



Shabbat Announcements

Parshat Noach

October 17, 2015 4 Cheshvan, 5776

TORAH
ARTSCROLL 20
HERTZ 26

HAFTORAH
ARTSCROLL 1131
HERTZ 41

BAR MITZVAH
NOAH & JOSHUA
HUTT

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks on Parshat Noach

Are we naturally good or naturally bad? On this great minds have argued for centuries. Hobbes believed that we have naturally "a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death." We are bad, but governments and police can help limit the harm we do. Rousseau to the contrary believed that naturally we are good. It is society and its institutions that make us bad. The argument continues today among the neo-Darwinians. Some believe that natural selection and the struggle for survival make us, genetically, hawks not doves. As M. T. Ghiselin puts it, "Scratch an 'altruist' and watch a 'hypocrite' bleed." By contrast, naturalist Frans de Waal in a series of delightful books about primates, including his favorite, the bonobos, shows that they can be empathic, caring, even altruistic. So by nature are we. T. E. Hulme called this the fundamental divide between Romantics and Classicists throughout history. Romantics believed that "man was by nature good, that it was only bad laws and customs that had suppressed him. Remove all these and the infinite possibilities of man would have a chance." Classicists believed the opposite, that "Man is an extraordinarily fixed and limited animal whose nature is absolutely constant. It is only by

tradition and organization that anything decent can be got out of him."

In Judaism, according to the sages, this was the argument between the angels when God consulted them as to whether or not He should create humans. The angels were the "us" in "Let us make man ..." The angels of chessed and tzedek said "Let him be created because humans do acts of kindness and righteousness." The angels of shalom and emet said, "Let him not be created because he tells lies and fights wars." What did God do? He created humans anyway and had faith that we would gradually become better and less destructive. That in secular terms is what Harvard neuroscientist Steven Pinker argues in *The Better Angels of our Nature*. Taken as a whole and with obvious exceptions we have become less violent over time. The Torah suggests we are both good and bad, and evolutionary psychology tells us why. We are born to compete and co-operate. Life is a competitive struggle for scarce resources. So we fight and kill. But we survive only within groups. Without habits of co-operation and trust, we would have no groups and we would not survive. That is part of what the Torah means when it says, "It is not good for man to be alone." So we are both aggressive and altruistic: aggressive to strangers, altruistic toward members of our group. But the Torah is far too profound to leave it at the level of the old joke of the rabbi who, hearing both sides of a domestic argument, tells the husband, "You are right," and the wife "You are right," and when his disciple says, "They can't both be right," replies,

"You are also right." The Torah states the problem, but it also supplies a non-obvious answer. This is the clue that helps us decode a very subtle argument running through last week's parsha and this.

The basic structure of the story that begins with creation and ends with Noah is that in the beginning God created a universe of order. He then created human beings who created a universe of chaos: "the land was filled with violence." So God, as it were, deleted creation by bringing a flood, returning the earth to as it was at the very beginning when "the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the spirit of God hovered over the waters." He then began again with Noah and his family as the new Adam and Eve and their children. Genesis 8-9 is thus a kind of second version of Genesis 1-3, but with two differences. In both accounts a key word appears seven times, but it is a different word. In Genesis 1 the word is "good." In Genesis 9 it is "covenant." The second is that in both, reference is made to the fact that humans are in the image of God, but the two sentences have different implications. In Genesis 1 we are told that "God created humanity in His own image, in the image of God He created them, male and female He created them." In Genesis 9 we read, "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God has God made mankind" (Gen. 9: 6). The difference is striking.

Times

Candle Lighting	5:55 pm
Friday Mincha	5:55 pm
Hashkama	8:00 am
Youth Minyan	8:30 am
Parsha Shiur	8:30 am
Main	9:00 am
Beit Midrash	9:15 am
Gemara Shiur	4:45 pm
Mincha	5:45 pm
Shabbat ends	7:01 pm
Sunday, Oct. 18	7:30/8:30am
Mon., Thur.	6:35/7:45 am
Tues., Wed., Fri.	6:45/7:45 pm
Mincha	5:45 pm
Latest Times for Shema/Shemoneh Esrei	
October 17	9:51/10:48 am
October 24	9:58/10:52 am
Next Shabbat Parshat Lech-Lecha	
Candle Lighting	5:45 pm
Mincha	5:45 pm

KIDDUSH AND BIMA FLOWERS
IN THE BEIT MIDRASH
ARE SPONSORED BY
DIDI & ADAM HUTT
IN HONOR OF THE BAR MITZVAH
OF THEIR SONS NOAH AND JOSHUA

Genesis 1 tells me that "I" am in the image of God. Genesis 9 tells me that "You," my potential victim, are in the image of God. Genesis 1 tells us about human power. We are able, says the Torah, to "rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air." Genesis 9 tells us about the moral limits of power. We can kill but we may not. We have the power, but not the permission. Reading the story closely, it seems that God created humans in the faith that they would naturally choose the right and the good. They would not need to eat the fruit of "the tree of knowledge of good and evil," because instinct would lead them to behave as they should. Calculation, reflection, decision – all the things we associate with knowledge – would not be necessary. They would act as God wanted them to act, because they had been created in His image. It did not turn out that way. Adam and Eve sinned, Cain committed murder, and within a few generations the world was reduced to chaos. That is when we read that "The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him to His heart." Everything else in the universe was tov, "good." But humans are not naturally good. That is the problem. The answer, according to the Torah, is covenant. Covenant introduces the idea of a moral law. A moral law is not the same as a scientific law. Scientific laws are observed regularities in nature: drop an object and it will fall. A moral law is a rule of conduct: do not rob or steal or deceive. Scientific laws describe, whereas moral laws prescribe.

When a natural event does not accord with the current state of science, when it "breaks" the law, that is a sign that there is something wrong with the law. That is why Newton's laws were replaced by those of Einstein. But when a human being breaks the law, when people rob or steal or deceive, the fault is not in the law but in the deed. So we must keep the law and condemn, and sometimes punish, the deed. Scientific laws allow us to predict. Moral laws help us to decide. Scientific laws apply to entities without freewill. Moral laws presuppose freewill. That is what makes humans qualitatively different from other forms of life. So, according to the Torah, a new era began centered not on the idea of natural goodness but on the concept of covenant, that is, moral law. Civilization began in the move from what the Greeks called physis, nature, to nomos, law. That is what makes the concept of being "in the image of God" so different in Genesis 1 and Genesis 9. Genesis

1 is about nature and biology. We are in the image of God in the sense that we can think, speak, plan, choose and dominate. Genesis 9 is about law. Other people are also in God's image. Therefore we must respect them by banning murder and instituting justice. With this simple move, morality was born.

What is the Torah telling us about morality? First, that it is universal. The Torah places God's covenant with Noah and through him all humanity prior to his particular covenant with Abraham, then later with his descendants at Mount Sinai. Our universal humanity precedes our religious differences. This is a truth we deeply need in the twenty-first century when so much violence has been given religious justification. Genesis tells us that our enemies are human too. All societies have had some form of morality but usually they concern only relations within the group. Hostility to strangers is almost universal in both the animal and human kingdoms. Between strangers, power rules. As the Athenians said to the Melians, "The strong do what they want, while the weak do what they must." The idea that even the people not like us have rights, and that we should "love the stranger," would have been considered utterly strange by most people at most times. It took the recognition that there is one God sovereign over all humanity ("Do we not all have one father? Did not one God create us?" Malachi 2: 10) to create the momentous breakthrough to the idea that there are moral universals, among them the sanctity of life, the pursuit of justice and the rule of law. Second, God himself recognizes that we are not naturally good. After the Flood, He said: "I will never again curse the ground because of humankind, even though the inclination of their minds is evil from childhood on." The antidote to the yetzer (in rabbinic Hebrew, yetzer hara) the inclination to evil, is covenant. This has a neuroscientific basis. We have a prefrontal cortex, evolved to allow humans to think and act reflectively, considering the consequences of their deeds. But this is slower and weaker than the amygdala (what Jewish mystics called the nefesh habehamit, the animal soul) which, even before we have had time to think, produces the fight-or-flight reactions without which humans before civilization would not have survived. The problem is that these rapid reactions can be destructive. Often they lead to violence: not only the violence between species (predator and prey) that is part of nature, but also to the more gratuitous violence that is a feature of the life of most social animals. It is not that we only do evil. Empathy and compassion are as natural to us as are fear and aggression. The problem is that fear lies just beneath the surface of human interaction, and it can overwhelm all else.

Daniel Goleman calls this an amygdala hijack. "Emotions make us pay attention right now – this is urgent – and give us an immediate action plan without having to think twice. The emotional component evolved very early: Do I eat it, or does it eat me?" Impulsive action is often destructive because it is undertaken without thought of consequences. That is why Maimonides argued that many of the laws of the Torah constitute a training in virtue by making us think before we act. So the Torah tells us that naturally we are neither good nor bad but have the capacity for both. We have a natural inclination to empathy and sympathy, but we have an even stronger instinct for fear that leads to violence. That is why, in the move from Adam to Noah, the Torah shifts from nature to covenant, from tov to brit, from power to the moral limits of power. Genes are not enough. We also need the moral law.



GNS Yoetzet Halacha Lisa Septimus
 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: 516.415.1111
 Email: gnsyoetzet@gmail.com.
 All conversations and emails are kept confidential.



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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
Rabbi Sholom Jensen, Youth Director
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Cultivate your Mind **GNS Sunday Conversations**

AMBASSADOR IDO AHARONI
UPDATE ON THE STATE OF ISRAEL
AND THE BROADER REGION

SUNDAY EVENING
OCTOBER 25, 2015
7:00 PM MAIN SANCTUARY



Ambassador Ido Aharoni is Consul General of Israel in New York, representing the State of Israel to communities from throughout the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. He has been a member of Israel's Foreign Service since the summer of 1991. Ido held two overseas positions, in Los Angeles and New York, during his tenure in Israel's diplomatic corps.

While serving as Consul for Media and Public Affairs in New York, he became familiar with nation branding methods which he later introduced to his superiors in Jerusalem. His efforts in this area, which continue until today, have brought about a paradigm shift in Israel's public image by Israeli officials in Israel and the United States.

ALLEN WEST
at GNS
Saturday, October 31



The National Center for Policy Analysis welcomed Allen West as its new President and CEO effective January 2, 2015. West took the post because he believes it will be policy, not politics that secures a sound economic future for Americans – with growth, opportunity and returning the promise of the American dream for this generation and those to come.

He is the third of four generations of military servicemen in his family. During his 22 year career in the United States Army, Lieutenant Colonel West served in several combat zones and received many honors including a Bronze Star, three Meritorious Service Medals, three Army Commendation Medals and a Valorous Unit Award. In 1993 he was named the US Army ROTC Instructor of the Year.

In November of 2010, Allen was elected to the United States Congress, representing Florida's 22nd District. As a member of the 112th Congress, he sat on the Small Business and Armed Services Committees and was instrumental in passage of the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act.

He is a Senior Fellow at the London Center for Policy Research, a Fox News Contributor, author of *Guardian of the Republic: An American Boss's Journey to Family, Faith and Freedom*.

West is an avid distance runner, a Master SCUBA diver, and a motorcyclist, and in his spare time he enjoys cheering his beloved Tennessee Volunteers.

Lt. Col. West is a legacy life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, life member of the Association of the United States Army, life member of the National Rifle Association. He is married to Dr. Angela Graham-West and they have two daughters, Aubrey, a graduate student pursuing her master's degree and Austen, a college freshman.

Great Neck Synagogue does not endorse any political party or candidate. Any views expressed by speakers at Great Neck Synagogue are not intended to represent the views of Great Neck Synagogue. We encourage our members to learn about issues of importance to our community from our speakers as well as from all other available sources.

Grow at
GNS

OPEN TO THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY

DEBERT RECEPTION IN
 MAIN LOBBY
 OF
 GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

29 OLD HILLS RD. GREAT NECK, NY

The
 Shabbat
 Project

Coming it together

Join Great Neck's

GREAT BIG
Challah Bake

Loaves
of Love

#TogetherAgain

In the merit of all the singles in search of their soulmate

Join us on

Thursday, October 22nd 2015

at

Temple Israel of Great Neck
 108 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY

Doors open at 7:00 pm

Speakers: Rob. Abbey Larner
 Mrs. Amit Yaghoobi

Braiding Workshop: Neena Shiffon

Lali Zimfeld

Online Registration ONLY!

Fee: \$25 per woman

Mother and daughter packages available.

Payment by cc ONLY!

Reservations start at 12:00!

Check! (For Speakers ONLY) should be made out to "Great Neck Shabbat Project"

And mailed to: Great Neck Synagogue

GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE
MEN'S CLUB & SISTERHOOD
DINNER & LIVE CONCERT

BILLY COOL, ELTON JOHN AND
 SIMON & GARFUNKEL

...ALMOST

HURRY LIMITED SEATING

FREE LD FOR EARLY ATTENDING COUPLE

7:00 PM SATURDAY NOVEMBER 14th 7PM

\$250 MEMBER COUPLES, \$65 MEMBER SINGLES

\$190 NON MEMBER COUPLES, \$65 NON MEMBER SINGLES

RSVP HILLY MILLIN 504 0920 MARK FRIEDMAN 381 5491

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RABBI POLAKOFF'S SHABBOS DRASHA THROUGH 5776, IS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF PINCHAS BEN YOSEPH FOR OTHER SUCH OPPORTUNITIES PLEASE CONTACT HOWARD WOLF [212-686-9800](tel:212-686-9800)

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

RABBI POLAKOFF-OPEN OFFICE HOURS

Rabbi Polakoff's open office hours are resuming each week on Tuesday 10:00am-noon and on Thursday 1:00pm-3:30 pm. Barring any emergencies, he will be in his office during this time so please feel free to 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 EVENT

Book Club Discussion: Sunday, Oct. 25th: 10:00 am
Come and hear our gabbai and author **Tommy Furst** discuss his recently published acclaimed new book, "*Torah Mysteries Illuminated*". All welcome, breakfast available.

MITZVAH OPPORTUNITY

If you like to bake, please VOLUNTEER to bake pies for Thanksgiving for us to sell to raise money for sharsheret, an organization to help young Jewish women facing ovarian and breast cancer. Contact Marla Lemonik at marla.lemonik@gmail.com
It's a new year.....do a mitzvah....

CHANUKAH SCOPE MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Please submit all SCOPE magazine articles, recipes, photos, ads, sponsorships and any other material by October 19th to Diane Rein at drein@verizon.net.

ONGOING TORAH STUDY

Rabbi Polakoff's and Rabbi Lichter's weekday adult classes will begin this week (10/12). Please find the list of classes offered this year featured in the **Grow at GNS brochure**.

STUDENT CLASSES

Parsha 'n Pizza for grades 1-5 with Rabbi Lichter will begin Wednesday night, **Oct. 28th** from 7:00-7:45 pm.
Jr. High Class & Dinner with Rabbi Lichter will begin Tuesday night, **Oct. 20th** from 7:00-7:45 pm.
High School Class & Dinner with Rabbi Lichter will begin Thursday night, **Oct. 15th** from 7:00-7:45 pm.

OHEL SHABBATON

The OHEL Shabbaton will be **Shabbat Oct. 30-31**. There will be Friday night dinner at GNS and Shabbat lunch at hosts homes. If you are interested in sponsoring the Shabbaton (\$36) or hosting OHEL clients for the Shabbaton, please call the synagogue office or email ilichter@gns.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

October 24: Shabbat Scholar: Rabbanit Henkin
October 25: Tom Furst: Men's Club (Book)
October 25: Sunday Conversations: Ido Aharoni
October 31: Allen West
November 1: Men's Club Blood Drive
November 7: Men's Club & Sisterhood Dinner and Live Concert
November 14: U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham

MAZAL TOVS & COMMUNITY NEWS

Mazal Tov to Didi & Adam Hutt on the Bar Mitzvah of their sons **Noah & Joshua**.

Mazal Tov to Roz & Dave Wagner on the birth of a great grandson born to **Rabbi Eli & Devorah Levinson**.

Mazal Tov to Beth & Gary Orbach on the Bar Mitzvah of their son **Benji**.

DINNER HONOR

Mazal Tov to **Dr. Paul and Dora Brody** who will receive The Rachel Imeinu Bonei Yisrael Award at the 21st Annual Gala Journal Dinner of the Rachel's Children Reclamation Foundation on Sunday, October 25, 2015, the 11th of MarCheshvan, the Yahrzeit of Rachel Imeinu, at the Manhattan Beach Jewish Center. For info, contact Evelyn Haies at [718-648-2610](tel:718-648-2610) or [212-470-0967](tel:212-470-0967).

NSHA OPEN HOUSE

Please join us at the North Shore Hebrew Academy Open House on Wednesday, November 4th at 7:00pm at the Cherry Lane Campus. Learn more about what makes NSHA the warm and wonderful educational experience for so many of our children. Meet with parents, teachers and administrators at a fun and informative event.

LOST AND FOUND

A dark green London Fog or Clothier size 44-46 men's raincoat has been lost. It was left on the table next to the lockers where the tallit bags are laid out. Whoever took it by mistake, please return it to the synagogue office.

Susan Frisch and family would like to thank Rabbis Polakoff, Lichter, Cantor Kron, The Shiva Chesed Committee and the entire GNS community for their outpouring support and sympathy following the loss of her mother Katalin Samelson z'l.

**Y
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Saturday, 4 Cheshvan

Marc Epstein for Toby Epstein
Phyllis Weinberg for Ida Tubachnick

Sunday, 5 Cheshvan

Stuart Braunstein for Stanley Braunstein
Leon Miller for Ira Miller
Albert Safdieh for Julia Safdieh
Pari Schwartz for Kahtoun Torkan

Monday, 6 Cheshvan

Paul Brody for Joseph Brody

Tuesday, 7 Cheshvan

Elly Engelstein for Abraham Engelstein
Jill Swartz for Harvey Kronish

Wednesday, 8 Cheshvan

Leo Mindick for Hyman Rubinstein
Harold Domnitch for Alice Smoklow

Thursday, 9 Cheshvan

Felix Glaubach for Cyrilie Glaubach
Sarita Greszes for Hersh Rosenberg

Friday, 10 Cheshvan

Albert Miller for Israel Miller
Milton Rabinowitz for Avraham Rabinowitz