



Shabbat Announcements

Parshat Mikeitz/Rosh Chodesh/Chanukah

December 8, 2018 30 Kislev, 5779

TORAH ALIYAH 1-6
ARTSCROLL 222
HERTZ 155

ROSH CHODESH ALIYAH 7
ARTSCROLL 890
HERTZ 695

MAFTIR CHANUKAH
ARTSCROLL 768
HERTZ 599

HAFTORAH
ARTSCROLL 1210
HERTZ 987

BAR MITZVAH
OF
JOSEPH EDELMAN

Times

Candle Lighting	4:09 pm
Mincha	4:10 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	3:30 pm
Mincha	4:00 pm
Shabbat Ends	5:17 pm
R' Reisman Video	7:30 pm
Sun. Dec. 9	7:30 am - BYC
Rosh Chodesh & Chanukah	8:30 am - BM
Mon. Chanukah	6:30/7:45 am
Tues., Wed. & Fri.	6:45/7:45 am
Thurs.	6:35/7:45 am
Mincha	4:10 pm

Latest Times for
Shema/Shemoneh Esrei

December 8	9:26/10:13 am
December 15	9:31/10:17 am

Next Shabbat
Vayigash

Candle Lighting	4:09 pm
Mincha	4:10 pm

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks on Mikeitz

It was Joseph's first real attempt to take his fate into his own hands, and it failed. Or so it seemed. Consider the story so far, as set out in last week's parsha. Almost everything that happens in Joseph's life falls into two categories. The first are the things done to him. His father loves him more than his other sons. He gives him a richly embroidered cloak. His brothers are envious and hate him. His father sends him to see how the brothers are faring, attending the flocks far away. He fails to find them and has to rely on a stranger to point him in the right direction. The brothers plot to kill him, and sell him as a slave. He is brought to Egypt. He is acquired as a slave by Potiphar. Potiphar's wife finds him attractive, attempts to seduce him, and having failed, falsely accuses him of rape, as a result of which he is imprisoned. This is extraordinary. Joseph is the centre of attention whenever, as it were, he is onstage, and yet he is, time and again, the donee rather than the doer, an object of other people's

actions rather than the subject of his own.

The second category is more remarkable still. Joseph does do things. He runs Potiphar's household. He organises a prison. He interprets the steward's and baker's dreams. But, in a unique sequence of descriptions, the Torah explicitly attributes his actions and their success to God. Here is Joseph in Potiphar's house: God was with Joseph, and He made him very successful. Soon he was working in his master's own house. His master realised that God was with [Joseph], and that God granted success to everything he did. (39:2-3). As soon as [his master] had placed him in charge of his household and possessions, God blessed the Egyptian because of Joseph. God's blessing was in all [the Egyptian] had, both in the house and the field. (39:5) Here is Joseph in prison: God was with Joseph, and He showed him kindness, making him find favour with the warden of the dungeon. Soon, the warden had placed all the prisoners in the dungeon under Joseph's charge. [Joseph] took care of everything that had to be done. The warden did not have to look after anything that was under [Joseph's] care. God was with [Joseph], and God granted him success in everything he did. (39:21-23).

And here is Joseph interpreting dreams: 'Interpretations are God's business,' replied Joseph. 'If you want to, tell me about [your dreams].' (40:8)

Of no other figure in Tanakh is this said so clearly, consistently and repeatedly. Joseph seems decisive, organized and successful and so he appeared to others. But, says the Torah, it was not him but God who was responsible both for what he did and for its success. Even when he resists the advances of Potiphar's wife, he makes it explicit that it is God who makes what she wants morally impossible: "How could I do such a great wrong? It would be a sin before God!" (39:9) The only act clearly attributed to him occurs at the very start of the story, when he brings a "bad report" about his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah the handmaids. (39:2) This apart, every twist and turn of his constantly changing fate is the result of someone else's act, either that of another human or of God (as for Joseph's dreams – were they a Divine intimation or a product of his own imagination? – that is another story for another time).

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IN HONOR OF THE UPCOMING MARRIAGE
OF THEIR DAUGHTER MARCELLE TO BEN SANDEL

That is why we sit up and take notice when, at the end of the previous parsha, Joseph takes destiny into his own hands. Having told the chief steward that in three days he would be pardoned by Pharaoh and restored to his former position, and having no doubt at all that this would happen, he asks him to plead his cause with Pharaoh and secure his freedom: "When things go well for you, just remember that I was with you. Do me a favor and say something about me to Pharaoh. Perhaps you will be able to get me out of this place." (40:14) What happens? "The chief steward did not remember Joseph. He forgot about him." (40:23) The doubling of the verb is powerful. He did not remember. He forgot. The one time Joseph tries to be the author of his own story, he fails. The failure is decisive.

Tradition added one final touch to the drama. It ended the parsha of Vayeshev with those words, leaving us at the point that his hopes are dashed. Will he rise to greatness? Will his dreams come true? The question "What happens next?" is intense, and we have to wait a week to know. Time passes and with the utmost improbability (Pharaoh too has dreams, and none of his magicians or wise men can interpret them – itself odd, since dream interpretation was a specialty of the ancient Egyptians), we learn the answer. "Two full years passed." Those, the words with which our parsha begins, are the key phrase. What Joseph sought to happen, happened. He did leave the prison. He was set free. But not until two full years had passed.

Between the attempt and the outcome, something intervened. That is the significance of the lapse of time. Joseph planned his release, and he was released, but not because he planned it. His own attempt ended in failure. The steward forgot all about him. But God did not forget about him. God, not Joseph, brought about the sequence of events – specifically Pharaoh's dreams – that led to his release. What we want to happen, happens, but not always when we expect, or in the way we expect, or merely because we wanted it to happen. God is the co-author of the script of our life, and sometimes – as here –

He reminds us of this by making us wait and taking us by surprise. That is the paradox of the human condition as understood by Judaism. On the one hand we are free. No religion has so emphatically insisted on human freedom and responsibility. Adam and Eve were free not to sin. Cain was free not to kill Abel. We make excuses for our failures – it wasn't me; it was someone else's fault; I couldn't help it. But these are just that: excuses. It isn't so. We are free and we do bear responsibility.

Yet, as Hamlet said: "There's a divinity that shapes our ends/Rough-hew them how we will." God is intimately involved in our life. Looking back in middle- or old age, we can often discern, dimly through the mist of the past, that a story was taking shape, a destiny slowly emerging, guided in part by events beyond our control. We could not have foreseen that this accident, that illness, this failure, that seemingly chance encounter, years ago, would have led us in this direction. Yet now in retrospect it can seem as if we were a chess piece moved by an invisible hand that knew exactly where it wanted us to be.

It was this view, according to Josephus, that distinguished the Pharisees (the architects of what we call rabbinic Judaism) from the Sadducees and the Essenes. The Sadducees denied fate. They said God does not intervene in our lives. The Essenes attributed all to fate. They believed that everything we do has been predestined by God. The Pharisees believed in both fate and free will. "It was God's good pleasure that there should be a fusion [of divine providence and human choice] and that the will of man with his virtue and vice should be admitted to the council-chamber of fate" (Antiquities, xviii, 1, 3).

Nowhere is this clearer than in the life of Joseph as told in Bereishit, and nowhere more so than in the sequence of events told at the end of last week's parsha and the beginning of this. Without Joseph's acts – his interpretation of the steward's dream and his plea for freedom – he would not have left prison. But without divine intervention in the form of Pharaoh's dreams, it would also not have happened. This is the paradoxical interplay of fate and freewill. As Rabbi Akiva said: "All is foreseen yet freedom of choice is given" (Avot 3:15). Isaac Bashevis Singer put it wittily: "We have to believe in free will: we have no choice." We and God are co-authors of the human story. Without our efforts we can achieve nothing. But without God's help we can achieve nothing either. Judaism found a simple way of resolving the paradox. For the bad we do, we take responsibility. For the good we achieve, we thank God. Joseph is our mentor. When he is forced to act harshly he weeps. But when he tells his brothers of his success he attributes it to God. That is how we too should live.



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.
 All conversations and emails are kept confidential.



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 516-487-6100

Rabbi Dale Polakoff, Rabbi
Rabbi Ian Lichter, Assistant Rabbi
Dr. Ephraim Wolf, z"l, Rabbi Emeritus
Yitzy Spinner, 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
Erran Kagan, President
Harold Domnitch, Chairman of the Board
Lisa Septimus, Yoetzet Halacha 516-415-1111

Sunday Shacharit on December 9th
Rosh Chodesh & Chanukah
 The 7:30 am minyan will be in the
 Braun Youth Center
 The 8:30 am minyan will take place in the
 Beit Midrash accompanied by an
 instrumental Hallel led by Chazzan Spinner.

Great Neck Synagogue Shabbat Speakers Program



Shabbat Chanukah
December 8th, 2018

RABBI ARI LAMM
Special Advisor to the
President of Yeshiva University

Rabbi Ari Lamm is the Special Advisor to the President of Yeshiva University. He works closely with the president on all matters concerning the university's mission and vision, and oversees intellectual and philosophical initiatives emerging from the Office of the President. Rabbi Lamm received his BA from Yeshiva University. He earned his MA, as a US-UK Fulbright Scholar, in Jewish Studies and Eastern Christianity from University College London, as well as an MA from Princeton University in Religion, and semikhah from RIETS. Most recently, he was a Resident Scholar at the Jewish Center in Manhattan. He is currently pursuing his Phd in ancient Judaism and Christianity at Princeton University.

Shabbat Drasha:
Vigilante Justice
and the Story of Chanukah

Kiddush Class:
The Maccabean Revolt -
From Judaism to Christianity
and Back Again

Seudah Shlishit:
The Wizard vs. The Prophet

For dedications to our Speakers Program please contact the synagogue office at 516.487.6100 or mtwersky@gns.org
Sponsorships Available at \$180, \$360, \$500, \$750

**GNS Chanukah Bash
Shabbat December 8**

**"DON'T MISS"
YOUTH EVENT!!**

**Prizes, Dreidel Competition,
Bingo! Luncheon, Ticket Hunt
& Grand Raffle!**

**Please pick
up prizes
after
Shabbat**

**Grades 1-8
pickup 4:00pm**



PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE
GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE
ANNUAL DINNER

HONORING
RABBI DALE POLAKOFF

IN CELEBRATION OF
**30 YEARS OF DEDICATION
AS OUR MARA D'ATRA**

FOR A NIGHT OF FUN & MUSIC

**SATURDAY NIGHT
7:30 PM
DECEMBER 15, 2018**

8 TEVET 5779

TEMPLE ISRAEL
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RABBI CHIC
SKIP THE TIE

**GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE
ANNUAL DINNER
HONORING
RABBI DALE POLAKOFF**

BUY RAFFLE TICKETS NOW

Take advantage of the pre-sale discounts by logging on to www.gns.org/dinner/

Your pre-printed tickets will be waiting for you at the door.

If you cannot attend, please email mtwersky@gns.org and he will enter tickets for you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RABBI POLAKOFF'S SHABBOS DRASHA THROUGH 5779 IS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF DOVID BEN NISSAN v'LEAH FOR OTHER SUCH OPPORTUNITIES PLEASE CONTACT HOWARD WOLF 516-643-3344

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

OFFICE HOURS FOR RABBI POLAKOFF

Tuesdays 10:00-12:00; Thursdays 1:00-3:00. He can always be reached on his cell 516.637.3674 or at dpolakoff@gns.org.

KFAR YELADIM DAVID GALA DINNER

The Kfar Yeladim David Gala Dinner is to take place on **Tuesday December 4th at 7:30 pm** at Great Neck Synagogue. Guests of Honor are **Sam & Magda Yehaskel**. RSVP at kathy4kyd@gmail.com.

GNS YOUTH CHANUKAH BASH

This Shabbat Dec. 8th: Grades 1-8 Pick up time is 4:00 pm.

GNS GUEST SHABBAT SPEAKER FOR CHANUKAH

Rabbi Ari Lamm will be at GNS this Shabbat, Dec. 8th. In addition to giving the drasha, he will also give a Kiddush class.

CHAVERIM CENTER

Join us on next **Wed. Dec. 12** from 11:30-2:00 for the next Chaverim Center.

GNS HUNGER INITIATIVE

Thanks to the GNS Hunger Initiative for providing Hanukkah joy to many families in need, sending Israeli cookies & teas, as well as fruit, latke mix and other Hanukkah treats.

WOMEN'S LEARNING

Thank you to Sara Feldschreiber for hosting the women's shiur this past week.

NORTH SHORE HEBREW ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL

Join us for our Open House on **Sunday December 9** from **10:00-1:00** to learn about our college preparatory General Studies courses and inspiring Judaic Studies curriculum including the only co-ed Beit Midrash program in New York. We look forward to welcoming you and your family to the NSHAHS experience.

ZOA OF LONG ISLAND

ZOA Long Island presents Anti-Semitism and Israel Bashing on Campus - What you need to know and how we can fight it! **December 13, 2018 at 7:00PM** at the home of Mark & Sandy Gold - Sushi, Saki and Sweets will be served. For more information or to RSVP, email Deborah at dperetz@zoa.org.

MIAMI MARATHON—ANNA GLASMAN

Anna Glasman is hoping to raise \$5,000 for Chai Lifeline and has organized a team for the Miami Marathon in January in memory of her close friend Adeena Paknoush who passed away from cancer almost a year ago. The link to her personal page is: <https://www.teamlifeline.org/team-lifeline-miami/annasteam>

UPCOMING EVENTS AT GREAT NECK SYNAGOGUE

Dec. 8: Shabbat Speaker: Rabbi Ari Lamm
Dec. 8: GNS Youth Chanukah Bash
Dec. 12: Chaverim Center
Dec. 15: GNS Annual Dinner

MAZAL TOVS & COMMUNITY NEWS

Mazal Tov to Ramesh & Steven Edelman on the Bar Mitzvah of their son **Joseph**.

Mazal Tov to Vivianne & Arnold Breitbart on the upcoming marriage of their daughter **Marcelle** to **Ben Sandel**.

Mazal Tov to Susan & Bruce Decter on the forthcoming marriage of their daughter **Emma** to **Jack Strulowitz**.
Mazal Tov as well to grandparents **Anita and Hal Beretz**.

Mazal Tov to Beth & Gary Orbach on the engagement of their daughter **Naomi** to **Michael Bouaziz**.

Mazal Tov to Cheryl & Ron Silverman on the engagement of their son **Jonathan** to **Nechama Neren**.

YCQ DINNER

The Yeshiva of Central Queens Annual Dinner, honoring our own **Randi Luxenberg '73** with the Distinguished Alumni of the Year Award will take place on Saturday night, **March 2nd 2019** at Old Westbury Hebrew Congregation. RSVP at DINNER@YCQ.US or call 718.793.8500 ext. 300.

Y A H R Z E I T

Saturday, 30 Kislev

Edith Lubin for Annie Goldberg
Gary Orbach for Mark Orbach
Cheryl Silverman for Mark Orbach
Drora Brody for Mazal Yefet

Sunday, 1 Tevet

Chava Shalmon for Yosef Grinszpan
Steven Kashan for Ezra Kashan
Stuart Schwartz for Herbert Schwartz
Martin Sokol for Milton Sokol
Gerald Traub for Emil Traub

Monday, 2 Tevet

Alla Landa for Leo Fleysher
Joseph Hyman for Leon Hyman
Joe Rosenthal for Paul Rosenthal

Tuesday, 3 Tevet

Doreen Zobel for Harry Geist
Leonard Kahn for Robert Kahn
Joan Katz for Nathan William Rezak
Joan Katz for Max Sadinoff
Susan Frisch for Felix Samelson
Lev Dynkin for Rakhil Shifman
Semyon Dynkin for Rakhil Shifman
Jerrald Weinstein for Morris Weinstein

Wednesday, 4 Tevet

Israel Freeman for Naftali ben Alter & Rifka
Chaya Gilad for Naftali Freeman
Sharon Goldwyn for Emanuel Goldwyn
Judith Soleimani for Lilli Hajdu
Ilene Schuman for Loius Tabachnick
Baruch Toledano for Jamila Toledano
Paul Brody for Miriam Weiner

Thursday, 5 Tevet

Albert Miller for Molly Miller
Deena Heisler for Samuel Jacob Wachsberg

Friday, 6 Tevet

Randi Luxenberg for Evelyn Beeber
Stewart Kaplan for David Kaplan
Rabbi Shimon Wolf for Rebeca Miller
Susan Goldman for Ilana Pachinsky