



# Shabbat Announcements

Parshat Bechukotai

June 4, 2016 27 Iyar, 5776

**TORAH**  
ARTSCROLL 708  
HERTZ 542

**HAFTORAH**  
ARTSCROLL 1179  
HERTZ 551

**SHABBAT MEVARCHIM**  
**MOLAD: SUNDAY 6/4**  
**12:44 PM**  
**ROSH CHODESH SIVAN:**  
**TUESDAY 6/7**

## Rabbi Jonathan Sacks on Bechukotai

Smart-phones can do amazing things – few more amazing than Waze, the Israeli-designed satellite navigation system acquired by Google in 2013. But there is one thing even Waze cannot do. It can tell you how to get there, but it cannot tell you where to go. That is something you must decide. The most important decision we can make in life is to choose where we want eventually to be. Without a sense of destiny and destination, our lives will be directionless. If we don't know where we want to go, we will never get there no matter how fast we travel. Yet despite this, there are people who spend months planning a holiday, but not even a day planning a life. They simply let it happen. That is what our parsha is about, applied to a nation, not an individual. God, through Moses, set out the stark choice. "If you follow my statutes and carefully obey my commands, I will send you rain in its season and the ground will yield its crops and the trees their fruit...I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid." If, on the other hand, "You do not

listen to me, and do not keep all these commands..." then disaster will follow. The curses set out here at length are among the most frightening of all biblical texts – a portrait of national catastrophe, bleak and devastating.

The entire passage, both the blessings and the curses, can be read supernaturally or naturally. Read the first way, Israel's fate, at least in biblical times, was a direct result of its faithfulness or lack of it to the Torah. God was constantly intervening miraculously in history to reward the good and punish the bad. Every drought and famine, every bad harvest or military defeat, was the result of sin. Every peaceful and productive year was the result of obedience to God. That is how Israel's prophets understood history. But there is also a more naturalistic reading, which says that Divine providence works through us, internally rather than externally. If you are the Israelites in the land of Israel, you will always be surrounded by empires and enemies bigger and stronger than you are. You will always be vulnerable to the hazards of rainfall and drought because Israel, unlike the Nile Delta or the Tigris-Euphrates valley, has no natural, reliable, predictable supply of water. You will always, therefore, find yourself looking up to the heavens. Even quite

secular Jews often understand this – most famously David Ben Gurion when he said, "In Israel, in order to be a realist you have to believe in miracles." On this reading, the way of life set out in the Torah is unique in ways that are natural rather than supernatural. It is indeed the word of God, but not God as a perpetual strategic intervener in history, but rather, God as guide as to how to live in such a way as to be blessed. The Torah is a set of instructions for life issued by the Designer of life. That is what the sages meant when they said that at the beginning of time, "God looked into the Torah and created the world." Living according to the Torah means, on this view, aligning yourself with the forces that make for human flourishing, especially if you are a tiny people surrounded by enemies.

What was unique about the society envisaged by the Torah is that in it every individual mattered. Justice was to be paramount. The rich could not buy special treatment and the poor were not left destitute. When it came to communal celebrations, everyone – especially the orphan, the

### Times

Candle Lighting	8:03 pm
Mincha	7:00 pm
Hashkama	8:00 am
Youth Minyan	8:30 am
Parsha Shiur	8:30 pm
Main	9:00 am
Beit Midrash	9:15 am
Gemara Shiur	7:00 pm
Mincha	8:00 pm
Shabbat Ends	9:12 pm
R' Reisman Video	10:30 pm
Sunday June 5	7:30/8:30 am
Mon. & Thurs.	6:35/7:45 am
Tue. (Rosh Chodesh)	6:30/7:45 am
Wed. & Fri	6:45/7:45 am
Mincha	8:05 pm
Latest Times for Shema/Shemoneh Esrei	
June 4	9:08/10:23 am
June 11	9:08/10:24 am
Next Shabbat Bamidbar	
Candle Lighting	8:08 pm
Mincha	7:00 pm

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**GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE**

widow, the stranger – was to be included. Everyone had at least some share in the harvest of grain and fruit. Employers were to treat employees with fairness and sensitivity. Even though there were still slaves, one day in seven they would enjoy the same freedom as their owners. This meant that everyone had a stake in society. Therefore they would defend it with their lives. The Israelites were not an army conscripted by a ruler for the purpose of his own self-aggrandizement. That is why they were capable of defeating armies and nations many times their size. Above all, they were to have a sense of destiny and destination. That is the meaning of the keyword that runs like a refrain through the curses: *keri*, a word that appears seven times in our parsha and nowhere else in Tanakh. "If you walk with Me with *keri*...then I will walk with you with *keri*." There are many interpretations of this word. Targum Onkelos reads it as "hardheartedly", Saadia as "rebelliously", Rashi as "treating as a casual concern." Others understood it as "harshly", or "with hostility". Maimonides, however (partially echoed by Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, Chizkuni and others), understands it as related to the word *mikreh*, meaning "chance". Hence the meaning of the passage according to Maimonides is: "If you believe that what happens to you is simply a matter of chance, then, says God, I will leave you to chance." On this reading, the book of Vayikra ends as it began, with the fateful choice between *mikra* (with an aleph) and *mikreh* (with a heh): between seeing life as a call, a summons, a vocation, a destiny, and seeing it an accident, a random happening with no ultimate meaning whatsoever.

So it is in the life of nations and individuals. If you see what happens to you as mere chance, your fate will be governed by mere chance. That is what the sages meant when they said, "Wherever [the Torah] says, 'And it came to pass', it is always a prelude to tragedy." If you simply let things come to pass, you will find yourself exposed to the vagaries of fortune and the whims of others. But if you believe you are here for a purpose,

your life will take on the directedness of that purpose. Your energies will be focused. A sense of mission will give you strength. You will do remarkable things. That was the special insight Jews brought to the world. They did not believe – as people did in ancient times and as atheists do today – that the universe is governed by mere chance. Was it mere chance that a random fluctuation in the quantum field produced the Big Bang that brought the universe into being? Or that the universe just happened to be regulated by precisely the six mathematical constants necessary for it to give rise to stars and planets and the chemical elements essential for the emergence of life? Was it mere chance that life did in fact emerge from inanimate matter? Or that among the hundred million life forms that have existed on earth, just one, *Homo sapiens*, was capable of asking the question "Why?" There is nothing self-contradictory about such a view. It is compatible with all the science we now know, perhaps with all the science we will ever know. That is the universe as *keri*. Many people think this way. They always did. On this view, there is no "Why," not for nations, and not for individuals. Life just happens. We are here by accident. Jews believed otherwise. No one said it better than the Catholic historian Paul Johnson: No people have ever insisted more firmly than the Jews that history has a purpose and humanity a destiny. At a very early stage in their collective existence they believed they had detected a divine scheme for the human race, of which their own society was to be a pilot. They worked out their role in immense detail. They clung to it with heroic persistence in the face of savage suffering. Many of them believe it still. Others transmuted it into Promethean endeavors to raise our condition by purely human means. The Jewish vision became the prototype for many similar grand designs for humanity, both divine and man-made. The Jews therefore stand right at the centre of the perennial attempt to give human life the dignity of a purpose.

The people who change the world are those who believe that life has a purpose, a direction, a destiny. They know where they want to go and what they want to achieve. In the case of Judaism that purpose is clear: to show what it is to create a small clearing in the desert of humanity where freedom and order coexist, where justice prevails, the weak are cared for and those in need are given help, where we have the humility to attribute our successes to God and our failures to ourselves, where we cherish life as the gift of God and do all we can to make it holy. In other words: precisely the opposite of the violence and brutality that is today being perpetrated by some religious extremists in the name of God. To achieve this, though, we have to have a sense of collective purpose. That is the choice that Moses, speaking in the name of God, set before the Israelites. *Mikra* or *mikreh*? Does life just happen? Or is it a call from God to create moments of moral and spiritual beauty that redeem our humanity from the ruthless pursuit of power? "To give human life the dignity of a purpose." That is what Jews are called on to show the world.



**Great Neck 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: [greatneckyoetzet@gmail.com](mailto:greatneckyoetzet@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**  
**Dov Sassoon, President**  
**Harold Domnitch, Chairman of the Board**  
**Lisa Septimus, Yoetzet Halacha 516-415-1111**

**Growing spiritually can have its ups and downs. Take consolation in the fact that the way down is only a preparation for the way back up...Rebbe Nachman of Breslov**

GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE  
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CELEBRATE ALL OF YOUR SMACHOT WITH US

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TO PARTICIPATE PLEASE CALL THE SYNAGOGUE OFFICE  
OR SEND YOUR INFORMATION TO [MTWERSKY@GNS.ORG](mailto:MTWERSKY@GNS.ORG)

COST IS \$100 PER FAMILY



I WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONGREGATIONAL KIDDUSH

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**Join us for our next Chaverim Program  
on June 1st from 11:30 – 2 pm.**

Our program this week will feature Sheva Turk, a nurse who will be doing a presentation about healthy lifestyles and other health topics of interest to seniors. She will also do free blood pressure screenings after her talk.

As always a delicious lunch will be provided, so please let us know if you will be attending. All you need to do is reply to this email.

Play mah jong, scrabble and card games with your fellow Chaverim after lunch and the presentation.

Thank you to Debbie Wang for a very interesting and informative presentation on Jewish Genealogy.

Thank you to Michele Wolf and Anne Sandler for sponsoring the lunch in memory of their parents

**Save the dates for upcoming programs**

**June 15** – William Helmreich will talk about "Jewish Stereotypes and the Myths behind them"

**June 29<sup>th</sup>** – Marilyn Freedman

**Chaverim will be continuing through the summer**

**Hope to see you all at our next program**

**Cindy, Erica, Michelle and Naeema**

**GNS/YIGN SHAVUOT PROGRAM 5776**

**Rapid-Fire Responsa  
5 Minute Farher  
Just the Facts**

There's a lot about Judaism we are curious about, but it can be so hard to find the time to spend on fully investigating the relevant sources and differing opinions.

Imagine being able to have any question answered in under five minutes.  
No shpiel, no shlep, just strait to the point.

For the very first time, at our joint GNS/YIGN Shavuot night program, our rabbis will be taking YOUR questions and giving comprehensive, but rapid fire responses in five minutes or less.

Don't be shy! Send your questions ASAP to [ShavuotQs@gmail.com](mailto:ShavuotQs@gmail.com).  
(In order to make sure that we can cover as many topics as quickly and thoroughly as possible, we will not be taking questions from the floor.)

**Youth Bash  
Shabbat June 18**


**06/18/2016**

**GNS YOUTH BASH**

**Prizes, Candy, Luncheon,  
Ticket Hunt & Grand Raffle!**

Grades 1-8  
Pickup 4:00pm

*Please pick  
up prizes  
after  
Shabbat*



**BASEBALL**  
**METS VS. KANSAS CITY**  
**CITIFIELD EXCELSIOR BOX**  
Contact Jack Lipsky 384-1482, jblref@aol.com or GNS office  
**JUNE 21 TUESDAY 7:10PM**  
COST: \$80 Mens Club members \$52

**GNS YOUTH PRESENTS  
4TH ANNUAL  
WOMEN'S SHABBATON**

Parshat  
Bechukotai  
June 3-4, 2016

Welcoming Back  
Nationally Renowned Speaker  
**Mrs. Jackie Bitton**

Friday Night Dinner & Oneg for Young Women:  
HS Seniors, College & Graduate Students

Dinner @ GNS following Davening 8:00 pm  
Oneg @ Atlas Home following dinner 9:30 pm

RSVP to Zehava Atlas zehmach@aol.com

Seudah Shlishit Afternoon Shiur 6:00 pm  
Braun Youth Center Mother Daughter Program

"Achieving the Impossible  
When You Believe in Yourself & Don't Give Up!"

**Sponsorships Available from \$36 Contact shul office**



**MEN'S CLUB** JOIN OUR EVENT AT THE  
NASSAU COUNTY RIFLE RANGE

**SHOOTING EVENT**

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RIFLE, AMMO, TARGET, INCLUDED

MONDAY JUNE 27TH 6-9PM  
COST \$56 WITH PIZZA

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(\$10 NEW MEMBER DUES)

**PRIZE FOR  
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ADULTS 21+

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**HILLY MILUN 516-504-0320**

# GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

## 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 reckoning with the Great Neck sanitation department.

It doesn't have to be that way! You can give these items a new lease on life and, more importantly, help those in need when doing so. All you need to do is drop off those 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 Souls4Soles, a terrific charity dedicated to fighting poverty in the U.S. and around the world. Can read more about it at <http://soles4souls.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. Read more at <http://www.new-eyes.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 13-year old brother and sister from Massachusetts and has since provided almost 200 million minutes of talk time allowing troops to have priceless conversations with their loved ones back home. You can read more about the program at <http://www.cellphonesforsoldiers.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 chesed.

**Please drop your items off any time Sunday through Friday beginning Sunday May 22.**

1. **88 Old Pond Road** (Please leave by the garage.) Contact, if needed: **Steve Blumner** – [516-639-8941](tel:516-639-8941)
2. **11 William Penn** (Please leave by the garage.) Contact, if needed: **Jonny Ambalo** – [347-971-8178](tel:347-971-8178)

**SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2016**

**11am - 4pm • 57th-74th St. on Fifth Ave.**

**CelebrateIsraelNY.org**

Join us at the 52nd Annual **CELEBRATE ISRAEL PARADE**, the world's largest gathering in celebration of Israel.

Don't miss this year's special guests from the cast of Broadway's *Fiddler on the Roof*, the 30 fabulous floats, 15 marvelous marching bands including the world champion drum and bugle corps, The Cadets, and performances by: The Maccabeats, Kosher Dillz, Milk and Honeys, SOULFARM – and more! #TogetherOnFifth

**Watch the Parade live on FOX's My9 or at CelebrateIsraelNY.org starting at Noon.**

 CelebrateIsraelParade  @celebrateisrael #TogetheronFifth

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A special thanks to our sponsors:



## THE CONCERT WITH A MESSAGE

לזרעך אתן את הארץ הזאת... לך אתננה ולזרעך עד עולם" בראשית יב:ז... וי:ג

"To Your Offspring, I Will Give This Land... To You I Will Give It And To Your Descendants Forever" Genesis: 12:7, 13:15

Celebrate Our Eternal Bond with The **UNDIVIDED CAPITAL** of Israel: **YERUSHALAYIM** and the heroic families and communities of Yehuda, Shomron, The Jordan Valley and The Golan Heights.

"For the Sake of Jerusalem, I shall not be silent" • "למען ירושלים לא אשקט"

"PRAY FOR PEACE OF JERUSALEM, THOSE WHO LOVE YOU WILL BE SERENE" (PSALMS 122) | "I AM PEACE WHEN I SPEAK, BUT THEY ARE FOR WAR" (PSALMS 120)



FEATURING: LIPA SCHMELTZER, EITAN KATZ, TAL VAKNIN WITH SHLOMI AHARONI, SHLOIME DACHS ORCHESTRA & SINGERS, AVI KILIMNICK, MICHAEL PRUZANSKY, MATI SHRIKI, DR. MEYER ARITAN, JERRY MARKOVITZ, CHAIM KISS, IZZY KIEFFER & HESHY R., WHITE SHABBOB, MICHA GAMERMAN AND OTHERS.

### **DOUBLEHEADER FOR ISRAEL:**

After the Israeli Day Parade, celebrate at the Annual Israel Day **CONCERT/RALLY**, the Concert with a Message, at Central Park's Summer Stage, (enter 5th Ave. & 72nd St), on **Sunday, June 5, 2016 from 2:30 - 7:30PM, RAIN or SHINE.**

The Concert is dedicated to the 10 Americans HY'D murdered in Israel over the past 2 years, to keeping JERUSALEM UNITED, and to combating BDS. Enjoy talented performers and inspiring speakers. **FREE ADMISSION!** For info, contact Chairpersons Dr. Paul & Drora Brody.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**RABBI POLAKOFF'S SHABBOS DRASHA THROUGH 5776, IS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF PINCHAS BEN YOSEPH FOR OTHER SUCH OPPORTUNITIES PLEASE CONTACT HOWARD WOLF 212-843-4668**

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

## HASHAMA MINYAN KIDDUSH

Hashkama Minyan Kiddush is sponsored by **Raylene & Andrew Adler** in honor of the 100th birthday of his mother Golda Adler.

## WOMEN'S SHABBATON

Join us for our 4th annual Women's Shabbaton featuring nationally renowned speaker, **Mrs. Jackie Bitton** this Shabbat June 3-4. There is a Friday night dinner for HS Seniors, college and graduate students, please RSVP at [zemach@aol.com](mailto:zemach@aol.com). There is also a mother/daughter afternoon Seudah Shlishit/Shiur at 6:00 pm.

## GNS CHESED

We are collecting shoes, eyeglasses and cell phones to be dropped off at the Blumner home, 88 Old Pond Rd. or the Ambalo home, 11 William Penn, Sunday through Friday.

## SOLICITING NOMINEES

We are currently soliciting nominees to be considered for the next **David and Ellie Werber Chesed Award**, to be presented June 11. Please email [mtwersky@gns.org](mailto:mtwersky@gns.org) with the name of your nominee.

## UPDATE OF EIRUV ON GNS WEBSITE

The eiruv page on the GNS website has been updated with a new map and detailed description. Please familiarize yourself with it to ensure proper observance.

## GNS/YIGN SHAVUOT PROGRAM

Rapid-Fire Responsa - 5 Minute Farher - Just the Facts  
There's a lot about Judaism we are curious about, but it can be so hard to find the time to spend on fully investigating the relevant sources and differing opinions. Imagine being able to have any question answered in under five minutes. No shpiel, no shlep, just strait to the point. For the very first time, at our joint GNS/YIGN Shavuot night program, our rabbis will be taking YOUR questions and giving comprehensive, but rapid fire responses in five minutes or less. Don't be shy! Send your questions ASAP to [ShavuotQs@gmail.com](mailto:ShavuotQs@gmail.com). (In order to make sure that we can cover as many topics as quickly and thoroughly as possible, we will not be taking questions from the floor.)

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

June 1: Chaverim Center  
June 4-5: Women's Shabbaton: Jackie Bitton  
June 11-13: Shavuot Programming  
June 15: Chaverim Center  
June 18: Graduation Kiddush  
June 18: Youth Bash  
June 21: Men's Club: Mets Game  
June 27: Men's Club: Rifle Range

## MAZAL TOVS & COMMUNITY NEWS

**Mazal Tov** to **Dr. Mark & Beth Gersten** on the graduation of **Joshua Gersten** from dental school.

**Mazal Tov** to **Bracha & Ze'ev Kron** the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughter **Yael** daughter of **Toby & Moshe Drebin** in Lakewood.

**Mazal Tov** to the **Boys Mishnayot Learning Group** on completing Masechet Megillah in Mishnayot.

**Mazal Tov** to **Michael Leventhal** on being honored by the Great Neck Friends of Mesivtha Tifereth Jerusalem.

**Mazal Tov** to **Rabbi Dale & Ellen Polakoff** on the birth of a granddaughter, born to their children **Ilana & Shlomo Barry**.

## AMERICAN FRIENDS OF ATERET COHANIM DINNER

American Friends of Ateret Cohanim/Jerusalem Chai is honoring **Drs. Bill & Farla Frumkin** and **Joseph & Dr. Gail Notovitz**, continuing their Patriarch's legacy on **Tues. May 31, 2016**.

## MESIVTHA TIFEREH JERUSALEM HONOR

Great Neck Friends of MTJ is honoring **Michael Leventhal** with the Community Leadership Award on **Tues., May 31** at 8:00 pm at the home of Marc & Davida Yehaskel, 9 Willow Lane.

## NISHMAT DINNER

**Netti and Ari Herman** will be Guests of Honor at Nishmat's 26th Anniversary Gala Dinner, featuring Nishmat Dean & Founder, Rabbanit Chana Henkin, on **Wednesday, June 1**. Visit [www.nishmatgala.org](http://www.nishmatgala.org) for more details.

*The Wagner family would like to thank Rabbi & Mrs. Polakoff, Rabbi Lichter, Cantor Kron, Jerry Weinstein, the GNS Chesed committee, and the entire community for their outpouring of support and sympathy following the loss of their beloved husband and father David M. Wagner Z" L.*

*Albe Glasman would like to thank Rabbis Polakoff, Lichter, Cantor Kron, the GNS Chesed committee, and the entire community for their outpouring of support and sympathy following the loss of his beloved mother Miriam Glasman Z" L.*

## Y A H R Z E I T

### Saturday, 27 Iyar

Kenneth Magida for Emma Greenberg  
Vicky Maher for Lila Rothman

### Monday, 29 Iyar

Seymour Cooper for Isaac Cooper  
Marion Kapner for Sadie Eisenberg  
Ebrahim Gabbazadeh for Tala bat Yoseph  
Joseph Hyman for Carolyn Hyman  
Ellie Werber for Rosa Preis  
Jerrald Weinstein for Mae Rubin  
Abraham Soleimani for Lalezar Soleimani  
Moussa Soleimani for Lalezar Soleimani

### Tuesday, 1 Sivan

Regina Gil for Israel Keller  
Franetta Gil for Israel Keller  
Ellen Allen for Eleanor Schaffer

### Wednesday, 2 Sivan

Rita Litvin for Tsilya Marianovsky

### Thursday, 3 Sivan

Adam Hutt for Frances Hutt  
Cindy Ludwig for Bertha Siegal

### Friday, 4 Sivan

Trudy Jettelson for Jules Jettelson  
Karen Wydra for Henry Sten-Wallach  
Jerrald Weinstein for Abraham Weinstein  
Goldie Lorber for Nathan Winter