



Shabbat Shalom!

4:16 pm Candle Lighting
 4:20 pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv
 8:45 am Mishnayot class
 9:00 am Shacharit
 9:35 am Latest Shema
 Parasha p. 250 Haftorah p. 1144
 3:15 pm Gemara Class
 3:35 pm Maimonides The Eight Chapters
 4:00 pm Mincha & Seudah Shlisheet
 5:15 pm Maariv & Havdalah

Kiddush is sponsored by Renee & David Hirsch commemorating the 2nd Yahrzeit of her mother Betty Feit Z”L
Seudah Shlisheet sponsorship available.

Upcoming Sponsorships

- ☆ January 3 Brian Kirschner
- ☆ January 10 Kim & Joseph Trigoboff
- ☆ February 7 Jennifer & Jerry Revich

Mark Your Calendar!

- ☆ **Next Sunday January 4 at 10:30 am: Rabbi and Rebetzin Algaze invite you to a conversation about their future plans. We look forward to speaking with all our members and friends about the plans and ideas for the future of Havurat.**
- ☆ **Thursday, January 8 at noon: Lunch & Learn**

NEW CLASSES by the Rabbi

THE EIGHT CHAPTERS

On Shabbat afternoon, the Rabbi will be teaching an essential classical text by Maimonides, *The Eight Chapters*. Originally written in Arabic, Maimonides' Introduction to his Commentary on Avot, known as "The Eight Chapters," has been lauded as the best introduction to Maimonides' philosophy—perhaps the best introduction to all medieval Jewish philosophy. Join us for a fascinating book full of psychological and spiritual insights.

PATACH ELIAHU

Mondays at 7 pm
This Kabbalistic piece is an Aramaic, Kabbalistic discourse from the introduction to Tikunei Zohar 17a. It is named after its opening words and is attributed to Elijah the Prophet. Considered a foundational text of Kabbalah, Patach Eliyahu is known for enumerating and summarizing the sefirot, corresponding them to parts of the body, and describing the infiniteness and uniqueness of God. The course will introduce some of the basic concepts of Kabbalah.

Asara B'Tevet

This Tuesday, December 30th is the fast of the 10th of Tevet.

On Asarah B'Tevet, the 10th day of the Jewish month of Tevet, in the year 3336 from Creation (425 BCE), the armies of the Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem. Thirty months later— on 9 Tammuz 3338—the city walls were breached, and on 9 Av of that year the Holy Temple was destroyed. The Jewish people were exiled to Babylonia for 70 years.

Asarah B'Tevet (this year, December 30, 2025) is observed as a day of fasting, mourning and repentance. We refrain from food and drink from daybreak to nightfall, and add selichot and other special supplements to our prayers. The fast ends at nightfall.

Hanukkah Party Saturday December 20th, 2025



An excellent Hanukkah party took place at Havurat Yisrael last Saturday night, with a friendly, festive atmosphere and fantastic music featuring a performance by Avram Pengas. Rabbi Algaze lit the candles for the seventh night of Hanukkah and there was joyful singing and dancing. The guests enjoyed delicious latkes prepared by the Hausman Family and delicious arepas prepared by Simcha Kulaya. Thanks to the party sponsors: Judy & Stuart Rosen, Arlene Ross, Yael Yopez and Yakov Simkhayev.



As we approach a new calendar year, maximize your 2025 tax deductions. Please bring your shul account up-to-date.

EIRUV CONTRIBUTION

Please support the eiruv. Send a check with your contribution to Havurat Yisrael Chessed Fund.

SUNDAY Dec. 28 / 8 Tevet	MONDAY Dec. 29 / 9 Tevet	TUESDAY Dec. 30 / 10 Tevet FAST DAY	WEDNESDAY Dec. 31 / 11 Tevet	THURSDAY Jan. 1 / 12 Tevet NEW YEARS DAY	FRIDAY Jan. 2 / 13 Tevet
7:30 am Gemara Shiur 8:00 am Shacharit 9:30 am Rabbi Algaze: Parasha Class in Spanish	6:25 am Gemara Shiur 6:45 am Shacharit 7:00 pm — Rabbi Algaze's class	6:07 am Fast Begins 6:30 am Shacharit 4:15 pm Mincha/Maariv 5:05 pm Fast Ends	6:25 am Gemara Shiur 6:45 am Shacharit	7:30 am Gemara Shiur 8:00 am Shacharit 7:00 pm Class with Rabbi Levitt by Zoom https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8868114170?pwd=Ulo4YkSMU2YrcUJ2WVpPaHNBTFFoZz09	6:25 am Gemara Shiur 6:45 am Shacharit 4:22 pm Candle Lighting 4:25 pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat

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THE GRAND TAPESTRY

By Rabbi David Algaze

“It was not you that sent me hither, but G-d and He has appointed me as a father to Pharaoh and a lord to his whole house and a ruler throughout the land of Egypt.” (Beresheet 45:8)

The most tragic event in a family is coming to a close. After years of brotherly enmity and rivalry, punctuated by a murderous design and abject callousness to the cries of a brother, we arrive now at the denouement of the story. Joseph has become indeed the highest of the siblings and they in turn have acknowledged his superiority by calling themselves “his servants.” Yet the pain, the regret and the shame have not gone away. They stand in awe, almost petrified as they face the brother they thought long gone. Their memories are torturing them as they recall those fateful moments, as Reuven tells it, “Did I not tell you, do not sin against the lad and you did not listen to me?” (id. 42:22) The brothers themselves murmur to one another, “We are guilty concerning our brother when we saw the anguish of his soul as he cried to us and we did not hear” (ibid. 21)

Joseph reacts in the most comforting manner, reassuring them that he still considers himself their brother, extending towards them an unexpected and majestic warmth and love. “Do not worry, do not be sad!” he implores as he witnesses their emotional breakdown and untold shame and humiliation. His point is that he does not regard them as the real causes of his exile and suffering. He was sent to Egypt by a Higher Force, Who planned everything in the most perfect fashion. He insists that he knows that “It was not you who sent me here but G-d.” At a later time, as he comprehends what happened in the deepest perception, Joseph says, “You may have thought to do something against me for an evil purpose, but G-d made it into a cause for good.” (id. 50:20)

In this episode of comforting the brothers, Joseph is expressing a philosophy of life that has very far-reaching implications. The central insight is that all events in human affairs are ultimately guided by G-d. Whatever happens to us, whatever success, failure, loss or gain, friendliness and hostility—all have their roots in the One Who creates and governs the world. This story and particularly Joseph’s interpretation of the events is very illustrative of G-d’s role in the world affairs and in the life of every man. As Rabbi Hirsch notes, “There is hardly any other story that presents to our eyes to a similar extent the ways of the Divine Providence.” From small acts that may seem insignificant to people, G-d is able to weave a tapestry of historical reality that would have been unimaginable to the participants in the events. Rabbi Hirsch employs the verse in Proverbs (26:10) “The Master produces everything, he hires the fool, he hires the passersby” to elucidate G-d’s methods. Just as a wise man draws other people to do something he does not wish to do directly, in the same manner G-d is able to achieve His goals by utilizing man’s actions and placing them in a context that yields the desired results. He brings everything from the smallest parts, as the smallest seeds create larger trees and plants, and equally in the social realm, He weaves small parts into large and momentous realities. Without knowing it and without wishing it, people bring about His ends as fools in the night.

In this story, the threads are clear to all and Joseph reiterates this pivotal point in order to teach us a lesson in the ways of G-d. Other times and in other situations, the threads may not be as visible yet they too will all conform to create the grand tapestry that G-d has designed.

G-d’s purpose was to bring about the exile in Egypt as He had foretold Abraham early on at the Covenant Between the Parts. (“*Brit ben habetarim*”, Beresheet 15). The reason for this sad sojourn in a foreign land may have been precisely in order to forge the family of Jacob into the nation of Israel. Had they remained in Canaan, the family may have slowly integrated into the Canaanite society and the

adaptive mechanisms would have yielded a syncretistic approach to religion and robbed us of the spiritual purity of the Abrahamic tradition. By coming instead into another nation, and one that was particularly antagonistic to the shepherds and Jewish principles, they had to develop that particular characteristic of the Jews of every generation, namely the separateness from the host culture even as they participate and contribute to it. In no other condition would the people of Israel have been developed and G-d’s Supreme wisdom required this experience.

Each person played a part in this saga. Jacob initiated it by his gift of the coat to Joseph. As the Rabbis put it, “By the two oz. of silk that Jacob spent on the embroidery of Joseph’s coat, the Covenant of the Parts came to be fulfilled.” The brothers’ intemperance and their ensuing hatred provoked the next step while unknowingly Midianites and Ishmaelites completed the task of bringing Joseph into Egypt. The other actors in this play, Potiphar, his wife’s lust and Joseph’s subsequent imprisonment gave birth to his encounter with high-ranking members of the court and his ultimate ascent to become “ruler in Egypt.” Who could have predicted all these parts and their final resolution? Yet, G-d knew from the outset where each part was going to fit into the entire puzzle. As an artist that brings different pieces of threads and colors knows how the final tapestry would look, so G-d manages everything from the smallest and most insignificant pieces and utilizes them to create the grand tapestry He wants.

This lesson teaches us not to despair when we do not understand a certain twist in our lives or be disappointed that something behaved differently than we expected. We must understand that everything that happens or exists is being used by G-d for a very definite purpose, even though unknowable to us and therefore inconsequential in our eyes. Moreover, it teaches us to be patient and not sense defeat or loss prematurely. Even when things look bleak and hopeless, when everything seems to be lost, G-d may be planning a greater event that will give us the peace and tranquility for which our souls yearn. It took many years, many miles and many individuals, but at the end the Design became clear to all. So it is with us and our lives; it may take years, many actors and journeys but the destination may be reached and sooner than we thought.



New English Class with Aaron Levy **by Zoom or in person.**
Thursdays at 7pm at Havurat Yisrael. Please contact the office or Miriam Portela for more details and to register.

Zoom Classes with Rabbi Avrohom Levitt

Link for the zoom class :

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8868114170?
pwd=Ulo4Yk5MU2YrcjJ2WVpPaHNBTFoZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8868114170?pwd=Ulo4Yk5MU2YrcjJ2WVpPaHNBTFoZz09)

Topic: Living Shabbos by Rabbi Sutton

Monday to Friday 9:30 — 10:00 am

Everyone is welcome!

Refuah Shlema Alte Ester Riva bat Devorah Shifra, Yaakov ben Leah, Tzvi ben Sara, Talia Leah bat Sarah, Miriam bat Rivka, Reuven ben Malka, Baruch Chaim ben Basha, Malka bat Simcha, Hannah bat Yehudit, Binyamin Baer ben Chana, Hillel Zvi Yehuda ben Tzina, Joseph David ben Rachel, Abraham ben Devorah Shifra, Israel ben Devora Shifra, Sherry Plutzker, Chaya Sarah bat Bunye, Tuvia Moshe ben Chanah Miriam, Baruch Chaim ben Basha, Chayah Rivka bat Brucha, Sharona Mindy bat Rivkah Rachel.