



CANDLE LIGHTING 6:43 PM | 25 ADAR | MARCH 14, 2026 | HAVDALA 7:47 PM



שבת פרשת ויקהל-פקודי  
פרשת החדש

PARSHAT VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI  
PARSHAT HACHODESH

Two Sifrei Torah. Maftir reads from Bo (Shemot 12:1-20). Haftorah is Ezekiel 45:16-46:18. We bless the month of Nisan. We don't say אב הרחמים.

FRIDAY EVENING

**MINCHA** 6:45 PM  
SHKIA 7:01 PM  
TZAIT HAKOCHAVIM 7:41 PM

SHABBAT

**HASHKAMA** 7:45 AM  
**SHACHARIT - MAIN** 9:00 AM  
POST-HASHKAMA SHIUR HIATUS  
LAST KRIAT SHEMA 10:08 AM  
FUNDAMENTALS SHIUR ≈11:30 AM  
PRE-MINCHA SHIUR 5:50 PM

**MINCHA** 6:30 PM  
SHKIA 7:02 PM  
**MAARIV** 7:47 PM



Molad for Nisan is Wed., March 18, 4:34 PM & 13 Chalokim.

ראש חדש ניסן יהיה ביום חמישי  
הבא עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה

EMATAI

This Sunday, March 15 at 8:00 PM, please join us for a discussion with Bassie Taubes, RN, on advance planning, healthcare goals and values, and how to have this important discussion with friends and family. Please RSVP here: [Health](#).

MAOT CHITIM

To facilitate the centuries old minhag of Maot Chitim, "wheat monies", providing wheat/matzah to the poor on Pesach, make a donation here: [Maot Chitmitim](#). More info on the destination of these contributions to the Cheryl Wigod<sup>ת"ע</sup> Tzedakah Fund to come.



BARUCH DAYAN HA'EMET

We regret to inform you of the passing of Sybil Scheiner, beloved mother of Amy Agress. Shiva is being observed by Amy and her sister Julie at Amy's home, 36-14 High Street, Fair Lawn, NJ, and the remaining visiting hours are as follows: Saturday Night: 8:30 PM - 10:30 PM, and Sunday: 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM; 1:30 PM - 6:00 PM; and 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM.

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

PRE-PESACH SHABBAT COMMUNITY LUNCH IN TWO WEEKS!

Sponsorship levels are: Tzafun: \$180; Maggid: \$118; Karpas: \$72; and Kadesh: \$54. To sponsor or RSVP that you will be attending the lunch, click here: [CHOMETZ](#).

MAZEL TOV

Mazel tov to Sheree & Hazkiel Kor on the birth of a grandson to Loni & David Kor.

גדלוהו לתורה ולחופה ולמעשים טובים ויכניסוהו לבריתו בזמנו ובעתו  
May they raise him to Torah, chuppah and good deeds, and may he be entered into the covenant of Abraham.



ORTHODOX UNION Enhancing Jewish Life	SUNDAY 3/15	MONDAY 3/16	TUESDAY 3/17	WEDNESDAY 3/18	THURSDAY 3/19	FRIDAY 3/20
<b>WEEKDAY MINYANIM AT AHAVAT ACHIM</b>						
SHACHARIT	8:00 AM	6:15 AM	6:25 AM	6:25 AM	6:00 AM	6:25 AM
2ND SHACHARIT MINYON - YISHTABACH AT 7:40 AM		7:25 AM	7:25 AM	7:25 AM	7:10 AM	7:25 AM
MINCHA/MAARIV	6:51 PM	6:52 PM	6:53 PM	6:54 PM	6:55 PM	6:55 PM
<b>ZMANIM</b>						
Earliest Talit	6:14 AM	6:12 AM	6:11 AM	6:09 AM	6:07 AM	6:05 AM
Gedolah	1:35 PM	1:35 PM	1:35 PM	1:35 PM	1:35 PM	1:35 PM
Shkia	7:03 PM	7:04 PM	7:05 PM	7:07 PM	7:08 PM	
Tzait	7:43 PM	7:44 PM	7:45 PM	7:47 PM	7:48 PM	

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Mar. 15** - "What's the Plan? Navigating Advance Halachic Healthcare Directives & Meaningful Family Conversations," with Bassie Taubes, RN, Director of Community Outreach, Ematai, discussing advance planning, healthcare goals and values. RSVP: [Health](#).

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

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

**Mar. 29** - Hagolas Kelim/Pesach Kashering, 9:00 - 11:00 AM, at the shul.

**April 1** - Seraifat (Burning) Chometz, 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM, at the Norton residence, 20-11 Hunter Pl. No foil, plastic, paper, cardboard, pasta, sauces or liquids. Bread, cereal, crackers and dry items only.

**Apr. 1** - Latest to eat Chometz: 10:51 AM

**Apr. 1** - Latest to own Chometz: 11:55 AM

**Apr. 25** - Rabbi Binny Freedman SIR.

## IN OUR FUTURE - KIDDUSH, SEUDAH SHLISHIT, & ETC.

**Apr. 25** - Birthday and Anniversary Kiddush

**June 20** - Kiddush is sponsored by Shelly & Steve Winchester celebrating Daniel's Auf Ruf and upcoming wedding to Yael Simons.

- 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 April list (next Kiddush on Shabbat, April 25), click here: [SIMCHA](#). Listings/sponsorships are \$36 per family per month. RSVP for the April birthday/anniversary Kiddush by Sunday night, April 19.

## 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 - **HIATUS**
- SEDER ON THE SIDDUR, at Seudah Shlishit - **MIZMOR SHIR CHANUKAT HABAYIT - R. DONIN PP. 176-178, RABBI MUNK 76-77.**

## BOARD MEETINGS 8:15 PM

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

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

## GITA COOPERWASSER ה"י YOUTH EVENTS

**Apr. 9** - Playdate in the Park (Pesach Edition), 3:45 PM.

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

## GITA COOPERWASSER ה"י SHABBAT YOUTH INFO



- **SHABBAT YOUTH LEADERS:**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> - 5<sup>TH</sup>: ARIELYS & LETIZIA**  
**K - 2<sup>ND</sup>: ARIELLA & CASSANDRA**  
**3 YRS - PRE-K: ABBY & 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
Ruth Lerner	1	March 18	Laurie Phipps	Mother
Joseph Bickel	2	March 19	Jack Bickel	Father
Herbert Sturm	2	March 19	Robyn Safier	Father
Ben Chass	3	March 20	Murray Chass	Father
Aaron Goldstein	3	March 20	Mitchell Goldstein	Father
Edith Garfunkel	4	March 21	David Garfunkel	Mother
Margot Flora Rothschild	5	March 22	Audrey Bickel	Mother
Phyllis Chuback Weiner	7	March 24	Randi Spier	Mother
Hania Kirschenbaum	8	March 25	Hyman Kirschenbaum	Mother
Estelle Smedresman	9	March 26	Steve Smedresman	Mother
Daniel Mittelpunkt	13	March 30	Eita Latkin	Cousin
Yetta Mittelpunkt	14	March 31	Eita Latkin	Grandmother
Bernard Greenbaum	21	April 7	Eli Greenbaum	Father
Leah Schwartz	29	April 15	Kenny Levine	Grandmother

## DAVID SCHWITZER<sup>ר"ע</sup> SOCIAL HALL

Contact Lori at [garfmom@gmail.com](mailto:garfmom@gmail.com) to book the David Schwitzer<sup>ר"ע</sup> 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.

## PARSHAT HACHODESH

"This month shall be for you the beginning of the months, it shall be for you the first of the months of the year." (Shemot 12:2)

On the Shabbat before Rosh Chodesh Nissan, or on Rosh Chodesh if it falls on the Shabbat, two Torah Scrolls are removed from the Ark (three if on Rosh Chodesh). From the first, the Sidrah of the week is read, and from the second (or third on Rosh Chodesh), the Maftir reads the passage giving the commandments associated with the very first Rosh Chodesh Nissan in Egypt.

The first day of Nissan was and always remains a historic day for the Jewish nation. It was the day when the people received their first commandment as a nation: Sanctify the New Moon.

This ritual has a profound spiritual and historic significance. It is noteworthy that it was one of three commandments that the Syrian Greeks, in the time before the Chanukah miracle, attempted to nullify by force. The other two were the Observance of Shabbat and Circumcision. Clearly, therefore, Israel's enemies understood that the sanctification of the New Moon was basic to the existence of Israel as a nation of Torah.

Commentators explain that, by virtue of this Commandment, G-d gave the Jewish people mastery over time. From that moment onward, the calendar with its cycle of festivals could exist only when the Sages of Israel declared the New Month. This signifies more than control over the reckoning of time, the dating of legal documents, and all the banalities to which man is subject in his everyday life. It represents the potential for renewal.

The Jewish people is symbolized by the moon because, although the moon wanes, it waxes as well. It stands for hope, for the confidence that there is a future as well as a past. This vibrancy assures that any conquest of the Jewish people can never be more than temporary. Israel may seem to disappear from the panorama of history - but so does the moon.

The moon returns - and Israel, by means of the power vested in it by the Torah, sanctifies the New Month. So, too, the nation constantly renews its vigor, constantly defies the laws of history that insist it should have long since become extinct, constantly demonstrates its ability to make itself the vehicle for the prophecies of redemption and a greater spiritual world.

## 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.]





# What's the Plan?

*Navigating Advance Halachic Healthcare Directives & Meaningful Family Conversations*

**Congregation Ahavat Achim and Ematai**  
invite you to join

**Bassie Taubes, RN**

Director of Community Outreach, Ematai

for a discussion about advance planning, healthcare goals and values,  
and how to have this important discussion with friends and family



**Sunday, March 15th**

**8PM**

**Congregation Ahavat Achim**

*18-25 Saddle River Rd, Fairlawn*

**RSVP: [tinyurl.com/EmataiWorkshop](https://tinyurl.com/EmataiWorkshop)**

A guide to starting important  
conversations with your family

Designate your healthcare  
proxy and rabbinic consultant

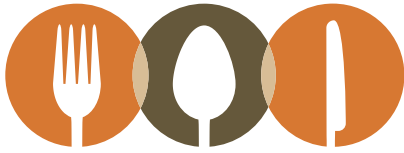
Communicate your healthcare  
preferences and Jewish values

Endorsed by leading poskim,  
doctors, and attorneys

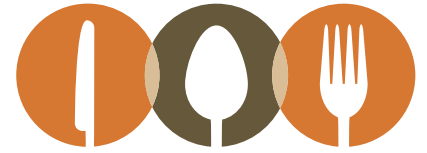


REALTIME CONSULT HELPLINE:  
+1-646-599-3895

 **[ematai.org](https://ematai.org)**



AHAVAT ACHIM  
קהלת אהבת אחים  
THE FAMILY SHUL



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

# PRE-PESACH COMMUNITY LUNCHEON

**IT'LL BE  
CHAMETZ-ING!**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 28**

SIGN UP TO SPONSOR OR VOLUNTEER TO  
MAKE A CROCKPOT DISH!

## **SPONSORSHIPS:**

KADESH: \$54

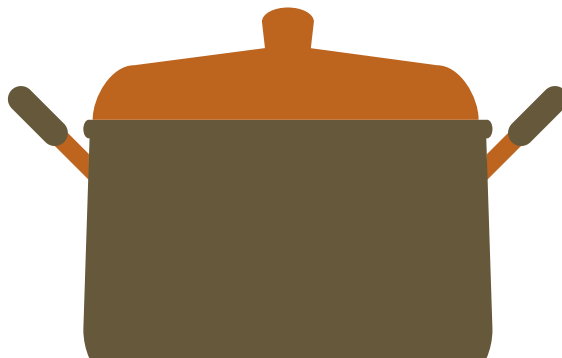
KARPAS: \$72

MAGGID: \$118

TZAFUN: \$180

**SIGN UP BY 3/24!**

[TINYURL.COM/AAPRE-PESACH](https://tinyurl.com/aapre-pesach)



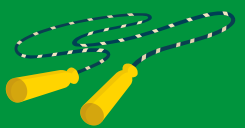


Save the Date!

# Playdate in the Park: Pesach Edition



Join us at Edison Park on  
Thursday, April 9th at 3:45 P.M.



Fruit & snacks will be provided!  
Bring your own water.

\*please do not bring snacks containing nuts\*



AHAVAT ACHIM  
קהלת אהבת אחים

718.224.1111



**MIZRACHI**  
RELIGIOUS ZIONISTS OF  
**AMERICA**  
rza.org



# AHAVAT ACHIM

PRESENTS A SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE SHABBATON WITH

## RABBI BINNY FREEDMAN

SAVE THE DATE

**SHABBAT PARASHAT  
ACHAREI MOT-KEDOSHIM  
APRIL 24–25, 2026**



**Rabbi Binny Freedman** is Rosh Yeshiva, founder, and Dean of Yeshivat Orayta. He is a highly engaging and inspiring educator who has the gift for synthesizing difficult, sophisticated material in a way that inspires both the novice and the scholar. His proficiency in applying Jewish concepts to contemporary life in a personal and meaningful manner has made him a sought-after speaker and educator around the world. Rav Binny is an IDF Company Commander who came to Israel as a lone soldier in 1982.

**Israel360** reflects Israel's international reach and Mizrachi's mission of spreading Torat Eretz Yisrael across the world. To celebrate Israel during the month of Iyar, Mizrachi brings inspiring Israeli speakers and thinkers to 360 communities all around the globe. [www.mizrachi.org/israel360](http://www.mizrachi.org/israel360)



# Covenant & Conversation

Jonathan Sacks  
THE RABBI SACKS LEGACY

VAYAKHEL-PEKUDEI • ויקהל-פקודי

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

## Three Types of Community

A long drama had taken place. Moses had led the people from slavery to the beginning of the road to freedom. The people themselves had witnessed God at Mount Sinai, the only time in all history when an entire people became the recipients of revelation. Then came the disappearance of Moses for his long sojourn at the top of the mountain, an absence which led to the Israelites' greatest collective sin, the making of the Golden Calf. Moses returned to the mountain to plead for forgiveness, which was granted.

Its symbol was the second set of Tablets. Now life must begin again. A shattered people must be rebuilt. How does Moses proceed? The verse with which the sedra begins contains the clue:

Moses assembled all the community of Israel and said to them: "These are the

things God has commanded you to do."

Shemot 35:1

The verb *vayakhel* – which gives the sedra its name – is crucial to an understanding of the task in which Moses is engaged. At its simplest level it serves as a motiv-word, recalling a previous verse. In this case the verse is obvious:

When the people saw that Moses was long delayed in coming down the mountain, they assembled around Aaron and said to him, "Get up, make us gods to go before us."

Shemot 32:1

Moses' act is what the kabbalists called a *tikkun*: a restoration, a making-good-again, the redemption of a past misdemeanour. Just as the sin was committed by the people acting as a *kahal* or *kehillah*, so atonement was to be

achieved by their again acting as a *kehillah*, this time by making a home for the Divine presence as they earlier sought to make a substitute for it. Moses orchestrates the people for good, as they had once been assembled for bad (The difference lies not only in the purpose but in the form of the verb, from passive in the case of the Calf to active in the case of Moses. Passivity allows bad things to happen – “Wherever it says ‘and it came to pass’ it is a sign of impending tragedy”). (Megillah 10b) Proactivity is the defeat of tragedy:

“Wherever it says, ‘And there will be’ is a sign of impending joy.”

Bamidbar Rabbah 13

At a deeper level, though, the opening verse of the sedra alerts us to the nature of community in Judaism.

In classical Hebrew there are three different words for community: *edah*, *tzibbur*, and *kehillah*, and they signify different kinds of association.

*Edah* comes from the word *ed*, meaning “witness.” The verb *ya’ad* carries the meaning of “to appoint, fix, assign, destine, set apart, designate or determine.” The modern Hebrew noun *te’udah* means “certificate, document, attestation, aim, object, purpose, or mission.” The people who constitute an *edah* have a strong sense of collective identity. They have witnessed the same things. They are bent on the same purpose. The Jewish people become

an *edah* – a community of shared faith – only on receiving the first command:

““Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household””.

Shemot 12:3

An *edah* can be a gathering for bad as well as good. The Israelites, on hearing the report of the spies, lose heart and say they want to return to Egypt. Throughout, they are referred to as the *edah* (as in “How long will this wicked community grumble against Me?” Bamidbar 14:27). The people agitated by Korach in his rebellion against Moses and Aaron’s authority is likewise called an *edah* (“If one man sins, will You be angry with the whole community? Bamidbar 16:22). Nowadays the word is generally used for an ethnic or religious subgroup. An *edah* is a community of the like-minded. The word emphasises strong identity. It is a group whose members have much in common.

By contrast the word *tzibbur* – it belongs to Mishnaic rather than biblical Hebrew – comes from the root *tz-b-r* meaning “to heap” or “pile up”. (Bereishit 41:49) To understand the concept of *tzibbur*, think of a group of people praying at the Kotel. They may not know each other. They may never meet again. But for the moment, they happen to be ten people in the same place at the same time, and thus constitute a quorum for prayer. A *tzibbur* is a community in the

minimalist sense, a mere aggregate, formed by numbers rather than any sense of identity. A *tzibbur* is a group whose members may have nothing in common except that, at a certain point, they find themselves together and thus constitute a “public” for prayer or any other command which requires a *minyan*.

A *kehillah* is different from the other two kinds of community. Its members are different from one another. In that sense it is like a *tzibbur*. But they are orchestrated together for a collective undertaking – one that involves making a distinctive contribution. The danger of a *kehillah* is that it can become a mass, a rabble, a crowd.

That is the meaning of the phrase in which Moses, descending the mountain, sees the people dancing around the Calf:

Moses saw that the people were running wild, for Aaron had let them run out of control and become a laughingstock to their enemies.

Shemot 32:25

The beauty of a *kehillah*, however, is that when it is driven by constructive purpose, it gathers together the distinct and separate contributions of many individuals, so that each can say, “I helped to make this.” That is why, assembling the people on this occasion, Moses emphasises that each has something different to give:

Bring of what is yours an offering to the Lord. Let everyone who is willing bring an offering to the Lord: gold, silver, and bronze . . . And let all among you who are skilled come and make the things that the Lord has commanded.

Shemot 35:5-10

Moses was able to turn the *kehillah* with its diversity into an *edah* with its singleness of purpose, while preserving the diversity of the gifts they brought to God:

So all the community of Israel left Moses’ presence. And they came, everyone whose heart inspired him and whose spirit moved him, and brought an offering for the Lord, to be used for the Tent of Meeting and all its service, and for the sacred vestments. All whose hearts moved them – the men with the women – brought brooches, earrings, signet rings and pendants, all kinds of gold ornaments . . . Everyone who had sky-blue, purple, or scarlet wool . . . Whoever could make an offering of silver or bronze brought it . . . Every skilled woman spun with her own hands, and brought what she had spun . . . All the women whose hearts inspired them used their skill . . . The leaders brought rock crystal stones and other precious stones . . . So the Israelites – all the men and women whose hearts moved them to bring anything for the work that the Lord, through Moses, had commanded –

brought it as a freewill offering to the Lord.

Shemot 35:20-29

The greatness of the Tabernacle was that it was a collective achievement – one in which not everyone did the same thing. Each gave a different thing. Each contribution was valued – and therefore each participant felt valued. *Vayakhel* – Moses’ ability to forge out of the dissolution of the people a new and genuine *kehillah* – was one of his greatest achievements.

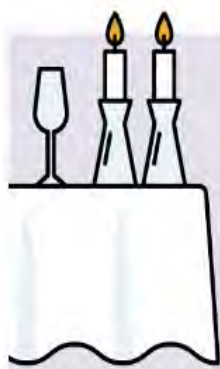
Many years later, Moses, according to the Sages, returned to the theme. Knowing that his career as a leader was drawing to an end, he prayed to God to appoint a successor: “May God, Lord of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a person over the community.” (Bamidbar 27:16) Rashi, following the Sages, explains the unusual

phrase “Lord of the spirits of all flesh” as follows:

He said to Him: Lord of the universe, the character of each person is revealed and known to You – and You know that each is different. Therefore appoint for them a leader who is able to bear with each person as his or her temperament requires.

Rashi on Bamidbar 27:16

To preserve the diversity of a *tzibbur* with the unity of purpose of an *edah* – that is the challenge of *kehillah*-formation, community-building, itself the greatest task of a great leader.



## Around the Shabbat Table

1. Think about the groups you belong to. Which feel like an *edah*, which are a *tzibbur*, and which are a *kehillah*?
2. Why is it sometimes harder to be part of a *kehillah* than an *edah*?
3. Moshe’s great task was to lead people with different temperaments. What is the key to making a diverse group work well together?

● 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/vayakhel/three-types-of-community/>