



Shabbat Announcements

Parshat Bereishit

October 10, 2015 27 Tishrei, 5776

TORAH
ARTSCROLL 2
HERTZ 1

HAFTORAH
ARTSCROLL 1130
HERTZ 21

ROSH CHODESH
MARCHESHVAN:
TUE & WED 10/12-10/13
MOLAD: TUE. OCT. 13
5:51:10 AM

BAR MITZVAH
JONATHAN KATZ

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks on Parshat Bereishit

What exactly was the first sin? What was the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil? Is this kind of knowledge a bad thing such that it had to be forbidden, and was only acquired through sin? Isn't knowing the difference between good and evil essential to being human? Isn't it one of the highest forms of knowledge? Surely God would want humans to have it? Why then did He forbid the fruit that produced it? In any case, did not Adam and Eve already have this knowledge before eating the fruit, precisely in virtue of being "in the image and likeness of God? Surely this was implied in the very fact that they were commanded by God: Be fruitful and multiply. Have dominion over nature. Do not eat from the tree. For someone to understand a command, they must know it is good to obey and bad to disobey. So they already had, at least potentially, the knowledge of good and evil. What then changed when they ate the fruit? These questions go so deep that they threaten to make the entire narrative incomprehensible. Maimonides understood this. That is why he turned to this episode at

almost the very beginning of The Guide for the Perplexed (Book 1, Chapter 2). His answer though, is perplexing. Before eating the fruit, he says, the first humans knew the difference between truth and falsehood. What they acquired by eating the fruit was knowledge of "things generally accepted." But what does Maimonides mean by "things generally accepted? It is generally accepted that murder is evil, and honesty good. Does Maimonides mean that morality is mere convention? Surely not. What he means is that after eating the fruit, the man and woman were embarrassed that they were naked, and that is a mere matter of social convention because not everyone is embarrassed by nudity. But how can we equate being embarrassed that you are naked with "knowledge of good and evil"? It does not seem to be that sort of thing at all. Conventions of dress have more to do with aesthetics than ethics.

It is all very unclear, or at least it was to me until I came across one of the more fascinating moments in the history of the Second World War. After the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Americans knew they were about to enter a war against a nation, Japan, whose culture they did not understand. So they commissioned one of the great anthropologists of the twentieth century, Ruth Benedict, to explain the Japanese to them, which she did. After the war, she published her ideas in a book,

The Chrysanthemum and the Sword. One of her central insights was the difference between shame cultures and guilt cultures. In shame cultures the highest value is honor. In guilt cultures it is righteousness. Shame is feeling bad that we have failed to live up to the expectations others have of us. Guilt is what we feel when we fail to live up to what our own conscience demands of us. Shame is other-directed. Guilt is inner-directed. Philosophers, among them Bernard Williams, have pointed out that shame cultures are usually visual. Shame itself has to do with how you appear (or imagine you appear) in other peoples' eyes. The instinctive reaction to shame is to wish you were invisible, or somewhere else. Guilt, by contrast, is much more internal. You cannot escape it by becoming invisible or being elsewhere. Your conscience accompanies you wherever you go, regardless of whether you are seen by others. Guilt cultures are cultures of the ear, not the eye.

With this contrast in mind we can now understand the story of the first sin. It is all about appearances, shame, vision and the eye. The serpent says to the woman: "God knows that on the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." That

Times

Candle Lighting	6:06 pm
Friday Mincha	6:10 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	5:00 pm
Mincha	6:00 pm
Shabbat ends	7:12 pm
Sunday, Oct. 11	7:30/8:30am
Mon., Thur.	6:35/7:45 am
Tues., Wed.	6:30/7:45 am
Rosh Chodesh	
Fri.	6:45/7:45 am
Mincha	5:55 pm
Latest Times for Shema/Shemoneh Esrei	
October 10	9:52/10:49 am
October 17	9:51/10:48 am
Next Shabbat Parshat Noach	
Candle Lighting	5:55 pm
Mincha	5:55 pm

KIDDUSH & BIMA FLOWERS ARE SPONSORED BY SIGALIT & ROBERT KATZ IN HONOR OF THE BAR MITZVAH OF THEIR SON JONATHAN.

BIMA FLOWERS IN THE BEIT MIDRASH ARE SPONSORED BY MOSELLE & DANIEL BERKOWITZ IN HONOR OF THEIR NEW DAUGHTER.

is, in fact, what happens: "The eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized that they were naked." It was appearance of the tree that the Torah emphasizes: "The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and desirable to the eyes, and that the tree was attractive as a means to gain intelligence." The key emotion in the story is shame. Before eating the fruit the couple were "naked, but unashamed." After eating it they feel shame and seek to hide. Every element of the story – the fruit, the tree, the nakedness, the shame – has the visual element typical of a shame culture. But in Judaism we believe that God is heard not seen. The first humans "heard God's voice moving about in the garden with the wind of the day." Replying to God, the man says, "I heard Your voice in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid." Note the deliberate, even humorous irony of what the couple did. They heard God's voice in the garden, and they "hid themselves from God among the trees of the garden." But you can't hide from a voice. Hiding means trying not to be seen. It is an immediate, intuitive response to shame. But the Torah is the supreme example of a culture of guilt, not shame, and you cannot escape guilt by hiding. Guilt has nothing to do with appearances and everything to do with conscience, the voice of God in the human heart.

The sin of the first humans in the Garden of Eden was that they followed their eyes, not their ears. Their actions were determined by what they saw, the beauty of the tree, not by what they heard, namely the word of God commanding them not to eat from it. The result was that they did indeed acquire a knowledge of good and evil, but it was the wrong kind. They acquired an ethic of shame, not guilt; of appearances not conscience. That, I believe, is what Maimonides meant by his distinction between true-and-false and "things generally accepted." A guilt ethic is about the inner voice that tells you, "This is right, that is wrong", as clearly as "This is true, that is false". But a shame ethic is about social convention. It is a matter of meeting or not meeting the expectations others have of you. Shame cultures are essentially codes of social conformity. They belong to groups where socialization takes the

form of internalizing the values of the group such that you feel shame – an acute form of embarrassment – when you break them, knowing that if people discover what you have done you will lose honor and 'face'. Judaism is precisely not that kind of morality, because Jews do not conform to what everyone else does. Abraham was willing, say the sages, to be on one side while all the rest of the world was on the other. Haman says about Jews, "Their customs are different from those of all other people" (Esther 3:8). Jews have often been iconoclasts, challenging the idols of the age, the received wisdom, the "spirit of the age", the politically correct.

If Jews had followed the majority, they would have disappeared long ago. In the biblical age they were the only monotheists in a pagan world. For most of the post-biblical age they lived in societies in which they and their faith were shared by only a tiny minority of the population. Judaism is a living protest against the herd instinct. Ours is the dissenting voice in the conversation of humankind. Hence the ethic of Judaism is not a matter of appearances, of honor and shame. It is a matter of hearing and heeding the voice of God in the depths of the soul. The drama of Adam and Eve is not about apples or sex or original sin or "the Fall" – interpretations the non-Jewish West has given to it. It is about something deeper. It is about the kind of morality we are called on to live. Are we to be governed by what everyone else does, as if morality were like politics: the will of the majority? Will our emotional horizon be bounded by honor and shame, two profoundly social feelings? Is our key value appearance: how we seem to others? Or is it something else altogether, a willingness to heed the word and will of God? Adam and Eve in Eden faced the archetypal human choice between what their eyes saw (the tree and its fruit) and what their ears heard (God's command). Because they chose the first, they felt shame, not guilt. That is one form of "knowledge of good and evil", but from a Jewish perspective, it is the wrong form.

Judaism is a religion of listening, not seeing. That is not to say there are no visual elements in Judaism. There are, but they are not primary. Listening is the sacred task. The most famous command in Judaism is Shema Yisrael, "Listen, Israel." What made Abraham, Moses and the prophets different from their contemporaries was that they heard the voice that to others was inaudible. In one of the great dramatic scenes of the Bible God teaches Elijah that He is not in the whirlwind, the earthquake or the fire, but in the "still, small voice." It takes training, focus and the ability to create silence in the soul to learn how to listen, whether to God or to a fellow human being. Seeing shows us the beauty of the created world, but listening connects us to the soul of another, and sometimes to the soul of the Other, God as He speaks to us, calls to us, summoning us to our task in the world. If I were asked how to find God, I would say, Learn to listen. Listen to the song of the universe in the call of birds, the rustle of trees, the crash and heave of the waves. Listen to the poetry of prayer, the music of the Psalms. Listen deeply to those you love and who love you. Listen to the words of God in the Torah and hear them speak to you. Listen to the debates of the sages through the centuries as they tried to hear the texts' intimations and inflections. Don't worry about how you or others look. The world of appearances is a false world of masks, disguises and concealments. Listening is not easy. I confess I find it formidably hard. But listening alone bridges the abyss between soul and soul, self and other, I and the Divine. Jewish spirituality is the art of listening.



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.



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
Rabbi Sholom Jensen, Youth Director
Zehava & Dr. Michael Atlas, Youth Directors
Mark Twersky, Executive Director
Dr. James Frisch, Assistant Director
Dr. Hal Chadow, President
Harold Domnitch, Chairman of the Board
Lisa Septimus, Yoetzet Halacha 516-415-1111



Celebrate your Mind **GNS Sunday Conversations**

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

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



Idó Aharoni, the Aharoni is Grand 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 1995. He held two overseas positions, in Los Angeles and New York during his career in Israel's diplomatic corps.

While serving as Consul for Media and Public Affairs in New York, he became familiar with various branding methods which he later introduced in his agencies 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.

Grow at
GNS

OPEN TO THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY
 FREE TICKETS IN
 MAIN LOBBY
 OF
 GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE
 20 OLD HILL RD. GREAT NECK, NY

The Great Neck Synagogue MEN'S CLUB presents

DR. ISSAC SACHMECHI, MD

DIABETES
What You Must Know

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11th at 10:00 AM



GNS Member, Chief of Endocrinology at Queens Hospital, Director of the Diabetes Center of Excellence, Clinical Associate, Professor at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine

Ms. Amanda Sachmechi Mazloumi will talk briefly on nutritional aspects in diabetes management.

Breakfast Served **הנה חוש אמיד** All Welcome



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 Hill Road, Great Neck, NY

Doors open at 7:00 pm

Speakers: **Rob. Abbey Larner**
Mrs. Amit Yaghoubi

Braiding Workshop: **Wendy Shiffon**
Lali Dimfink
 Online Registration **ONLY!**

Fee: \$15 per woman
 Mother and daughter packages available.
Payment by cc ONLY!
 Registration starts at 6:00!
 Checks (For Speakers ONLY) should be made out to "Great Neck Shabbat Project"
 And mailed to: Great Neck Synagogue

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 retaining 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 Annual 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 Boy's Journey to Family, Faith and Freedom*. West is an avid distance runner, a Master SCLIBA 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, Ashby, a graduate student pursuing her master's degree and Austin, 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.

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.

MEN'S CLUB EVENTS

Health Series: **Sunday, Oct. 11th:** 10:00 am
Dr. Issac Sachmechi on Diabetes

Book Club Discussion: **Sunday, Oct. 25th:** 10:00 am
Tommy Furst discusses his new book, Torah Mysteries Illuminated

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. Thank you!

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 at marla.lemonik@gmail.com It's a new year.....do a mitzvah....

SHABBAT PROJECT COMMUNAL CHALLAH BAKE

Thursday Evening, **October 22nd** at Temple Israel of Great Neck. Reservations must be made online.

SURVEY FEEDBACK

While we have transitioned from the HH season back to reality, your feedback on your experience is very important to us while it is fresh in your mind. As such, a 2 minute survey will be circulated in the coming days. Please complete it so we can see what worked well and what needs improvement.

MAGAZINES

The GNS office is resuming the collection of magazines to be donated to hospitals. Please make sure that the magazines are not more than 3 months old, and that the address labels have been removed.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

October 11: Dr. Sachmechi: Men's Club (Health)
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 Sigalit & Robert Katz on the Bar Mitzvah of their son **Jonathan**.

Mazal Tov to Daniel & Moselle Berkowitz on the birth of a daughter. **Mazal Tov** to grandparents **Ada & Dov Berkowitz**.

ONGOING TORAH STUDY

Rabbi Polakoff's and Rabbi Lichter's weekday adult classes will begin the week of October 12th. 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.

Y A H R Z E I T

Saturday, 27 Tishrei

Jason Mayer for Steven Mayer
Susan Mayer for Steven Mayer
Albert Safdieh for Shaul ben Avraham

Sunday, 28 Tishrei

Ira Lubin for Max Gerber
Zahava Slonim for Tamar Kukulka

Monday, 29 Tishrei

Baruch Toledano for Joseph Toledano

Tuesday, 30 Tishrei

Perry Schneider for Harry Colton
Robert Glaser for Sophie Glaser
Marcia Toledano for Julia Karten
Zeev Kron for Hinda Kron
Paul Weinberg for Ida Weinberg

Wednesday, 1 Cheshvan

Sharon Herman for Muriel Adler
Leon Kutcher for Fran Kutcher
Herschel Flax for Ethel Pasvolsky
Mary Flax for Ethel Pasvolsky
Rita Silverman for Zelda Schwartz
Lorraine Domnitch for Jennie Speisel

Thursday, 2 Cheshvan

Sheila Bachman for Pauline Bachman
Joyce Swartz for Sol Gelfond
Ira Lubin for Pauline Gerber

Donald Heisler for Joseph Heisler
George Schuman for Erna Schuman
Deborah Hollander for Judith Sokol

Martin Sokol for Judith Sokol
Joseph Sokol for Judith Sokol
Shimon Wolf for Nathan Wolf

Friday, 3 Cheshvan

Pauline Levy for David Gruber
Paul Marcus for Victor Marcus