



CANDLE LIGHTING 5:10 PM | 27 SHEVAT | FEBRUARY 14, 2026 | HAVDALA 6:15 PM

**שבת פרשת משפטים  
פרשת שקלים  
SHABBAT PARSHAT MISHPATIM  
PARSHAT SHEKALIM**

Two Sifrei Torah. Maftir reads from Parshat Ki Tisah (Exodus 30:11-16). Haftorah is Kings II 12:1-17. We bless the month of Adar. No הרחמים.

**FRIDAY EVENING**

<b>MINCHA</b>	<b>5:15 PM</b>
SHKIA	5:29 PM
TZAIT HAKOCHAVIM	6:09 PM

**SHABBAT**

<b>HASHKAMA</b>	<b>7:45 AM</b>
<b>SHACHARIT - MAIN</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>
POST-HASHKAMA SHIUR	~9:30 AM
LAST KRIAT SHEMA	9:31 AM
FUNDAMENTALS SHIUR	~11:30 AM
PRE-MINCHA SHIUR	4:15 PM
<b>MINCHA</b>	<b>4:55 PM</b>
SHKIA	5:30 PM
<b>MAARIV</b>	<b>6:15 PM</b>

**החדש הזה לכם**

Molad for Adar is Tuesday, Feb. 17, 3:50 AM & 12 Chalokim.

ראש חדש אדר יהיה ביום שלישי  
יום רביעי הבא עלינו ועל כל  
ישראל לטובה

**SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE**



Please welcome Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Brody, the executive director of Ematai, an organization dedicated to helping Jews navigate the dilemmas of aging, end-of-life care, and organ donation.

**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY KIDDUSH**



Kiddush is sponsored to celebrate our February birthdays! Happy birthday: Daniel Avital, Flora Bienstock, Erica Cooper, Gabriella Gorelik, Jacqueline Gorelik, Liz Jacob, Deborah Kempin, Mathew Plotnick, Jonathan Schwitzer, & Shalva Shestack

**SEUDAH SHLISHIT**

Seudah Shlishit is sponsored by Amy & Stephen Agress to commemorate the Yahrtzeit of Rabbi Hyman Agress ז"ל, Stephen's father, הרב חיים בן הרב יהושע.

**SHUL MISHLOACH MANOT**

The deadline to be part of the shul's communal mishloach manot is this Friday. To be part of this communal endeavor, click here: [Mishloach Manot](#)

**4TH ANNUAL COMEDY NIGHT  
WITH MIKE FINE**

In one week, Sat. night, doors open at 7:30 PM, show starts at 8:00 PM! Buy Tickets: [LAUGHS!](#)



**ANNUAL DINNER**

Mazal tov to this year's Dinner Honoree, Dr. Melanie Kwestel, and this year's Young Leadership Awardees Sara & Natan Santacruz. Dinner is Sun., Feb. 22, 5:00 PM, at Temple Israel in Ridgewood, NJ. Click here for your reservation and indicate sponsorship level: [Dinner](#). **DEADLINE TO SUBMIT A TRIBUTE IS THIS MONDAY.** Submit a tribute to the honorees here: [Tribute](#).



**MATANOT LEVYONIM AND  
MAOT CHITIM**

Fulfill the mitzvah of Matanot Levyonim by contributing no less than \$30 (to help two poor individuals purchase food for Purim) here: [ML](#). Funds will be distributed to Project Ezrah (50%), JFCS (25%), and Leket Israel (25%). Also, you can donate "wheat monies", Maot Chitim, for the poor before Pesach here: [Wheat](#).

	SUNDAY 2/15	MONDAY 2/16	TUESDAY 2/17	WEDNESDAY 2/18	THURSDAY 2/19	FRIDAY 2/20
<b>WEEKDAY MINYANIM AT AHAVAT ACHIM</b>						
<b>SHACHARIT</b>	<b>8:00 AM</b>	<b>6:20/8:00 AM</b>	<b>6:00 AM</b>	<b>6:00 AM</b>	<b>6:15 AM</b>	<b>6:25 AM</b>
<b>2ND SHACHARIT MINYON - YISHTABACH AT 7:40 AM</b>			<b>7:10 AM</b>	<b>7:10 AM</b>	<b>7:25 AM</b>	<b>7:25 AM</b>
<b>MINCHA/MAARIV</b>	<b>5:19 PM</b>	<b>5:20 PM</b>	<b>5:22 PM</b>	<b>5:23 PM</b>	<b>5:24 PM</b>	<b>5:25 PM</b>
<b>ZMANIM</b>						
<b>Earliest Talit</b>	5:55 AM	5:54 AM	5:53 AM	5:52 AM	5:50 AM	5:49 AM
<b>Gedolah</b>	12:38 PM	12:38 PM	12:38 PM	12:38 PM	12:38 PM	12:38 PM
<b>Shkia</b>	5:31 PM	5:32 PM	5:34 PM	5:35 PM	5:36 PM	
<b>Tzait</b>	6:11 PM	6:12 PM	6:14 PM	6:15 PM	6:16 PM	

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Feb. 20** - Deadline to be part of the Shul's communal Mishloach Manot: [Order here](#).

**Feb. 21** - 4th Annual Comedy Night with Mike Fine. Buy Tickets here: [LAUGH A LOT!](#)

**Feb. 22** - Journal Dinner.

**Feb. 28** - Esther Chapter-by-Chapter Round-Robin Shiur. To sign up, click: [Esther](#).

**Mar. 3** - Women-Only Megillah Reading, 9:30 AM. Sign up here: [Women](#).

**Mar. 3** - Deadline to order matzah through the shul from Kerestir: [Matzah Order](#).

**Mar. 6** - Last Hour Friday Night Shabbat Dinner, RSVP here: [Dinner](#).

**Mar 7** -Board Games Night, 8:15 PM: [Games](#)

**Mar. 8** - Blood Drive

**Mar. 28** - Pre-Pesach Luncheon. RSVP here: [Lunch](#).

**Mar. 28** - Shir HaShirim Chapter-by-Chapter Round-Robin Sign up here: [Song of Songs](#).

## IN OUR FUTURE

**Fed. 21** - Seudah Shlishit is co-sponsored by the Greenes commemorating the Yahrzeit of Elliot's mother, Sylvia Greene<sup>ה"ט</sup>, Serah bat Ya'acov Tzvi, and the Garfunkels for the Yahrzeit of יהושע פאליק ב"ר משה הכהן, David's father, Shea Garfunkel<sup>ה"ט</sup>.

## KIDDUSH & SEUDAH SHLISHIT

- Enjoying Scotch at Kiddush, please donate a bottle from time to time.
- To sponsor a Kiddush (prices start at \$318, plus a bottle of scotch) email [dmgarfunkel@gmail.com](mailto:dmgarfunkel@gmail.com).
- Want to know the menu for Kiddush? Email [dmgarfunkel@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:dmgarfunkel@gmail.com).

## BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY KIDDUSH

To add a birthday or anniversary to our March list (next Kiddush on Shabbat, March 7), click here: [SIMCHA](#). Listings/ sponsorships are \$36 per family per month. RSVP for the February birthday/anniversary Kiddush by Sunday night, March 1.

## SHIURIM



- PESHAT OF 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](mailto:rabbishestack@gmail.com).
- TORAH PODCAST FOR YOUR COMMUTE is available on Spotify or on other applications with an RSS code. Click here: [PODCASTS](#).
- POST-HASHKAMA SHIUR, alternates between examining the development of Halachot and analyzing Mishlei (Proverbs)
- FUNDAMENTALS OF JEWISH THOUGHT, after Kiddush.
- 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.
- HALACHA SHIUR FOR WOMEN, Monday nights, 8:15 PM on Zoom - **Studying Borer**.
- SEDER ON THE SIDDUR, at Seudah Shlishit - **KADDISH 4 - R. DONIN PP. 220-221, ARTSCROLL'S KADDISH PP. 50-55.**

## BOARD MEETINGS 8:15 PM

**Feb. 24** - At shul w/Zoom option.

**Mar. 24, Apr. 28, May 26, & June 30**



## GITA COOPERWASSER<sup>ה"ט</sup> YOUTH EVENTS

**Feb. 28** - Interactive Youth Purim program with dinner.

**May 23** - Interactive Youth Shavuot program with dinner.

## GITA COOPERWASSER<sup>ה"ט</sup> SHABBAT YOUTH INFO



### SHABBAT YOUTH LEADERS:

**3<sup>RD</sup> - 5<sup>TH</sup>: SOPHIA**

**K - 2<sup>ND</sup>: ARIELYS & ABBY**

**3 YRS - PRE-K: ARNELLA & MAYA**

- 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
Perry Leeb	1	February 17	Jane Kirschenbaum	Mother
רינה בת חנה ואריה	2	February 18	Orit Zezon	Mother
Osias Garfunkel	3	February 19	David Garfunkel	Father
Charles Cooperwasser	10	February 26	Seymour Wigod	Uncle
Pearl Iroff	10	February 26	Renee Freund	Grandmother
Bert Vann	10	February 26	Avi Vann	Father
Elaine Goldstein	13	March 1	Mitchell Goldstein	Mother
Herman Klein	14	March 2	David Garfunkel	Grandfather
Morris N. Matkowsky	15	March 3	Charles Matkowsky	Father
Marvin M. Markovitz	15	March 3	Lori Garfunkel	Father
Helen Garfunkel	16	March 4	David Garfunkel	Grandmother
Pearl Gelb	17	March 5	David Graber	Cousin
Charles Feldman Frankel	17	March 5	Elyce Smedresman	Uncle
Bernard Page	18	March 6	Eita Latkin	Cousin
David Wigod	19	March 7	Seymour Wigod	Uncle
Doris Rotberg	21	March 9	Ellen Chass	Mother
Fred Diamond	22	March 10	Lisa Eis	Father
Morris Levine	22	March 10	Kenny Levine	Grandfather
Edna Kerin Shimoff	22	March 10	Melanie Kwestel	Mother
Avraham Schaeffer	26	March 14	Mimi Weinraub	Father

### DAVID SCHWITZERר"ע SOCIAL HALL

Contact Lori at [garfmom@gmail.com](mailto:garfmom@gmail.com) to book the David Schwitzerר"ע 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](mailto:chesed@ahavatachim.org).

### Yahrzeit 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](mailto:yahrzeit@ahavatachim.org) to arrange.

### DONATE A SEFER, ETC.

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

### MISHEBAYRACH

For a Mishebayrach 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](mailto:seplotnick@gmail.com).

### SINGLES SHIDDUCH GROUP

Reach out to Rabbi Shestack or Sara Levine ([saralevine06@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:MensClub@AhavatAchim.Org) to join the Men's Club.

## שבת שקלים - SHABBAT SHEKALIM

*From The OU.ORG Four Shabbatot as adapted with permission from The Book of Our Heritage by Rabbi Eliyahu Kitov and other sources.*

Resh Lakish said "On the first of Adar, an announcement is made concerning the Shekalim." (Masechet Megillah)

The first of the Four Special Shabbatot is Shabbat Parshat Shekalim. It occurs either on the last Shabbat of the month of Shevat, or on the Shabbat which in that year coincides with Rosh Chodesh Adar, or on a Shabbat early in Adar. A special reading, taken from Parshat KiTisa (Shemot 30:11-16) is appended to the regular Torah reading.

The reading describes a census of the Jewish People which was taken while the Jews were in the Wilderness, after their Exodus from Egypt. The Torah, here and in other places, teaches that it is forbidden to count Jews in the ordinary manner; rather, the People should be called upon to contribute items, which would then be counted.

In the case of this census, the item which was contributed, by rich and poor alike, was a half shekel, the "shekel" being the coin in use at the time, roughly equivalent to our dollar. The collected shekels, or "shekalim", in Hebrew, were then used for the construction and upkeep of the Mishkan, the portable Temple, which was used until the Temple found its permanent residence (despite its destruction twice, the place retains its holiness) in Jerusalem.

Equal participation of all the People symbolizes that all Jews must share in achieving national goals, by giving up his selfish, personal interests for the sake of the nation. One who does so gains infinite benefit, because the mission of Israel is dependent upon the unity of the whole. (Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, cited in the ArtScroll Stone Edition of the Chumash)

The verses also speak in terms of atonement that is achieved by participation in this half-shekel assessment... A solitary human being can seldom survive Divine scrutiny; what person is free of sin and shortcomings? But when a nation becomes one, it ascends, because all its individuals merge their virtues with one another. This is also the reason that it is better to pray with a "minyan," a quorum, to establish a community, whose virtues can merge, instead of praying individually.

Parshat Shekalim recalls the time of Purim, which was also a time of Divine scrutiny and judgment for the Jewish People. The name of the Day of Atonement, Yom HaKippurim, the "Day which is like Purim," is also suggestive of this relationship, although Purim also contains the word "Pur," lottery, to suggest how G-d uses what seems to be "chance" in His administration of the world.

At the time of Purim, an edict was issued by an earthly "court;" i.e., the "court" of Haman and Achashverosh, calling for harsh punishment, if not the destruction, of the Jewish People. The Fast of Taanit Esther, combined with the Repentance of the Jewish People, unified the nation and was once again able to receive upon itself the "yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven," and renew their acceptance of the Torah, "the Jews accepted again what they had begun to do," (Megillat Esther 9:23), and thus merit redemption.

## AHAVAT ACHIM MEMBERSHIP/ HOSPITALITY

Email Sara at [membership@ahavatachim.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100091322384429)

**INSTAGRAM:** [www.instagram.com/ahavatachim/](http://www.instagram.com/ahavatachim/)

**FLICKR:** [flickr.com/photos/ahavatachim/albums](http://flickr.com/photos/ahavatachim/albums)

## BULLETIN DEDICATIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND SHUL CALENDAR

Email [seplotnick@gmail.com](mailto: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



COMMUNITY  
SECURITY  
SERVICE

To become part of our community security service, email Margo at [security@ahavatachim.org](mailto: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 20 – Righteousness

מֵאֲזֵנַי מִרְמָה תוֹעֵבַת יְ-ה-וָה וְאֶבֶן שְׁלֵמָה רְצוֹנוֹ: יְבֹא זָדוֹן וְיִבָּא קָלוֹן וְאֵת-צְנוּעִים תַּכְמֶה: יִתְמַת יִשְׂרָיִם תַּנְחֵם וְסִלְף בּוֹגְדִים וְשָׂדֵם יִשְׂדֵם: לֹא-יִוָּעֵל הוּא בְיוֹם עֲבָרָה וְצִדְקָה תַצִּיל מִמּוֹת: צִדְקַת תְּמִים תִּישָׁר דְרָכּוֹ וּבְרִשְׁעוֹתָיו יִפֹּל רָשָׁע: יִצְדַּקְתּוּ יִשְׂרָיִם תַצִּילֵם וּבְהוֹת בּוֹגְדִים יִלְכְּדוּ: יִבְמֹת אֲדָם רָשָׁע תֵּאבֵד תִּקְוָה וְתוֹתֵלֵת אוֹנִים אֲבָדָה: צִדִּיק מִצָּרָה נִחְלָץ וְיִבָּא רָשָׁע תַחֲתָיו: יִכְפֹּה חֲנֹף יִשְׁחַת רַעְיוֹ וְיִבְדֹּעַת צִדִּיקִים יִחַלְצוּ: יִבְטֹיב צִדִּיקִים תַעֲלֶץ קַרְיָה וּבִאֲבָד רָשָׁעִים רָגָה: יִבְבְּרֶקֶת יִשְׂרָיִם תָרוֹם קָרַת וּבְקִי רָשָׁעִים תַהֲרֵם: יִבְזוּ-לְרַעְיוֹ חֲסֵר-לֵב וְאִישׁ תְּבוֹנֹת יִתְרִישׁ: יִהְיֶה רָכִיל מְגַלֵּה-סוֹד וְנֶאֱמַר-רוֹחַ מִכֶּסֶה דְבָר: יִבְאִין תַחֲבֹלוֹת יִפְלֵעַם וְתִשׁוּעָה בְרַב יוֹעֵץ: יִרַע-יָרוּעַ כִּי-עָרַב זָר וְשִׁנָּא תִקְעִים בּוֹטֵם: יִאֲשֶׁת-חַן תִּתְמַדּוּ כְבוֹד וְעֲרִיצִים יִתְמַכּוּ-עֲשָׂר: —

1Deceitful scales are an abomination of the Lord, but a perfect weight is His will. 2When arrogance appears, disgrace follows, but with the humble is wisdom. 3The innocence of the upright leads them, but the distortion of the treacherous robs them. 4Riches will not avail on the day of wrath, but charity will save from death. 5The righteousness of the innocent directs their path, but the wicked will fall in wickedness. 6The righteousness of the just saves them, but the treacherous are trapped by their own designs. 7When a wicked man dies, hope is lost, and the expectation of his children is lost. 8A righteous man is extricated from trouble, and the wicked man takes his place. 9With his mouth the hypocrite destroys his neighbor; but the just are rescued by knowledge. 10When the righteous prosper the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish there is jubilation. 11A city is built with the blessings of the upright, but demolished by the mouth of the wicked. 12He who despises his neighbor is devoid of sense, but a man of understanding is silent. 13He who reveals secrets is a talebearer, but one who is of faithful spirit conceals a matter. 14Without strategy the people falls, but with many counselors there is victory. 15He who gives surety for a stranger will be broken by it, but he who hates hand-claspers [for surety] is secure. 16A charming woman draws near to honor, but strong men draw near to riches.<sup>1</sup>

A. As we go through the proverbs section of Mishlei (chapters 10 through 24<sup>2</sup>), a few thoughts on repetitive pasukim that we have and shall continue to be encountering:

1. It's an anthology (i.e., a collection of collections), and therefore similar proverbs are not necessarily unique to one collection.<sup>3</sup>
2. Repetition makes it easier to remember without referencing written text or notes.
3. There may be different contexts to a given group of verses, but an idea presented in one grouping may also have merit in a different grouping, and hence the repetition.

As an example, compare the phrase in V.2, וְיִבָּא קָלוֹן - “when arrogance appears, disgrace follows”, to one of the most cited verses from Mishlei in common culture, Verse 16:18, לִפְנֵי-שֹׁכֵר גָּאוֹן, – “pride comes before the fall.”

B. Similar to the first half of Chapter 10, righteousness, the righteous person, and charity are a common reference in the first half of Chapter 11:

- V. 4: “Riches will not avail on the day of wrath, but charity will save from death.”
  - o Charity saving from death was previously discussed when we covered 10:2.
- V. 5: “The righteousness of the innocent directs their path, but the wicked will fall in wickedness.”
- V. 6: “The righteousness of the just saves them, but the treacherous are trapped by their own designs.”

<sup>1</sup> Mishlei Chapter 11.

<sup>2</sup> Assuming we include the “Thirty Sayings of the Wise” (verses 22:17–24:22) and the “Additional Wise Sayings” (verses 24:23–34), before we get to the section of the second collection of Solomon’s proverbs/aphorisms as maintained by King Hezekiah’s men beginning with Chapter 25.

<sup>3</sup> Remember that Bava Batra 15a states that Hezekiah and his colleagues “wrote” all of Proverbs (as well as Isaiah [Yeshayahu], Song of Songs [Shir HaShirim], and Ecclesiastes [Kohelet]), not just the verses beginning with chapter 25.

## Post-Hashkama Shiur 20

- V. 8: “A righteous man is extricated from trouble, and the wicked man takes his place.”
  - o Metzudot says that once the heavenly attribute of judgment is rendered, it must be followed through. Vilna Gaon compares this to the Purim story when Mordechai, who was saved after a heavenly judgment of hanging was decreed, could only have been saved because Haman took his place.
- V. 9: With his mouth the hypocrite [flatterer] destroys his neighbor; but the righteous are rescued by knowledge.
  - o Presumptively this knowledge is what saves the just from the hypocrite.
- V. 10: When the righteous prosper the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish there is jubilation.
  - o Interestingly, both the righteous prospering and the wicked perishing give rise to the same basic result, rejoicing/jubilation.
- V. 11: A city is built with the blessings of the upright, but demolished by the mouth of the wicked.

### C. A few notes on individual pasukim:

- V. 1: The matter of deceitful scales and perfect weights will be addressed three more times in Mishlei.<sup>4</sup> This concept is not unique to the Ketuvim, and is also found in the Torah: (1) “You shall not commit a perversion of justice with measures, weights, or liquid measures. You shall have true scales, true weights, a true ephah, and a true hin. I am the Lord, your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt”,<sup>5</sup> and (2) “You shall not keep in your pouch two different weights, one large and one small. You shall not keep in your house two different ephah measures, one large and one small. [Rather,] you shall have a full and honest weight, [and] a full and honest ephah measure, in order that your days will be prolonged on the land which the Lord, your God, gives you.”<sup>6</sup>
- V.7: “When a wicked man dies, hope is lost, and the expectation of his children is lost.”
  - o Rashi sees the people whose “hope” was dashed as being those who trusted in this wicked man.
  - o Contrary to Rashi, R’ Bachya sees this verse as relating to the wicked man’s hopes that are dying with him, namely his hope for further physical pleasures, etc.
  - o Rashi sees the reference to the expectations of the children being dashed as referring to not being able to proudly invoke their father’s name.
- V. 14: “Without strategy the people falls, but with many counselors there is victory.”
  - o First reaction is to try to counter this with different maxims, such as “too many cooks spoil the broth” or “too many chiefs and not enough Indians”. Vilna Gaon says don’t read it like this, as it should instead be understood as if the advisors have a hierarchy like a military chain of command, and then this proverb is an accurate statement.
- V.16: “A charming woman draws near to honor, but strong men draw near to riches.”
  - o Metzudot sees the reference to women here as being proof that once a woman has a good reputation she will fight dearly to hold on to it, while a man with riches will deem it more important to fight to maintain such riches.

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<sup>4</sup> Mishlei 16:11 (“just balance and scales...”), 20:10 (“diverse weights and diverse measures...”), and 20:23 (“diverse weights... false balance...”).

<sup>5</sup> Vayikra 19:35-36.

<sup>6</sup> Devarim 25:13-15.



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AHAVAT ACHIM INVITES YOU  
TO JOIN OUR

# ANNUAL DINNER

*Honoring*



DINNER HONOREE  
DR. MELANIE KWESTEL



YOUNG LEADERSHIP AWARD  
SARA & NATAN SANTACRUZ

2026

SUNDAY

22

FEBRUARY

5:00 pm

TEMPLE ISRAEL  
475 GROVE STREET  
RIDGEWOOD, NJ

\$250 per person



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## 45th Annual Dinner | Honor Scroll

**Shorashim:** Caryn & Mark Follender, Joan & Barry Goldberg, Janet Greenberg & Daniel Santacruz & Family, Kwestel & Jacobson Families, Sara and Natan Santacruz

**Bonim:** Brooks, Czinn/Kaplowitz, Garfunkel, Heller, Herman/Berger, Spier

**Achim v'Achot:** Agress, Bickoff, Brenenson, Coello, J & T Cohen, Cooper, R & R Dworkis, Eisman, Graber, Greene, Gorelick, Jacob/Avital, A Jacobson & P Kwestel & Family, Kessel, Kirschenbaum, R&S Kwestel, Levine, Riskin, Rozenfeld, Smedresman, Sonnenblick, Steinhardt, Stock, Vann, Wechsler, Winchester, S Wigod, Wolfson, Anonymous

**Shomrim:** Hochbaum/Czinn, C & C Goldberg, Greenbaum, T & G Herman, Hyman, Kestler, A Kwestel, Lerner, Plotnick, Reichardt, Schwed, Schwitzer, Sokoloff, Anonymous x2

**Chaverim:** Baron, Bernknopf, Bickel, H Brooks, Goldstein, Dubin, Golubtchik, Heda/Shanblatt, E Jacobson, Kor, Anonymous





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# February

*Simcha Kiddush  
Honorees*

## Birthdays

Daniel Avital  
Flora Bienstock  
Erica Cooper  
Gabriella Gorelik  
Jacqueline Gorelik

Liz Jacob  
Deborah Kempin  
Mathew Plotnick  
Jonathan Schwitzer  
Shalva Shestack

JAN - FEB

RUN OF SHOW

2026

# START 2026 W/ A BANG

NO CHAGIM. NO PROBLEM.

1/24 → GAME NIGHT FOR ADULTS

1/28 → TZURBA M'RABANAN: R. PODLASHUK

1/30 → SHABBAT SHIRA DINNER

1/31 → SUSTAINABLE KIDDUSH

2/1 → TU B'SHVAT W/ GROWTORAH

2/1 → HEAR FROM A CHAYAL: ADI KARNI

2/7 → SUPERBOWL KIDDUSH

2/7 → PARENT - CHILD LEARNING

2/14 → SIR: R. DR. SHLOMO BRODY (EMATAI)

2/21 → COMEDY NIGHT W/ MIKE FINE

LEADING TO...

2/22 → AHAVAT ACHIM ANNUAL DINNER

Claim your spot!



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Congregation Ahavat  
Achim presents

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

**RABBI DR  
SHLOMO BRODY**

**SHABBAT, FEBRUARY 14**

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

**Shabbat Drasha**

**Fundamentals  
following kiddush**

**Seudah Shlishit**

Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Brody is the executive director of Ematai, an organization dedicated to helping Jews navigate the dilemmas of aging, end-of-life care, and organ donation. He previously served as the founding director of the Tikvah Overseas Student Institute and co-dean of Tikvah Online Academy, a senior instructor at Yeshivat Hakotel, and as a junior research fellow at the Israel Democracy Institute. Rabbi Brody has been an invited scholar-in-residence at over 40 distinguished congregations and campuses in the United States, Canada, England, and Israel. Originally from Houston, Texas, Rabbi Brody now lives in Modi'in with his wife, Rocky, and five children.

[EVENTS@AHAVATACHIM.ORG](mailto:EVENTS@AHAVATACHIM.ORG)

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★ Annual ★  
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Night!  
WITH WINE AND DESSERT



Saturday, February, 21

8:00 PM/Doors Open at 7:30

Address to be  
given after  
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the comedy of

**MIKE FINE**



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**ORDER BY  
FEB 20TH!**

MAR 2, 2026  
14TH ADAR, 5786

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# AHAVAT ACHIM

**PURIM 5786 / 2026**

## MODAY, MARCH 2ND

**5:17AM** - TAANIT ESTHER FAST BEGINS

**5:20PM** - MINCHA/MAARIV

**6:30PM** - MEGILLAH READING

**7:05 - 8:00PM** BREAK-FAST AND PURIM SHPIEL

**9:30PM** - LATE MEGILLAH READING

## TUESDAY, MARCH 3RD

**6:00AM** - SHACHARIT W/  
MEGILLAH READING (APPROX 6:25AM)

**8:00AM** - SHACHARIT W/  
MEGILLAH READING (APPROX 8:25AM)

**9:30AM** - WOMEN'S MEGILLAH READING  
(DAVID SCHWITZER SOCIAL HALL)

**12:30PM - 2:00PM** - OPEN HOUSE PURIM  
SEUDAH AT THE SHESTACK HOME



WOMEN OF OUR COMMUNITY ARE INVITED TO A

# WOMEN'S READING OF MEGILLAT ESTHER

**MARCH 3, 2026 | 9:30 AM**

**CONGREGATION AHAVAT ACHIM**  
(DAVID SCHWITZER SOCIAL HALL)  
18-25 SADDLE RIVER ROAD, FAIR LAWN, NJ

[RSVP HERE](#)

CONTACT ELIANNA WITH ANY QUESTIONS:  
646-410-3041 | ELIANNAPLOWITZ@GMAIL.COM



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THE FAMILY SHUL



AHAVAT ACHIM

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**RSVP BY 3/2!**

# LAST HOUR FRIDAY NIGHT SHABBAT DINNER

**NOT READY FOR THE CLOCKS TO CHANGE? JOIN US FOR ONE LAST COMMUNITY FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER BEFORE WE SPRING FORWARD AN HOUR!**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 6 FOLLOWING DAVENING**

**(~6:30PM)**

**Early Bird Pricing before 2/20:**

ADULTS (12 YEARS OLD +) - \$25

CHILDREN AGES 6 - 11 - \$10

CHILDREN AGES 3 - 5 - \$3

FAMILY MAX - \$70

**Pricing after 2/20:**

ADULTS (12 YEARS OLD +) - \$30

CHILDREN AGES 6 - 11 - \$13

CHILDREN AGES 3 - 5 - \$5

FAMILY MAX - \$85



**[TINYURL.COM/AALASTHOUR](https://tinyurl.com/aalasthour)**



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# Board Game Night

FOR  
ADULTS!



WITH PIZZA & BEER

**SATURDAY  
MARCH 7**

**8:15 PM**

\$10 per person

RSVP by 3/4

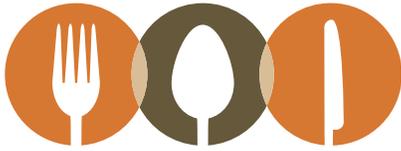
Bring your competitive spirit  
(and your favorite board games!)  
for a night of gaming and fun



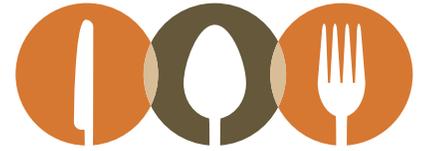
RSVP at:

<https://tinyurl.com/AAGameNight>

[events@ahavatachim.org](mailto:events@ahavatachim.org)



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**CABINETS BARE BEFORE PESACH?  
JOIN US FOR ONE LAST KIDDUSH!**

# PRE-PESACH COMMUNITY LUNCHEON

**IT'LL BE  
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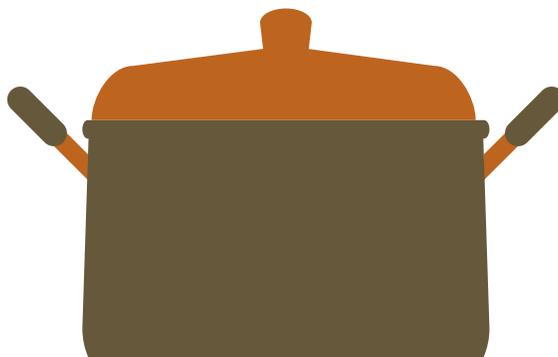
KARPAS: \$72

MAGGID: \$118

TZAFUN: \$180

**SIGN UP BY 3/24!**

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# Covenant & Conversation

Jonathan Sacks  
THE RABBI SACKS LEGACY

MISHPATIM • מִשְׁפָּטִים

FROM THE TEACHINGS AND WRITINGS OF RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS 7"צט

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 zt"l in 5773 (2012–2013). These timeless messages are accompanied by a new [Family Edition](#) created to inspire intergenerational learning on the Parsha.

## In the Details

On the opening phrase of Mishpatim: "And these are the laws you are to set before them," (Shemot 21:1) Rashi comments:

*"And these are the laws that you shall set before them."*

Wherever the word "these" is used, it signals a discontinuity with what has been stated previously. However, where the term "and these" is used, it signals a continuity. Just as the former commands were given at Sinai, so these were given at Sinai. Why then are the civil laws placed in juxtaposition to the laws concerning the altar? To tell you to place the Sanhedrin near to the Temple.

*"...that you shall set before them."*

You should not think, 'I will teach them a section, or law, two or three times until they know the words verbatim, but I will not take the trouble to make them understand the reason and its significance.' Therefore the Torah states "that you shall set before them" like a fully laid table with everything ready for eating.

Rashi on Shemot 21:1

Three remarkable propositions are being set out here which have shaped the contours of Judaism ever since.

The first is that just as the general principles of Judaism (*Aseret HaDibrot* means not "Ten Commandments" but "Ten Utterances" or "Ten Overarching Principles") are Divine, so are the details. In the 1960s the Danish architect Arne Jacobson designed a new college campus in Oxford. Not content with designing the building, he went on to design the cutlery and crockery to be used in the dining hall, and supervised the planting of every shrub in the college garden. When asked why, he replied in the words of another architect, Mies van der Rohe: 'God is in the details.'

That is a Jewish sentiment. There are those who believe that what is holy in Judaism is its broad vision, never so compellingly expressed as in the Decalogue at Sinai. The truth however is that God is in the details: "Just as the former were given at Sinai, so these were given at Sinai." The greatness of Judaism is not simply in its noble vision of a free, just, and compassionate society, but in the way it brings this vision down to earth in detailed legislation. Freedom is more

than an abstract idea. It means (in an age in which slavery was taken for granted – it was not abolished in Britain or the United States until the nineteenth century) letting a slave go free after seven years, or immediately if his master has injured him. It means granting slaves complete rest and freedom one day in seven. These laws do not abolish slavery, but they do create the conditions under which people will eventually learn to abolish it. No less importantly, they turn slavery from an existential fate to a temporary condition. Slavery is not what you are or how you were born, but something that has happened to you for a while, and from which you will one day be liberated. That is what these laws – especially the law of Shabbat – achieve, not in theory only, but in living practice. In this, as in virtually every other aspect of Judaism, God is in the details.

The second principle, no less fundamental, is that civil law is not secular law. We do not believe in the idea “render to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what belongs to God”. We believe in the separation of powers but not in the secularisation of law or the spiritualisation of faith. The Sanhedrin or Supreme Court must be placed near the Temple to teach that law itself must be driven by a religious vision. The greatest of these visions, stated in this week’s sedra, is:

*“Do not oppress a stranger. You know what it is to be a stranger, for you yourselves were strangers in Egypt.”*

Shemot 23:9

The Jewish vision of justice, given its detailed articulation here for the first time, is based not on expediency or pragmatism, nor even on abstract philosophical principles, but on the concrete historical memories of the Jewish people as “one nation under God.” Centuries earlier, God has chosen Abraham so that he would “teach his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord, by doing what is right and just.” (Bereishit 18:19)

Justice in Judaism flows from the experience of injustice at the hands of the Egyptians, and the God-given challenge to create a radically different form of society in Israel.

This is already foreshadowed in the first chapter of the Torah with its statement of the equal and absolute dignity of the human person as the image of God. That is why society must be based on the rule of law, impartially administered, treating all alike – “Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, and do not show favouritism to a poor man in his lawsuit.” (Shemot 23:2-3)

To be sure, at the highest levels of mysticism, God is to be found in the innermost depths of the human soul, but God is equally to be found in the public square and in the structures of society: the marketplace, the corridors of power, and courts of law. There must be no gap, no dissociation of sensibilities, between the court of justice (the meeting-place of man and man) and the Temple (the meeting-place of man and God).

The third principle – and the most remarkable of all – is the idea that law does not belong to lawyers. It is the heritage of every Jew. Rashi wrote “Do not think, I will teach them a section or law two or three times until they know the words verbatim, but I will not take the trouble to make them understand the reason and significance of the law. The Torah states ‘*that you shall set before them*’ like a fully laid table with everything ready for eating.” This is the origin of the name of the most famous of all Jewish codes of law, Rabbi Joseph Karo’s *Shulchan Aruch*.

From earliest times, Judaism expected everyone to know and understand the law. Legal knowledge is not the closely guarded property of an elite. It is – in the famous phrase – “the heritage of the congregation

of Jacob.” (Devarim 33:4) Already in the first century CE Josephus could write that “should any one of our nation be asked about our laws, he will repeat them as readily as his own name.

The result of our thorough education in our laws from the very dawn of intelligence is that they are, as it were, engraved on our souls. Hence to break them is rare, and no one can evade punishment by the excuse of ignorance.”<sup>1</sup> That is why there are so many Jewish lawyers. Judaism is a religion of law – not because it does not believe in love (“You shall love the Lord your God”, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself”) but because, without justice, neither love nor liberty nor human life itself can flourish. Love alone does not free a slave from his or her chains.

The sedra of Mishpatim, with its detailed rules and regulations, can sometimes seem

a let-down after the breathtaking grandeur of the revelation at Sinai. It should not be. Yitro contains the vision, but God is in the details. Without the vision, law is blind. But without the details, the vision floats in heaven. With them the Divine Presence is brought down to earth, where we need it most.



## Around the Shabbat Table

1. Why is it important that not only the Ten Commandments but also the civil laws were given at Har Sinai?
2. How does the Halachah's repeated focus on the stranger help form our understanding of justice?
3. What does it mean for legal knowledge to be 'the heritage of every Jew'?

How can we ensure this remains true?

● 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 <https://rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation-family-edition/mishpatim/in-the-details/>

<sup>1</sup> Contra Apionem, ii, 177-8