



Shabbat Announcements

Parshat Va'etchanan

August 1, 2015 16 Av, 5775

TORAH
ARTSCROLL 958
HERTZ 755

HAFTORAH
ARTSCROLL 1196
HERTZ 776

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks on Parshat Va'etchanan

Buried among the epic passages in Va'etchanan – among them the Shema and the Ten Commandments – is a brief passage with large implications for the moral life in Judaism. Here it is together with the preceding verse: You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and His testimonies and His statutes, which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may go well with you, and that you may go in and take possession of the good land that the Lord swore to give to your fathers. (Deut. 6: 17-18)

The difficulty is obvious. The preceding verse makes reference to commandments, testimonies and statutes. This, on the face of it, is the whole of Judaism as far as conduct is concerned. What then is meant by the phrase "the right and the good" that is not already included within the previous verse? Rashi says it refers to "compromise (that is, not strictly insisting on your rights)

and action within or beyond the letter of the law (lifnim mi-shurat ha-din)." The law, as it were, lays down a minimum threshold: this we must do. But the moral life aspires to more than simply doing what we must. The people who most impress us with their goodness and rightness are not merely people who keep the law. The saints and heroes of the moral life go beyond. They do more than they are commanded. They go the extra mile. That according to Rashi is what the Torah means by "the right and the good."

Ramban, while citing Rashi and agreeing with him, goes on to say something slightly different: At first Moses said that you are to keep His statutes and his testimonies which He commanded you, and now he is stating that even where He has not commanded you, give thought as well to do what is good and right in his eyes, for He loves the good and the right. Now this is a great principle, for it is impossible to mention in the Torah all aspects of man's conduct with his neighbors and friends, all his various transactions and the ordinances of all societies and countries. But since He mentioned many of them, such as, "You shall not go around as a talebearer," "You shall not take vengeance nor bear a

grudge," "You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor," "You shall not curse the deaf," "You shall rise before the hoary head," and the like, He went on to state in a general way that in all matters one should do what is good and right, including even compromise and going beyond the strict requirement of the law ... Thus one should behave in every sphere of activity, until he is worthy of being called "good and upright."

Ramban is going beyond Rashi's point, that the right and the good refer to a higher standard than the law strictly requires. It seems as if Ramban is telling us that there are aspects of the moral life that are not caught by the concept of law at all. That is what he means by saying "It is impossible to mention in the Torah all aspects of man's conduct with his neighbors and friends." Law is about universals, principles that apply in all places and times. Don't murder. Don't rob. Don't steal. Don't lie. Yet there are important features of the moral life that are not universal at all. They have to do with specific circumstances and the way we respond to them. What is it to be a good husband or

Times

Candle Lighting	7:53 pm
Friday Mincha	7:00 pm
Hashkama	8:00 am
Parsha Shiur	8:30 am
Youth Minyan	8:30 am
Main	9:00 am
Beit Medrash	9:15 am
Gemara Shiur	6:50 pm
Mincha	7:50 pm
Shabbat ends	9:00 pm
Sunday, Aug 2	7:30/8:30 am
Mon., Thur.	6:35/7:45 am
Tues., Wed., Fri.	6:45/7:45 am
Mincha	7:50 pm
Latest Times for Shema/Shemoneh Esrei	
August 1	9:27/10:38 am
August 8	9:30/10:40 am
Next Shabbat Ekev	
Candle Lighting	7:45 pm
Mincha	7:00 pm

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wife, a good parent, a good teacher, a good friend? What is it to be a great leader, or follower, or member of a team? When is it right to praise, and when is it appropriate to say, "You could have done better"? There are aspects of the moral life that cannot be reduced to rules of conduct, because what matters is not only what we do, but the way in which we do it: with humility or gentleness or sensitivity or tact.

Morality is about persons, and no two persons are alike. When Moses asked God to appoint a successor, he began his request with the words, "Lord, God of the spirits of all flesh." On this the rabbis commented: what Moses was saying was that because each person is different, he asked God to appoint a leader who would relate to each individual as an individual, knowing that what is helpful to one person may be harmful to another. This ability to judge the right response to the right person at the right time is a feature not only of leadership, but of human goodness in general.

Rashi begins his commentary to Bereishit with the question: If the Torah is a book of law, why does it not start with the first law given to the people of Israel as a whole, which does not appear until Exodus 12? Why does it include the narratives about Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, the patriarchs and matriarchs and their children? Rashi gives an answer that has nothing to do with morality – he says it has to do with the Jewish people's right to their land. But the Netziv (R. Naftali Zvi Yehudah Berlin) writes that the stories of Genesis are there to teach us how the patriarchs were upright in their dealings, even with people who were strangers and idolaters. That, he says, is why Genesis is called by the sages "the book of the upright."

Morality is not just a set of rules, even a code as elaborate as the 613 commands and their rabbinic extensions. It is also about the way we respond to people as individuals.

The story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is at least in part about what went wrong in their relationship when the man referred to his wife as Ishah, 'woman,' a generic description, a type. Only when he gave her a proper name, Chavah, Eve, did he relate to her as an individual in her individuality, and only then did God "make them garments of skin and clothed them." This too is the difference between the God of Aristotle and the God of Abraham. Aristotle thought that God knew only universals not particulars. This is the God of science, of the Enlightenment, of Spinoza. The God of Abraham is the God who relates to us in our singularity, in what makes us different from others as well as what makes us the same.

This ultimately is the difference between the two great principles of Judaic ethics: justice and love. Justice is universal. It treats all people alike, rich and poor, powerful and powerless, making no distinctions on the basis of color or class. But love is particular. A parent loves his or her children for what makes them each unique. The moral life is a combination of both. That is why it cannot be reduced solely to universal laws. That is what the Torah means when it speaks of "the right and the good" over and above the commandments, statutes and testimonies.

A good teacher knows what to say to a weak student who, through great effort, has done better than expected, and to a gifted student who has come top of the class but is still performing below his or her potential. A good employer knows when to praise and when to challenge. We all need to know when to insist on justice and when to exercise forgiveness. The people who have had a decisive influence on our lives are almost always those we feel understood us in our singularity. We were not, for them, a mere face in the crowd. That is why, though morality involves universal rules and cannot exist without them, it also involves interactions that cannot be reduced to rules.

Rabbi Israel of Rizhin once asked a student how many sections there were in the Shulchan Arukh. The student replied, "Four." "What," asked the Rizhiner, "do you know about the fifth section?" "But there is no fifth section," said the student. "There is," said the Rizhiner. "It says: always treat a person like a mensch." The fifth section of the code of law is the conduct that cannot be reduced to law. That is what it takes to do the right and the good.



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
 26 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023
 516-487-6100

Rabbi Dale Polakoff, Rabbi
Rabbi Ian Lichter, Assistant Rabbi
Dr. Ephraim Wolf, z"l, Rabbi Emeritus
Zeev Kron, Cantor
Eleazer Schulman, z"l, Cantor Emeritus
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Dena Block, Yoetzet Halacha 516-320-9818

GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

JULY CHESED COLLECTION



Who among us does not have old and unwanted shoes, eyeglasses or cell phones sitting in a closet or a drawer at home? Although enjoyed and treasured in their day, now these items sit awaiting their seemingly inevitable final resting with the Great Neck sanitation department. It doesn't have to be that way. You can give these items a new lease on life, more importantly, help those in need when doing so.

All you need to do is drop off these items this week at one of the two convenient drop-off locations listed below. Here's how your items will help:

Shoes Your gently used shoes will go to Soulmates, a terrific charity dedicated to fighting poverty in the U.S. and around the world. First, the shoes are sorted by condition, including by a facility dedicated to employing women with disabilities. Shoes in new or nearly-new condition are distributed to those in need, sometimes in response to natural disasters, or sometimes to those suffering chronic poverty, such as to orphanages in Third World countries. Shoes that grade are provided to micro-entrepreneurs in Third World countries, thereby helping some of the world's most poor people to start and sustain businesses to bring their families out of poverty. Read more about it at <http://www.soulmates.org/>

Eyeglasses and Sunglasses Your glasses or sunglasses will go to New Eyes, an outstanding charity based in New Jersey dedicated to providing free prescription glasses for those in need. Your donations will be sorted by volunteers, who will measure the prescription strength of the lenses, and who will also remove any small amounts of precious metals that can be recycled and sold to pay for glasses for the needs here in the U.S. After sorting, the glasses will then be shipped to medical missions and other distribution networks across the Third World. The newly recipients will sometimes travel and walk in line for hours for what can be a life-changing restoration of vision. Read more at <http://www.neweyes.org>

Cell phones Your used cell phone can help provide cost-free communications to the brave members of our military. Cell phones for Soldiers was founded in 2004 by a 12 and 11-year old brother and sister from Massachusetts and has since provided almost 200 million minutes of talk time allowing troops to have precious conversations with their loved ones back home. Your old cell phone will be sold to a recycling company and the monies raised is then used to pay for calling cards or other devices for members of the military. You can donate your old cell phones even if you don't have the charger, battery or other accessories. You can read more about the program at <http://www.cfpforheroes.com/>

We hope that you will take a few moments in your day to go through your closets and drawers to find and donate these items. This is also a wonderful opportunity to teach your children the life-changing value of small acts of kindness. **Please drop your items off any time Sunday through Friday.**

1. **18th St. Post Box** (Please leave by the garage) Contact, if needed: **Dee Blumberg - (201) 520-6918**

2. **11 William Ferry** (Please leave by the garage) Contact, if needed: **Jenny Ainkels - (516) 771-8178**



WORDS TO ACTION:

EMPOWERING JEWISH STUDENTS TO ADDRESS BIAS ON CAMPUS

An interactive workshop for recent high school graduates and college students to empower and equip them with effective responses to anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias on campus.

Wednesday, July 29, 2015
6:00 – 8:00 PM
Hofstra University
Hempstead, NY 11549
Axinn Library, Room 246
*kosher dinner provided



Gain the knowledge, skills and resources to respond and let your voice be heard.

Register online at: <http://hofstrawordstoaction.eventbrite.com>

For more information, contact Stephanie Merkle, at 212-845-7736 or email smerkle@hofstra.edu

For directions, please call Hillel at 516-463-6922 or email hillel@hofstra.edu



NEW YORK REGION
IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT HATE



Words to Action is part of the Anti-Defamation League's Continuing Anti-Semitism Program. Founded in 1953, the Anti-Defamation League is one of the nation's premier human relations and civil rights agencies. ADL is dedicated to fighting anti-Semitism and all forms of bigotry, defending democratic ideals and protecting civil rights for all.

Special thanks to the Anne and David Fisher Foundation for their generous support of ADL New York Region's Words to Action program.

Dear Friends,

On Tisha B'Av as we contemplate the destructions and tragedies that have befallen us as a people, we join together with so many others of our brothers and sisters, as well as with freedom loving people throughout our country, in the realization that we find ourselves on the verge of another tragedy and of another potential destruction – the IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT.

We have all heard and read about the agreement and the grave dangers it poses to Israel, America and the Free World. The difference is that we are here today, and it is our responsibility to stand up and make a difference. When we look back 70 years or so at the response of American Jewry to the unfolding destruction of the Holocaust, we wonder if more could have been done. Perhaps then we weren't as politically capable, or as able to spread the message of impending destruction as we are today. Perhaps then, we had an excuse. Today, and for the generations that will look back at these unfolding events and at us, we have no excuse.

We are fortunate to live in a democracy, and our views must be represented by those elected to serve as our voice. But they must hear our voices, they must know what we are thinking. Not at election time – now! This is not the time to be silent, for if our voices are not heard, if this bad deal gets congressional approval, if there are not enough supporters to override a potential presidential veto, we will have no one to blame but ourselves.

We know what we must do. This is not about politics – it is about survival, the survival of our brothers and sisters in Israel and the survival of our children and grandchildren in a world with a nuclear Iran.

Use the links at the bottom of this letter to find out more about the Agreement. Use the AIPAC link to send a message to Senators Schumer and Gillibrand as well as Congressman Israel. Ask them to vote AGAINST the Agreement, and ask them to convince their colleagues as well. Better yet, call their offices and leave a strong message or write them a letter of your own. 10,000 phone calls or letters or emails will make a difference.

There's nothing more important for us to do. Tisha B'Av is a day of crying, but we can also turn it into a day of doing, and I can't think of anything more appropriate to do on Tisha B'Av than this.. **MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD – NOW!**
Very cordially yours,

Rabbi Dale Polakoff
Great Neck Synagogue

[AIPAC INFORMATION ON THE AGREEMENT](#)

[POSITION STATEMENT OF THE OU AND RCA ON THE AGREEMENT](#)

[AIPAC LINK TO SEND MESSAGES TO SCHUMER, GILLIBRAND AND ISRAEL](#)

[EMAIL INFORMATION FOR SCHUMER, GILLIBRAND AND ISRAEL](#)

[PHONE NUMBER FOR SCHUMER \(202\) 224-6542, GILLIBRAND \(202\) 224-4451 AND ISRAEL \(202\) 225-3335](#)

SALLY & SEYMOUR OLSHIN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM GNS SUMMER 2015 LEARNING PROGRAM

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Elana Hain Stein

Halakhic (Legal) Loopholes:
Cynicism, Realism or Something
Else?



With an eye towards gaining perspective on current debates about kosher switches and Shabbat-riding apps, we will try to understand why the legal loopholes became such a significant feature of early Jewish law.

Dr. Elana Hain Stein is the Director of Leadership Education for the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America, where she serves as a lead faculty member and oversees the content of lay and professional leadership programs. A widely well-regarded teacher and scholar, Dr. Stein Hain earned her doctorate in Religion from Columbia University. She served for eight years as a clergy member at Lincoln Square Synagogue and The Jewish Center, both in New York, as well as adjunct faculty at NYU. She lives with her husband Yonah and her sons, Azriel and Naor, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

Tuesday, August 11
following 7:40pm
Mincha

Series
Sponsorships - \$180

To dedicate a
lecture, contact the
synagogue office

516.487.6100
mtworsky@gns.org



26 Old Mill Road
Great Neck, NY 11023

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

IF YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS MOVING INTO THE GREAT NECK AREA PLEASE LET THE OFFICE KNOW.

GNS JULY CHESED COLLECTION

Please donate shoes, eyeglasses, sunglasses and cell phones to the Blumner home, 88 Old Pond Rd, or the Ambalo home, 11 William Penn, now through Aug. 2nd.

GNS PASS IT FORWARD

Looking for something meaningful? Join the Steering Committee of GNS PASS IT FORWARD. We deliver over 1000 Yom Tov meals, bringing food and joy to those in need on Long Island. Contact **Michelle Berman**, michberman@gmail.com or **Cindy Hodkin**, koshercookinggn@gmail.com.

ROSH HASHANA CARDS

Sisterhood is selling beautiful Rosh Hashana cards. Early bird special rates will be 10 cards for 18 dollars until Aug 31. After that date they will be 2.50 each. Please call Judy at [516 487 6845](tel:516-487-6845) to pick up your cards. Cards can also be picked up in shul office.

CHAVEIRIM CENTER

Many individuals and families in our Shul Community would like to host Shul members for meals during the Chaggim. Other individuals and families would like to attend Yom Tov meals. Our Chaveirim Committee would like to facilitate the hosting and gisting process. Please email or call Ellen Polakoff, Katie Lichter or Cindy Hodkin if you would like to guest or host.

WOMEN'S TEFILA

This coming Friday, July 31st is TU B'AV, a joyous day in ancient times of the Temple in Jerusalem, when wedding matches were made between unmarried women and men. In today's world, supporting pre-nuptial and post-nuptial agreements are one way to mark this celebration. Women's Tefila suggests these links to get more info:

<http://www.thejewishweek.com/features/jew-voice/what-wear-post-nup>

<http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/189149/sign-on-the-dotted-line>

<https://www.iofa.org/library-item-subject/prenuptial-agreements>

UPCOMING EVENTS AT GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

August 11: Summer Series: Dr. Elana Stein Hain
 August 18: Summer Series: Lisa Septimus
 September 8: Teshuva Lecture: Rabbi Baruch Simon
 September 20: Men's Club: Yankees vs Mets

WITHIN OUR FAMILY

Mazal Tov to Dina Hamerman on being appointed as chairperson to the Architectural Review Board of the Village of Great Neck.

Mazal Tov to Phyllis & Albert Safdieh on the birth of a granddaughter, **Bella**, born to their children **Gabrielle and Saul Safdieh**.

Mazel Tov to Janet & Mitchell Feldman on the birth of their new grandson, **Asher Brett**, born to their children **Josh and Rachael Feldman**.

WORDS TO ACTION: EMPOWERING JEWISH STUDENTS TO ADDRESS BIAS ON CAMPUS

sponsored by Anti-Defamation League and Hofstra Hillel

An interactive workshop for recent high school graduates and college students to empower and equip them with effective responses to anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias on campus.

Wednesday, July 29, 2015, 6:00-8:00 PM, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549. Axinn Library, Room 246.

kosher dinner provided

Register online at: hofstrawordstoaction.eventbrite.com.

For more information, contact Stephanie Merkrebs, at 212-885-7736 or email smerkrebs@adl.org.

For directions, please call Hofstra Hillel at 516-463-6922 or email hillel@hofstra.edu.

Y A H R Z E I T

Saturday, 16 Av

Bonnie Diamond for Beatrice Brandeis
 Scott Danoff for Zita Danoff
 Morris Hodkin for Elizabeth Hodkin
 Leo Mindick for Fannie Rubinstein
 Henry Katz for Sonia Suskin
 Belkis Nasser for Selma Suveke

Sunday, 17 Av

Moshe Apelbaum for Yosef Apelbaum
 Janet Kashani for Sarah bat Yacob
 Ori Pagovich for Benjamin Pagovich

Monday, 18 Av

Murray Honig for Joseph Honig
 Ephraim Slonim for Mordechai Slonim

Tuesday, 19 Av

Murray Frank for Dorothy Efron
 Judith Traub for Rebecca Hechtkopf
 Susan Mindick for Rose Schwartz

Wednesday, 20 Av

Paul Weinberg for Ise Klein
 Harriet Frederick for Ida Sillen

Thursday, 21 Av

Jeffrey Bilfeld for Florence Bilfeld
 Esther Verbit for Gila Shpall Lantz

Friday, 22 Av

Ebrahim Gabbazadeh for Shoshana bat Shlomo Gabbay
 Ebrahim Gabbazadeh for Dovid ben Meir
 Carl Rosenberg for Bluma Muller