

Congregation Sons of Israel

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Upcoming Events

Dear Women of the Community,

Please join me as I observe the 16th Yahrzeit of my beloved father, Dr. Mark Moskowitz Z"L, Moshe ben Avraham, Saturday night, September 9th at 9:15 p.m at our home, 2845 Liberty St. This Yahrzeit Melave Malka has truly become an important and meaningful part of my commemorating my father. I look forward to sharing words of Torah with you and reconnecting as we enter the High Holiday period.

Warmly,
Rachel Wilensky
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A **Youth Chesed Project and Meeting** will be held on Sunday, Sept. 10th from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Come pack and decorate personal hygiene products for the Allentown homeless shelter while enjoying snacks and music. For more information, please contact Alyssa at arkomarow@gmail.com

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Yachad University classes begin on September 12th at the JCC. Jeanette Eichenwald will teach a class Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. on **"Future Tense: Jews, Judaism and Israel in the 21st Century."** Rabbi Wilensky will teach a class at 10:45 a.m. on **"A Realistic Approach to the Fanciful World of Midrash"**. Enroll online at www.jewishlehighvalley.org/yachad.

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Join Sons of Israel's Tuesday night Jewish Philosophy Class with Rabbi Wilensky as they start the New Year studying Maimonides' **"Shmoneh Perakim"** (Eight Chapters). This class will analyze Maimonides' guide to improving one's relationship with Hashem, others, and oneself through cognitive behavioral change. **The class meets at 8:15 p.m. and begins on Sept 12th.**

Regular Classes

Daily: Daf Yomi, Sunday–Friday 7:30 AM
Tuesday & Thursday Mornings:
"...Jews, Judaism and Israel" with Jeanette Eichenwald at JCC 9:30 AM
"...Fanciful World of Midrash" with Rabbi Wilensky at JCC 10:45 AM
Tuesday Evening:
"Shmoneh Perakim", with Rabbi Wilensky at the shul 8:15 PM
Shabbos:
Shabbos Morning Gemara Shiur with Dr. Henry Grossbard 8:00 AM
"Contemporary Halachic Issues from the Parsha", with R' Wilensky 12 noon
Daf Yomi 1 hr. before Mincha



קהילת בני ישראל
Congregation Sons of Israel

Parshat Ki Tavo
18 Elul, 5777
September 9, 2017

Announcements

Kiddush is presented by Deborah Degani and Judy Livny in honor of Nathan Fisher's engagement to Chava Gottlieb.

Mazel Tov to Harry and Amy Fisher on Nathan and Chava's engagement.

Parents, please be mindful of your children that they not play in the main sanctuary during kiddush. Thank you for your cooperation.

If you need **seats for the High Holidays** and have not turned in your seating request form, please contact the office.

Kever Avos: Our annual memorial services will be held on Sunday, September 17th, at 11:00 a.m. on the cemetery grounds in Fullerton. Rain or shine.

Shabbos Schedule

8:00 AM	Beginner's Gemara Class
9:00 AM	Shacharis
10:30 AM	Jr. Congregation
12:00 Noon	Contemporary Halachic Issues from the Parsha: "Hasagas G'vul: Judaism's View on Competition in Business"
5:50 PM	Daf Yomi
6:50 PM	Mincha, Shalosh Se'udos,
8:03 PM	Shabbat concludes

Selichot begins next Motzei Shabbat at 1:00 a.m. at Sons of Israel, preceded by a community lecture at Brith Sholom at 8:30 p.m.

Minyanim September 10-16

	Sunday 9/10	Monday 9/11	Tuesday 9/12	Wed 9/13	Thursday 9/14	Friday 9/15	Shabbos 9/16
AM	8:30 AM	6:30 AM	6:45 AM	6:45 AM	6:30 AM	6:45 AM	9:00 AM
PM	6:55 PM	6:55 PM	6:55 PM	6:55 PM	6:55 PM	6:50 PM	6:40 PM

Ki Tavo:

Walls Have Ears

By Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

We all have our secret lives.

I don't mean to say that each of us has a sinister side, which we wickedly act out in some deep, dark, private world. What I do mean is that we all act differently when we are alone, or with a few close intimates, than we act when we are out in public, among others.

There is no one who is so behaviorally consistent that he is the same person in the privacy of his own home as he is in the workplace or marketplace.

Nor do I suggest that there is anything wrong with the fact that we each are two persons, and perhaps even multiple persons, depending upon the social context in which we find ourselves.

It is problematic, however, when we act hypocritically, presenting a pious and altruistic face to the world, while acting cruelly and crudely in our own homes and with our families.

In this week's Torah portion, *Parshat Ki Tavo*, there appears a particularly piercing and perceptive verse:

"Cursed be he who strikes his fellow in secret—and all the people shall say, Amen."

In no way does the Torah imply that he who strikes his fellow in public is to be blessed. Rather, the Torah recognizes the tendency humans have to reserve the worst side of themselves for their secret social settings, even when they behave meritoriously in their public social worlds. It is the façade, the contrast, between public demonstrations of righteousness and private acts of fiendishness that is cursed.

Sinning in secret is particularly offensive in the religious personality. He or she who believes in a G-d who is omniscient, and who yet sins in private, is guilty, not merely of hypocrisy, but of heresy. If G-d knows all, how can you delude yourself into thinking that your secret misdeeds can go undetected?

The *Shulchan Aruch*, the Jewish code of law, opens with a statement recognizing that a person's behavior, when he is alone at home, is very different from his behavior when he appears before a great king. And it urges the religious person to be aware that he is always in the presence of the great King of Kings, the all-knowing G-d.

But it is not only from a spiritual perspective that it is wrong to act demeaningly in private. There is a practical aspect as well to the importance of behaving properly even in secret. There always is the very real possibility that our secrets will be "leaked" and that things we were sure would never be known will become embarrassingly exposed.

I know of no place where this is conveyed more cogently than in these words of caution, to be found in *Ecclesiastes* (10:20):

"Don't revile a king, even in your intimate thoughts.
Don't revile a rich man, even in your bedchamber;
For a bird of the air may carry the utterance,
And a winged creature may report the word."

Indeed, as our Sages say (see Rashi on *Berachot* 8b), the walls have ears.

The passage in this week's Torah portion that condemns secret violence also gives quite a comprehensive catalog of other sins which tend to be performed behind closed doors. They include elder abuse, criminal business practices, deceiving blind persons, subverting the rights of the helpless, incest and bestiality, and the acceptance of

bribery. Quite a list, and one that has certainly not lost its relevance over the centuries.

I am not so naïve as to think that we are required to act in an absolutely identical fashion in our "secret chambers" as we do out in the "real world." To a certain extent, it is necessary and right that we maintain a façade of sorts when we interact in public. We all have, and need, our masks and personas.

But many times, we go too far and indeed split our personalities between the Dr. Jekylls of our external visible behavior and the Mr. Hydes of our inner sancta. How well advised we would be to set as an objective for ourselves the words of the daily prayer book:

"A person should always be G-d-fearing, privately and publicly, acknowledging the truth and speaking it in his heart."