פֶּלֶס - מַעֲגֵל רִגְלָה וְכִל-דֶּרֶכֶיךָ יִכְנוּ: 26”אֶל-תִּטֹּמֵן יָמֶיךָ וּשְׁמְאוֹל הִסְרָה רִגְלֶךָ מִרָע: 27”

14Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of the evil. 15Avoid it, do not pass through it; turn away from it and pass it by. 16For they will not sleep if they do not commit evil, and their sleep will be robbed away if they do not cause stumbling. 17For they eat the bread of wickedness, and they drink the wine of violence. 18But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn; it shines ever brighter until the day is perfect. 19The way of the wicked is like pitch darkness; they do not know on what they stumble. 20My son, hearken to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. 21Let them not depart from your eyes; guard them within your heart, 22for they are life for those who find them, and for all his flesh a healing. 23More than everything else guard your heart, for it is the source of life. 24Take crooked speech away from yourself, and put devious lips far away from you. 25Let your eyes gaze forward, and let your eyelids look straight ahead. 26Weigh the path of your feet, and all your ways will be established. 27Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your feet from evil.¹

A. FYI, this is our first Mishlei shiur where none of the verses being discussed use any of the key terms we’ve been following (*i.e.*, no mention of חָכְמָה (wisdom), בִּינָה (Understanding), דַּעַת (knowledge), etc.).

B. In the pasukim discussed in the last shiur, the son is told that his father has led him in the path of the upright, and that the son must safeguard what was taught. The above concluding pasukim of Chapter 4 reinforce this by delineating the “paths” and interweaving physical/sensory metaphors into exhortations:

- Sleeping. Those that are evil only *sleep* well if they do evil.
- Eating/Drinking. Those that are evil *eat* the bread of wickedness and *drink* the wine of violence.
- Seeing. Path of the righteous is light, the wicked pitch darkness, but the father’s words shouldn’t depart from the son’s *eyes*. Let your *eyes gaze* forward, and let your *eyelids look* straight ahead.
- Speaking. Take crooked *speech* away from yourself, and put devious *lips* far away from you.
- Feelings (emotions). Guard the father’s words within your *heart* . . . more than anything else guard your *heart* for it is the source of life.
- Traversing. Consider carefully the path your feet are about to take you down, and when on the right path do not swerve to the right or the left and keep your feet from changing to an evil way.

C. Essence of these pasukim seem to be that every action/decision being discussed is a choice, and the choices are binary (righteousness or evil). More than anything else, as mentioned in verse 23, the father is exhorting his son to protect his “heart”. I believe that the common understanding of references to the “heart” in these pasukim relate to the part of oneself that embodies emotions such as love, empathy and compassion. The father is not exhorting the son to guard his mind, but to guard that part of himself that might allow him to override rational thought and choose a path of evil.²

- Query: When one says they are “following their heart”, how often is the path chosen a bad one.

¹ Mishlei Chapter 4.

² See Malbim, Immanuel of Rome, etc.

D. Notwithstanding the normative translation of לֵב as heart, certain translations (e.g., JPS) translate לֵב as mind, and the Ralbag and others see the references here to לֵב as relating to intellect. Rashi does not discuss whether “heart” was supposed to cover feelings or intellect, but sees these exhortations relating to the heart as not dismissing transgressions of minor mitzvot, as long as one does not commit grave sins.

E. Some parallels from other philosophical works:

- As Iyov suffers, he states emphatically that: בְּאֲשֶׁר אֶחְזֶק רַגְלִי וְדַרְכּוֹ שְׁמַרְתִּי וְלֹא-אֶזְטָ: “My foot has held to His path; I have kept His way and do not turn away.”³ Iyov reminds us that a quid pro quo reward of remaining on the path of the righteous is not always apparent at best, or at worst, may not exist at all. Nevertheless, he is a paragon of person who stays on the righteous path as the father in the discourses of Mishlei advises.
- As mentioned above, Mishlei appears to see the path of righteousness and that of wickedness as either/or binary choices. In Kohelet, after recognizing (similar to Iyov) that sometimes reward and punishment are not in line with the choices an individual makes, Kohelet suggests a less binary approach: אַל-תִּהְיֶה צָדִיק הַרְבֵּה וְאַל-תִּתְחַכֵּם יוֹתֵר לְמַעַן תִּשְׁוֹמָם: אַל-תִּרְשָׁע הַרְבֵּה וְאַל-תִּהְיֶה סָכָל לְמַעַן תָּמוּת בְּלֹא עֲתִיד: - “Don’t be overly righteous or too wise; why should you end up dumbfounded? Don’t overdo wickedness and don’t be a fool; why die before your time?”⁴
- Socrates, as set forth in Plato’s Dialogues, veers away from issues relating to the heart, and assumes that bad choices are a result of bad information or a lack of knowledge, i.e., evil is a result of ignorance. This approach is adapted by Plato (*Republic*) who sees rationality as being the tool to govern harmful desires.
- Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics*) sees virtue as achieved by repeated practices (similar to the analogy of continually walking the righteous path), thereby allowing one to self-govern their desires.

³ Iyov 23:11.

⁴ Kohelet 7:16-17.



AHAVAT ACHIM

קהלת אהבת אחים

THE FAMILY SHUL

November 24, 2025 at 8:15pm

Living Waters: The Story of Mikvah from Torah to Today

Join your fellow women in
learning about the history,
evolution, and social impacts
of the mitzvah of mikvah

RSVP TODAY!

Location provided upon RSVP

<https://forms.gle/oqs4Lelk76BmPHuq9>





AHAVAT ACHIM

קהלת אהבת אחים

THE FAMILY SHUL



MIX & MATCH SHABBAT DINNER

FRIDAY NIGHT, NOVEMBER 21ST
FOLLOWING DAVENING

DINNERS STARTING BY 5:45PM!

[SIGN UP HERE TO HOST OR BE
HOSTED FOR FRIDAY DINNER!](#)

DEADLINE TO SIGN UP: 11/17

Questions? Email:
events@ahavatachim.org



CHANUKAH CELEBRATION



SEUDAH SHLISHIT DINNER FOR CHILDREN, AN
INTERACTIVE CHANUKAH PROGRAM FOLLOWED BY
GLOW IN THE DARK MUSICAL HAVDALA!

DECEMBER 20TH
STARTING AT 4:15 PM

RSVP HERE BY 12/14
\$5/CHILD, \$12/FAMILY MAX

**Sponsorship
welcome!**



AHAVAT ACHIM

קהלת אהבת אחים

THE FAMILY SHUL

Ahavat Achim invites
you to join us for a fun

Monthly

Simcha Kiddush

Have a birthday, anniversary, or
another reason to say Mazel Tov?
For \$36, you can co-sponsor that
month's simcha kiddush!

Click HERE to get
your sponsorship in!



Deadline: 1 week before each kiddush!



PARENT CHILD LEARNING CHANUKAH EDITION!

RSVP HERE
BY 12/4!
SPONSORSHIP
WELCOME!

DECEMBER 6TH AT 6 PM
FOR KIDS IN 1ST GRADE AND UP

RABBI SHESTACK ON THE TOPIC OF
"OILY MIRACLES VS WINNING WARS":
A BATTLE FOR THE HEART OF
CHANUKAH

PIZZA DINNER TO BE SERVED!

HOSTED BY MIRIAM & ADAM NUDELAM



JFCS

JEWISH FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES
OF NORTHERN NEW JERSEY



AHAVAT ACHIM

קהלת אהבת אחים

The Family Circle

We are partnering with Jewish Family & Children's Services of Northern NJ to help our community!

Most Needed Items:*

- Canned Tuna/Salmon
- Canned Mix Vegetables
- Canned chick peas
- Canned Black beans
- Canned pinto beans
- Canned Spaghetti sauce
- Oats
- Pancake mix
- 1% Shelf Stable Milk
- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Grape jelly

**Unopened and not expired.*



Drop off items in the bin located in the lobby by November 25th

For more information contact Natasha Borsuk: chesed@ahavatachim.org



Donate to JFCS
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AHAVAT ACHIM
— קהלת אהבת אחים —
THE FAMILY SHUL

Congregation Ahavat
Achim presents

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

**RABBI AARON
GOLDSCHIEDER**

SHABBAT, NOVEMBER 29

Save the date and join us for
an inspirational and
meaningful Shabbat!

Shabbat Drasha

**Fundamentals
following kiddush**

Seudah Shlishit

Rabbi Aaron Goldscheider serves as chief-editor of OU Israel's 'Torah Tidbits', Coordinator of Rabbinic/Leadership Training at Yeshiva University's RIETS Gruss Kollel, and Faculty member at the Rabbinical Council of America's 'Machon Melton' conversion program in Jerusalem. He is the author of the best-selling Haggadahs, *The Night That Unites* (Urim Press), and *Layla Shel Achdut* (Yediot Achronot) and Chanukah companion, *The Light That Unites* (OU Press). He most recently published *Torah United* (Aug 2023), a book on the weekly parashah from Rav Kook, Rabbi Soloveitchik, and the Chassidic Masters (OU Press).

EVENTS@AHAVATACHIM.ORG

Start the day off with
community and gratitude!

THANKSGIVING DAY FOOTBALL & PIE DONATION

November 27, 2025

9:30am – 11:30am:

Flag Football

12:00pm – 1:00pm:

Pie Donation to Police
and Volunteer
Ambulance Corp



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AHAVAT ACHIM
קהלת אהבת אחים
THE FAMILY SHUL

BERGEN COUNTY

Chanukah toy drive

Drop off new, unwrapped toys for children and teens

Drop off toys in the shul lobby from 11/17-11/28





Covenant & Conversation

Jonathan Sacks
THE RABBI SACKS LEGACY

CHAYEI SARAH • חיי שרה

FROM THE TEACHINGS AND WRITINGS OF RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS זצ"ל

With thanks to the Schimmel Family for their generous sponsorship of Covenant & Conversation, dedicated in loving memory of Harry (Chaim) Schimmel. "I have loved the Torah of R' Chaim Schimmel ever since I first encountered it. It strives to be not just about truth on the surface but also its connection to a deeper truth beneath. Together with Anna, his remarkable wife of 60 years, they built a life dedicated to love of family, community, and Torah. An extraordinary couple who have moved me beyond measure by the example of their lives." — Rabbi Sacks

This year's series of essays were originally written and recorded by Rabbi Sacks זצ"ל in 5773 (2012–2013). These timeless messages are accompanied by a new [Family Edition](#) created to inspire intergenerational learning on the Parsha and Haftara.

Hopes and Fears

The sedra of Chayei Sarah focuses on two episodes, both narrated at length and in intricate detail. Abraham buys a field with a cave as a burial place for Sarah, and he instructs his servant to find a wife for his son Isaac. Why these two events? The simple answer is because they happened. That, however, cannot be all. We misunderstand Torah if we think of it as a book that tells us what happened. That is a necessary but not sufficient explanation of biblical narrative. The Torah, by identifying itself as Torah, defines its own genre. It is not a history book. It is *Torah*, meaning "*teaching*." It tells us what happened only when events that occurred then have a bearing on what we need to know now. What is the "*teaching*" in these two episodes? It is an unexpected one.

Abraham, the first bearer of the covenant, receives two promises – both stated five times. The first is of a land. Time and again he is told, by God, that the land to

which he has travelled – Canaan – will one day be his:

- (1) Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." There he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him. (Gen. 12:7)
- (2) After Lot had separated from him, the Lord said to Avram, "Raise your eyes and look around from where you are to the north, south, east, and west. All the land you see I will give to you and your descendants forever. . . Get up and walk through the length and breadth of the land, for to you shall I give it." (Gen. 13:14–17)
- (3) And He told him, "I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur Kasdim to give you this land to possess it. (Gen. 15:7)

(4) On that day the Lord made a covenant with Avram: "To your descendants I will give this land, from the River of Egypt to the great river Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Refaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites" (Gen. 15:18-21)

(5) "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout the generations: an eternal covenant. I will be God to you and your descendants after you, and I will give you and your descendants after you the land where you now live as strangers, the whole land of Canaan, an everlasting possession, and I will be their God" (Gen. 17:7-8).

The second was the promise of children, also stated five times:

(1) "I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great. You will become a blessing." (Gen. 12:2)

(2) "I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth: if anyone could count the dust of the earth, only then could your offspring could be counted." (Gen. 13:16)

(3) He took him outside and said, "Look at the heavens and count the stars – if indeed you can count them." He said

to him, "that is how your descendants will be." (Gen. 15:5)

(4) "And God said to him, "As for Me – this is My covenant with you: you shall be father to a multitude of nations. No longer shall you be called Avram. Your name will be Avraham, for I have made you father to a multitude of nations. (Gen. 17:4-5)

(5) "I will bless you greatly and make your descendants as many as the stars of the heavens, as the sand on the seashore." (Gen. 22:17)

These are remarkable promises. The land in its length and breadth will be Abraham's and his children's as "an everlasting possession." Abraham will have as many children as the dust of the earth, the stars of the sky, and the sand on the seashore. He will be the father, not of one nation, but of many. What, though, is the reality by the time Sarah dies?

Abraham owns no land and has only one son (he had another, Ishmael, but was told that he would not be the bearer of the covenant).

The significance of the two episodes is now clear. First, Abraham undergoes a lengthy bargaining process with the Hittites to buy a field with a cave in which to bury Sarah. It is a tense, even humiliating, encounter. The Hittites say one thing and mean another. As a group they say, "Sir, listen to us. You are a prince of God in our midst. Bury your dead in the choicest of our tombs." Ephron, the

owner of the field Abraham wishes to buy, says: “Listen to me, I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it. I give it to you in the presence of my people. Bury your dead.”

As the narrative makes clear, this elaborate generosity is a façade for some extremely hard bargaining. Abraham knows he is “an alien and a stranger among you,” meaning, among other things, that he has no right to own land. That is the force of their reply which, stripped of its overlay of courtesy, means: “Use one of our burial sites. You may not acquire your own.” Abraham is not deterred. He insists that he wants to buy his own. Ephron’s reply – “It is yours. I give it to you” – is in fact the prelude to a demand for an inflated price: four hundred silver shekels. At last, however, Abraham owns the land. The final transfer of ownership is recorded in precise legal prose (Gen. 23:17–20) to signal that, at last, Abraham owns part of the land. It is a small part: one field and a cave. A burial place, bought at great expense. That is the entirety of the Divine promise of the land that Abraham will see in his lifetime.

The next chapter, one of the longest in the Mosaic books, tells of Abraham’s concern that Isaac should have a wife. He is – we must assume – at least 37 years old (his age at Sarah’s death) and still unmarried. Abraham has a child but no grandchild – no posterity. As with the purchase of the cave, so here: acquiring a daughter-in-law will take much money and hard

negotiation. The servant, on arriving in the vicinity of Abraham’s family, immediately finds the girl, Rebecca, before he has even finished praying for God’s help to find her. Securing her release from her family is another matter. He brings out gold, silver, and clothing for the girl. He gives her brother and mother costly gifts. The family have a celebratory meal. But when the servant wants to leave, brother and mother say, “Let the girl stay with us for another year or ten [months].” Laban, Rebecca’s brother, plays a role not unlike that of Ephron: the show of generosity conceals a tough, even exploitative, determination to make a profitable deal. Eventually patience pays off. Rebecca leaves. Isaac marries her. The covenant will continue.

These are, then, no minor episodes. They tell a difficult story. Yes, Abraham will have a land. He will have countless children. But these things will not happen soon, or suddenly, or easily. Nor will they occur without human effort. To the contrary, only the most focused willpower will bring them about. The Divine promise is not what it first seemed: a statement that God will act. It is in fact a request, an invitation, from God to Abraham and his children that they should act. God will help them. The outcome will be what God said it would. But not without total commitment from Abraham’s family against what will sometimes seem to be insuperable obstacles.

A land: Israel. And children: Jewish continuity. The astonishing fact is that today, four thousand years later, they remain the dominant concerns of Jews throughout the world – the safety and security of Israel as the Jewish home, and the future of the Jewish people.

Abraham's hopes and fears are ours. (Is there any other people, I wonder, whose concerns today are what they were four millennia ago? The identity through time is awe-inspiring.)

Now as then, the Divine promise does not mean that we can leave the future to God. That idea has no place in the imaginative world of the first book of the Torah. To the contrary: the covenant is God's challenge to us, not ours to God. The meaning of the events of Chayei Sarah is that Abraham realised that God was

depending on him. Faith does not mean passivity. It means the courage to act and never to be deterred. The future will happen, but it is we – inspired, empowered, given strength by the promise – who must bring it about.



Around the Shabbat Table

1. Divine promises are not guarantees; they are challenges." What does this message mean to you?
2. "Why do you think struggle is such an important part of faith?
3. Where else in Tanach are the characters tested in their faith and commitment to God? What about in later Jewish history?

● These questions come from this week's **Family Edition** to Rabbi Sacks' Covenant & Conversation. For an interactive, multi-generational study, check out the full edition at rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation-family-edition/chayei-sarah/hopes-and-fears/