

Parasha Perspectives

Parashat Vayera tells of the three angels who visited Avraham and later arrived in the condemned city of Sedom, where they were invited into the home of Lot, Avraham's nephew. The Midrash (Bereishit Rabba 50) notes that in the narrative of the angels' visit to Avraham, the Torah refers to them as "anashim" ("men" or "people"), while in the context of their visit to Sedom, they are called "malakhim" ("angels"). The reason, the Midrash explains, is that "to Avraham, whose stature was great, they appeared in the image of men, but to Lot, since his stature was lowly, they appeared in the image of angels."

The common explanation of this Midrash is that from the heights of Avraham's stature of piety, angels seem like ordinary people; they do not make much of an impression. It is only from the perspective of ordinary people, like Lot, that angels are perceived as something greater than human beings.

Some commentators (cited in Yalkut Yehuda), however, explained differently. When the Midrash speaks of the angels appearing to Avraham "in the image of anashim," it means that from Avraham's standpoint, the angels may just as well have been ordinary people. The generous hospitality and warmth he extended to the guests had nothing at all to do with their personal stature. What mattered to Avraham was only that they were anashim, human beings, who deserved a place to eat and rest from their journey in the hot sun. Lot, however, invited "malakhim." He realized that these strangers were not ordinary people, and it was for that reason that he extended an invitation. Lot's hospitality was reserved for those whose presence would bring him honor and satisfaction. Unlike Avraham, who extended hospitality to "anashim," Lot welcomed only "malakhim."

This insight into the difference between Avraham and Lot reminds us to carefully assess the motivation behind the acts of chesed we perform. At times we extend ourselves to do favors not out of genuine concern for the beneficiary, but for our own honor, to earn the respect of the beneficiary or of others who will hear of the favors. Like Lot, we forget that all "anashim," regardless of who there are, deserve to be treated kindly. Avraham sets the example of kindness and generosity extended to all people, irrespective of any social "points" that are scored as a result.

By Rabbi David Silverberg, from the Virtual Beit Midrash (www.vbm-torah.org).

To submit a Dvar Torah to the weekly Keshet, please email bulletin@mtsinaishul.com.

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Sunday 8:30 - 12:00
Mon, Tues, Thurs 9:30 - 5:00
Wednesday **9:00 - 10:00 a.m.**
Friday 8:30 - 12:00
212-568-1900 • office@mtsinaishul.com



The Mount Sinai Keshet

November 6-7, 2009 • 20 Marcheshvan, 5770 • Parashat Vayera

Shabbat Schedule

Candle Lighting	4:28 p.m.
Mincha	4:33 p.m.
Chulent Tisch	8:00 p.m.
Shacharit	7:00, 9:00 a.m.
Kri'at Shema before	9:06 a.m.
Rabbi Schwartz's Gemara shiur	3:05 p.m.
Mincha	4:05 p.m.
<i>Seuda Shlishit following Mincha</i>	
Shkia	4:45 p.m.
Maariv/Havdala	5:32 p.m.

**Tefilla Schedule
Week of November 8th**

<i>Shacharit</i>	
Sunday	7:30, 8:30, 9:00 a.m.
Mon., Thurs.	6:45, 7:20, 8:00 a.m.
Tues., Wed., Fri	7:00, 7:30, 8:00 a.m.
<i>Mincha/Maariv</i>	
Sunday -Thursday	4:30 p.m.
<i>Next Shabbat, Parashat Chayei Sarah</i>	
Candles	4:21 p.m.
Mincha	4:26 p.m.

Gabbat Notice

The shul is considering starting a 10pm Ma'ariv and wants to make sure there is sufficient interest. If you are interested, please see Akiva Stechler.



HATZOLA: (212) 230 - 1000

Sponsorships

The **ERUV** is sponsored by **Elie and Leezy Klein** in honor of all of those who worked so diligently to extend the eruv across Broadway. May you be zocheh to extend it into Fort Tryon Park as well.

The Eruv DOES extend across Broadway, but does not extend into Fort Tryon Park. For an updated map of the Eruv please go to our website or see the map in the shul lobby. If you are not sure where you can carry, please contact the rabbi or a member of the eruv committee.

The **KESHER** and **SEUDA SHLISHIT** are not sponsored this week.

Please send all announcements to office@mtsinaishul.com and bulletin@mtsinaishul.com by 5 p.m. on Wednesday. Thank you!

**This Week...
Rabbi Schwartz's Office Hours**

Monday: 9:00 -10:00 p.m.
Wednesday: approx. 9:30 -10:30 p.m.
(after the 8:45 p.m. shiur)

Holocaust Library Hours

Tuesday: 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

This Week at Mt. Sinai

Sunday:

Krystallnacht Program, 7:30 p.m. The speaker is Rabbi Jonathan Rosenblat of the Riverdale Jewish Center and his topic will be "The Legacy of Krystallnacht: The Vulnerability of the Normal."

Men's Basketball, 7:30 p.m. Contact: Daniel Falik, daniel@danielfalik.com

Monday:

Women's Aerobics, 7:30 p.m. Contact: Anat Coleman, (212) 740 2740.

Lecture by Matty Lichtenstein, 8:30 p.m. "The Good, The Bad, and the Holy: Ethics in Foundational Jewish Thinkers". This week: Modern Religion and the Ideology of Dogma: R. Dessler.

Women's Basketball, 9:00 p.m. Contact: Susanne Goldstone, susqhb@gmail.com.

Tuesday:

Women's Basketball, 9:00 p.m. Contact: Elie Appleson, elie.appleson@gmail.com.

Wednesday:

Men's Basketball, 8:00 p.m. Contact: Daniel Falik, daniel@danielfalik.com

Class with Rabbi Schwartz, 8:45 p.m. Final class in a 5 part series on the laws of Yichud.

Shabbat:

Shabbat Mevarchim Women's Shiur, "Formulaic or Fundamental?: A Closer Look at *Birchot haTorah*," given by Chava Chaitovsky.

Mt. Sinai DVD Drive

Donate new or used DVDs (with or without covers) to benefit the patients at the **Children's Hospital at Montefiore**.



Drop off your DVDs at the following drop off sites from now through **November 18th**:

1. Mt. Sinai Jewish Center, outside the office
2. Shlomo Benzaquen - 182 Bennett Ave, Apt 3E
3. Elie Appleson - 56 Bennett Ave, Apt 4F
4. Debbie Rybak - 21 Bennett Ave, Apt 33
5. Benjy Gottesman - 590 Ft Wash. Ave, Apt 6G
6. Yael Barzideh - 736 W. 187 St, Apt 603
7. Shifra Apter - 707 W. 192nd St, Apt 5E

For more information or for questions, contact: Debbie Rybak (debbierybak@gmail.com), Estee Psaty (SpinFlips@gmail.com), or Chessed@mtsinaishul.com

Save the dates!

- The **Mt. Sinai Blood Drive** will be Sunday, **November 15th** from 11:00-4:30. To make an appointment or volunteer please contact Ariela Adler: arielasadler@gmail.com
- On **Monday, November 16** at 8pm, Rabbi Josh Yuter will be giving a lecture on **Healthcare and Halacha**.
- Mark your calendars! **Rabbi David Fohrman** will be BACK starting **Tuesday, November 17** at 8:30 pm.
- The **Family Pajama Party** is coming up on Motzei Shabbat, **November 21st** at 6:30 p.m. for kids under 5. For more info: familylife@mtsinaishul.com



Taste of Limmud NY in Washington Heights

November 17, 2009, 7-9pm
Hebrew Tabernacle Congregation
551 Fort Washington Ave, NY, NY

RSVP for Taste at www.limmudny.org

Join us for an exciting evening of learning and shmoozing. Text. Prayer. Activism. Art. Film. Whatever your interest, it's all here under one roof. Don't miss this chance to experience a taste of the Limmud NY Conference and learn with our community. Refreshments will be served. There is a \$10 minimum donation which is paid at the door.



This event is brought to you in partnership with Limmud NY, Hebrew Tabernacle Congregation, Fort Tryon Jewish Center, the Pardes Institute, Mechon Hadar, American Jewish World Service.

Shabbat Play Space Update

The Shabbat play space for children under 5 has been moved from the gym to the Multi-purpose room, effective immediately, and will be open at 10am. Parents, please remember that each child using the play space must be supervised by an adult at all times.

Welcome New Members

Adam Soclof
Michael Langer
Shabtai Horowitz



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