



Shabbat Announcements

Parshat Shemot

January 10, 2015 19 Tevet, 5775

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks on Parshat Shemot

TORAH
ARTSCROLL, 292
HERTZ, 205

HAFTORAH
ARTSCROLL, 1147
HERTZ, 225

Times

Candle Lighting	4:27 pm
Friday Mincha	4:30 pm
Hashkama	8:00 am
Parsha Shiur	8:30 am
Main Shul	9:00 am
Beit Midrash	9:15 am
Youth Minyan	8:30 am
Shiur	3:45 pm
Mincha	4:25 pm
Shabbat Ends	5:36 pm
Sunday Jan., 11	7:30/8:30 am
Mon. Thurs.	6:35/7:45 am
Tues., Wed. Fri.	6:45/7:45 am
Mincha	4:35 pm
Latest Times for Shema/Shemoneh Esrei	
January 10	9:41/10:28am
January 17	9:40/10:27am
Next Shabbat Va'eira	
Candle Lighting	4:34 pm
Mincha	4:35 pm

This week's parsha could be entitled "The birth of a leader." We see Moses, adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, growing up as a prince of Egypt. We see him as a young man, for the first time realizing the implications of his true identity. He is, and knows he is, a member of an enslaved and suffering people: "Growing up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people" (Ex. 2: 10).

He intervenes. He acts: the mark of a true leader. We see him intervene three times, twice in Egypt, once in Midian, to rescue victims of violence. We then witness the great scene at the burning bush where God summons him to lead his people to freedom. Moses hesitates four times until God becomes angry and Moses knows he has no other choice. This is a classic account of the childhood of a hero. But this is only the surface. The Torah is a deep and subtle book, and it does not always deliver its message on the surface. Just beneath is another and far more remarkable story, not about a hero but about six heroines, six courageous women without whom there would not have been a Moses.

First is Jocheved, wife of Amram and mother of the three people who were to become the great leaders of the Israelites: Miriam, Aaron and Moses himself. It was Yocheved who, at the height of Egyptian persecution, had

the courage to have a child, hide him for three months, and then devise a plan to give him a chance of being rescued. We know all too little of Yocheved. In her first appearance in the Torah she is unnamed. Yet, reading the narrative, we are left in no doubt about her bravery and resourcefulness. Not by accident did her children all become leaders.

The second was Miriam, Yocheved's daughter and Moses' elder sister. It was she who kept watch over the child as the ark floated down the river, and who approached Pharaoh's daughter with the suggestion that he be nursed among his own people. The biblical text paints a portrait of the young Miriam as a figure of unusual fearlessness and presence of mind. Rabbinic tradition went further. In a remarkable midrash, we read of how the young Miriam confronted her father Amram and persuaded him to change his mind. Hearing of the decree that every male Israelite baby would be drowned in the river, Amram led the Israelites in divorcing their wives so that there would be no more children. He had logic on his side. Could it be right to bring children into the world if there were a fifty per cent chance that they would be killed at birth? Yet Miriam, so the tradition goes, remonstrated with him. "Your decree," she said, "is worse than Pharaoh's. His affects only the boys; yours affects all. His deprives children of life in this world; yours will deprive them of life even in the world to come." Amram relented, and as a result, Moses was born. The implication is clear: Miriam had more faith than her father.

Third and fourth were the two midwives, Shifrah and Puah, who frustrated Pharaoh's first attempt at genocide. Told to kill the male Israelite children at birth, they "feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live" (Ex. 1: 17). Summoned

and accused of disobedience, they outwitted Pharaoh by constructing an ingenious cover story: the Hebrew women, they said, are vigorous and give birth before we arrive. They escaped punishment and saved lives.

The significance of this story is that it is the first recorded instance of one of Judaism's greatest contributions to civilization: the idea that there are moral limits to power. There are instructions that should not be obeyed. There are crimes against humanity that cannot be excused by the claim that "I was only obeying orders." This concept, generally known as "civil disobedience," is usually attributed to the nineteenth century American writer Henry David Thoreau, and entered international consciousness after the Holocaust and the Nuremberg trials. Its true origin, though, lay thousands of years earlier in the actions of two women, Shifra and Puah. Through their understated courage they earned a high place among the moral heroes of history, teaching us the primacy of conscience over conformity, the law of justice over the law of the land.

The fifth is Zipporah, Moses' wife. The daughter of a Midianite priest, she was nonetheless determined to accompany Moses on his mission to Egypt, despite the fact that she had no reason to risk her life on such a hazardous venture. In a deeply enigmatic passage, it was she who saved Moses' life by performing a circumcision on their son (Ex. 4: 24-26). The impression we have of her is of a figure of monumental determination who, at a crucial moment, has a better sense than Moses himself of what God requires.

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I have saved until last the most intriguing of them all: Pharaoh's daughter. It was she who had the courage to rescue an Israelite child and bring it up as her own in the very palace where her father was plotting the destruction of the Israelite people. Could we imagine a daughter of Hitler, or Eichmann, or Stalin, doing the same? There is something at once heroic and gracious about this lightly sketched figure, the woman who gave Moses his name. Who was she? The Torah does not give her a name. However the First Book of Chronicles (4: 18) mentions a daughter of Pharaoh, named Bitya, and it was she the sages identified as the woman who saved Moses. The name Bitya (sometimes rendered as Batya) means "the daughter of God". From this, the sages drew one of their most striking lessons: The Holy One, blessed be He, said to her: "Moses was not your son, yet you called him your son. You are not My daughter, but I shall call you My daughter." They added that she was one of the few (tradition enumerates nine) who were so righteous that they entered paradise in their lifetime.

So, on the surface, the parsha is about the initiation into leadership of one remarkable man, but just beneath the surface is a counter-narrative of six extraordinary women without whom there would not have been a Moses. They belong to a long tradition of strong women throughout Jewish history, from Deborah, Hannah, Ruth and Esther in the Bible to more modern figures like Sarah Schenirer and Nechama Leibowitz to more secular figures like Anne Frank, Hannah Senesh and Golda Meir.

How then, if women emerge so powerfully as leaders, were they excluded in Jewish law from certain leadership roles? If we look carefully we will see that women were historically excluded from two areas. One was the "crown of priesthood," which went to Aaron and his sons. The other was the "crown of kingship," which went to David and his sons. These were two roles built on the principle of dynastic succession. From the third crown – the "crown of Torah" – however, women were not excluded. There were prophetesses, not just prophets. The sages enumerated seven of them. There were great women Torah scholars from the Mishnaic period (Beruriah, Ima Shalom) to today.

At stake is a more general distinction. Rabbi Eliyahu Bakshi-Doron in his Responsa, Binyan Av, differentiates between formal or official authority (samchut) and actual leadership (hanhagah). There are figures who hold positions of authority – prime ministers, presidents, CEOs – who may not be leaders at all. They may have the power to force people to do what they say, but they have no followers. They excite no admiration. They inspire no emulation. And there may be leaders who hold no official position at all but who are turned to for advice and are held up as role models. They have no power but great influence. Israel's prophets belonged to this category. So, often, did the gedolei Yisrael, the great

sages of each generation. Neither Rashi nor Maimonides held any official position (some scholars say that Maimonides was chief rabbi of Egypt but most hold that he was not, though his descendants were). Wherever leadership depends on personal qualities – what Max Weber called charismatic authority – and not on office or title, there is no distinction between women and men. Yocheved, Miriam, Shifra, Puah, Zipporah and Batya were leaders not because of any official position they held (in the case of Batya she was a leader despite her official title as a princess of Egypt). They were leaders because they had courage and conscience. They refused to be intimidated by power or defeated by circumstance. They were the real heroes of the exodus. Their courage is still a source of inspiration today.



GNS Yoetzet Halacha Dena Block welcomes your questions about mikvah, observance of taharat mishpacha (halacha relating to married life) and women's health, as it connects to Jewish law. Reach out to her at:
 Phone: (516) 320-9818
 Email: gnsyoetzet@gmail.com All conversations/ emails are strictly confidential.



Great Neck Synagogue
Shabbat Activities Program
 26 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023
 516-487-6100

- Dale Polakoff, Rabbi**
- Ian Lichter, Assistant Rabbi**
- Dr. Ephraim Wolf, z"l, Rabbi Emeritus**
- Zeev Kron, Cantor**
- Eleazer Schulman, z"l, Cantor Emeritus**
- Rabbi Sholom Jensen, Youth Director**
- Zehava & Dr. Michael Atlas, Youth Directors**
- Mark Twersky, Executive Director**
- James Frisch, Assistant Director**
- Rabbi Avraham Bronstein, Program Director**
- Ari Lipsky, Rabbinic Intern**
- Dr. Hal Chadow, President**
- Harold Domnitch, Chairman of the Board**
- Dena Block, Yoetzet Halacha 516-320-9818**

MEN'S CLUB
GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

Thursday,
 January 15th,
 7PM

Tickets available are first
 four rows
 in orchestra

Tickets are \$60
 \$35 for paid up Men's Club
 members

Call Steven Blumer
 516-679-8941
 Or Holly Milan
 516-448-4890
 For ticket information



MOVIE NIGHT

Great Neck Synagogue
presents on
Saturday night February 7th

**A Spy Shaped by Manipulation
and Shame**

**'The Green Prince,'
About a Hamas Son
Recruited by Israel**

7:30 pm

**MEN'S CLUB PRESENTS
LEARN TO SHOOT
LIKE WILLIAM TELL**

**Sunday Feb. 8th
4-6 pm**

C&R Archery
17 Commercial Street
Hicksville, NY 11801
516-933-2697

Ages 8 & up

PIZZA & SUSHI

Cost \$40 pp
Advance purchase only
(only 40 spots available)
Prize for high score!

Contact:

- Hilky Milum 504-0320
- Mark Friedman 384-5491
or mfriedman@aol.com
- GNS office



BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE!

Great Neck Synagogue
January Chesed Project

We are collecting only
NEW or GENTLY USED
sweaters for men, women and children.

Drop off will be at Hindi Lunzer's
91 Bayview Ave(side porch only)
516 829 4034

Or

Judy Lillien
35 Margaret Court
516 487 6845

You can drop off through January 26.
These sweaters will be going to Oneg Shabbos



FRIDAY EVENING, JANUARY 30

**GNS SHABBAT DINNER
& GUEST SPEAKERS SERIES**

*International Holocaust Remembrance Day
Commemorating the 70th Anniversary
of the liberation of Auschwitz*

Guest Speaker:
Dr. Bernd Wollschlaeger



*His Father Was A Nazi Tank Commander,
awarded the Iron Cross by Hitler himself*

*He emigrated to Israel, converted to Judaism,
and served in the IDF as a medical officer.*

Don't miss his remarkable story.

Copies of Dr. Wollschlaeger's "A German Life:
Against All Odds Change is Possible" are available
for pre-order from the synagogue office and will be
signed following Shabbat.

**RESERVATIONS
REQUIRED BY:
Tuesday,
January 27**

**\$30/PERSON
\$25/TEEN
\$15/CHILD
\$125 FAMILY MAX**

**SPONSORSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE
Contact the
Synagogue Office**

**RSVP: 516.487.6100
mhworsky@gns.org
www.gns.org**



26 Old Mill Road
Great Neck, NY 11023

**Friday Night Dinner
Reservations**

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Adults _____ at \$36

Teens _____ at \$25

Children under 12 _____ at \$15
\$125 FAMILY MAX

Amount enclosed _____

Credit card # _____

exp date _____

You can reserve online at gns.org

Or call the shul office 487-6100

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RABBI POLAKOFF'S SHABBOS DRASHA THROUGH 5775, IS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF PINCHAS BEN YOSEPH FOR OTHER SUCH OPPORTUNITIES PLEASE CONTACT HOWARD WOLF [212-686-9800](tel:212-686-9800) EXT 220

HASHKAMA KIDDUSH

Kiddush is sponsored by **Amy & Martin Griffel** in memory of their mothers, **Marion Griffel** and **Sally Fox, z"l**

RABBI POLAKOFF-OPEN OFFICE HOURS

Rabbi Polakoff will have open office hours each week on Tuesday from 10am - noon and on Thursday from 1:00pm - 3:30 pm. Barring any emergencies, he will be in his office during these times so please feel free drop by to shmooze, discuss issues about GNS, share personal concerns or learn some Torah. He can be reached at other times through the synagogue office ([516-487-6100](tel:516-487-6100)), through his cell phone [516-637-3674](tel:516-637-3674) (call or text) or through email at rabbi@gns.org.

MEN'S CLUB

Thur. Jan 15, 7:00pm: The Men's Club invites you to join us to see "**SOUL DOCTOR**", the Broadway musical on the life of **Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach**. Discounted tickets are \$60 each (\$55 for paid-up Men's Club members) for front orchestra seats. Car-pool can be arranged, if required. To reserve seats please contact Steven Blumner 639-8941, Hilly Milun 504-0320 or the Shul office.

SUN. FEB. 8th

ARCHERY: See page three for details

Sat Feb 21, 8:00 – 11:30 PM

Announcing The Men's Club First **Tennis Extravaganza**. Tennis, Food and Good Friends, Singles, Men's Doubles, Women's Doubles, Mixed Doubles. Please let us know if you are a Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced. \$50 per Couple for Food, \$75 per Couple for Food & Tennis Come to Play, Socialize and Eat or Just Socialize & Eat. For info: Jack Lipsky (516) 384-1482, jlipsky.lipsk01@insuremail.net.

THE JANUARY CHESED COLLECTION

January will be a collection of sweaters for men ,women and children. The sweaters will be given to Oneg Shabbos. Please make sure that the sweaters are either new or in good condition. Please drop off donations at the home of **Hindi Lunzer, 91 Bayview Ave.** (side porch only) or at home of **Judy Lillien, 35 Margaret Court, until Jan. 26th.**

PESACH SCOPE DEADLINE

Please submit all articles, advertisements, photos, recipes, sponsorships and any other matters of interest for our membership for the upcoming Pesach issue of SCOPE magazine to **Diane Rein** at drein@verizon.net. The deadline for all submissions is **Monday, January 26th** – thank you so much!

WITHIN OUR FAMILY

Mazal Tov to Israel & Zehavit Rosenzweig on the birth of a grandson born to their children **Steven & Michal Rosenzweig**.

COMMUNITY NEWS

SOLICITING NOMINEES

We are currently soliciting nominees to be considered for the **David and Ellie Werber Chesed Award**. This is an award presented to a child/teenager from our community who performs chesed in a notable way. Please email Mark Twersky (mtwersky@gns.org) with the name of your nominee and a brief description of why you think he or she is deserving of this award. All nominees will be considered by the committee, and are confidential.

E-MAIL INFORMATION

To be put on the shul's e-mail list please send your e-mail address to mtwersky@gns.org. There are many important notices and reminders that are sent only this way.

Judy Soleimani and family would like to thank Rabbis Polakoff and Lichter, Cantor Kron, Brenda Parver, Sharon Goldwyn, Magda Yehaskel and the entire GNS community for their outpouring support and sympathy following the loss of her mother Lilly Hajdu z"l.

Y A H R Z E I T

Saturday, 10 Tevet

Harvey Ishofsky for Morris Ishofsky
Gladys Moslin for Solomon Moslin

Sunday, 11 Tevet

Vivian Kron for Salim Mahlab
Al Leiderman for Ralph Leiderman
Grace Oster for Freda Horowitz
Fred Pomerantz for Mina Pomerantz
Ephraim Slonim for Sara Slonim

Monday, 12 Tevet

Lev Dynkin for Rashe Dynkin
Semyon Dynkin for Reshe Dynkin
Sarita Greszes for Rifca Rosenberg Keltai
Helaine Helmreich for Dorothy Gewirtz
Peter Shrock for Millie Shrock
Arnold Swartz for Irma Swartz

Tuesday, 13 Tevet

Anita Beretz for Seigfried Reischenberg
Arnie Flatow for Miriam Flatow

Wednesday, 14 Tevet

Klara Brand for David Sabov
Linda Bunim for Isadore Shapiro
Mansour Farhadian for Yedegar Yedegar

Mel Fox for Leah Solomon

Susan Mayer for Hans Abramson
Judith Weinstein for Ruth Kloogman

Thursday, 15 Tevet

Albert Benak for Esther Benak
Laura Danoff for Sonia Herman
Jerrald Weinstein for Sara Weinstein

Friday, 16 Tevet

Robin Bours for Theresa Lynn Siegel
Pauline Levy for Leon Joseph
Susan Mindick for Phyllis Cohen
Fay Smith for Abraham Brafman