

GNHC CHADASHOT



Saturday 26 JUNE 2010

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Armed Forces Shabbat & Student Chaplaincy Shabbat Parshat Balak (Perek 6) 14 Tammuz 5770 - 26 June 2010

Artscroll Soncino

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| Sedra | 856 | 915 |
| Maftir | 874 | 929 |
| Haftorah | 1189 | 929 |

Shabbat Youth Service

Kiddush Shiur after Kiddush

Mincha & Maariv 10.30 pm Short Shiur on Ethics of the Father and Torah Portion end of Shabbat 11.40 pm

Tuesday
Friendship Club
1.45 pm - 3.45 pm

Wednesday
Mother and Toddlers
10.00 - 11.30 am

Thursday
2nd Minyan at 9.15 am
Refreshments
Tea & Cake

Mazal Tov
To Sharyn & Roger Mitchell on the birth of a grandson, a son to Chloe & Anthony Mitchell and a great grandson to Freda Mitchell.

To Pearl & Morris Lipsey on the birth of a granddaughter, a daughter to Lara & Jeremy Lipsey.

To Sharman Hepner & Herbert Hepner on the birth of a granddaughter, a daughter to Katy & Mark Levine and a great granddaughter to Sylvia Miller.

The Three Weeks

The Three Weeks is an annual mourning period that falls out in the summer. This is when we mourn the destruction of the Holy Temple and our launch into a still-ongoing Exile. The period begins on the 17th of the Hebrew month of Tammuz, a fast day that marks the day when the walls of Jerusalem were breached by the Romans in 69 CE. It reaches its climax and concludes with the fast of the 9th of Av, the date when both Holy Temples were set aflame. This is the saddest day of the Jewish calendar, and it is also the date of other tragedies, spanning our nation's history.

Observances:

There are various mourning-related customs and observances that are followed for the entire three-week period. We do not cut our hair, purchase new clothes, or listen to music. No weddings are held.

Tammuz 17 is a fast day, on which we refrain from eating and drinking from dawn to nightfall.

Those who mourn the destruction of Jerusalem will merit seeing it rebuilt with the coming of Moshiach. The final **Nine Days** of the Three Weeks is a time of intensified mourning. Starting on the 1st of Av, we refrain from eating meat or drinking wine and from wearing freshly laundered clothes.

Av 9 is a more stringent fast than Tammuz 17. It begins at sunset of the previous evening, when we gather in the synagogue to read the Book of Lamentations. Besides fasting, we abstain from additional pleasures: washing, applying lotions or creams, wearing leather shoes, and marital relations. Until midday, we sit on the floor or on low stools.

There is more to the Three Weeks than fasting and lamentation. Our Sages tell us that those who mourn the destruction of Jerusalem will merit seeing it rebuilt with the coming of Moshiach. May that day come soon, and then all the mournful dates on the calendar will be transformed into days of tremendous joy and happiness.

The Congregation wishes "Long Life"

to all those who commemorating a Yahrzeit.

14 Tammuz-26 June 2010

Mr. S.H. Berman
Mrs. R. Delmonte

16 Tammuz-28 June 2010

Mr. S.H. Berman
Mr. D. Jacobs
Mrs. C. Peters

17 Tammuz-29 June 2010

Mrs. B. Caplan

18 Tammuz-30 June 2010

Mr. S.L. Antick
Mr. H. Dykes
Mrs. W. Gardner
Mrs. S. Karter

Mr. J. Kingsley

Mr. M. Lipsey

19 Tammuz-1 July 2010

Mr. S. Carr

Mrs. F. Freeman

Mr. I. Gillman

Mrs. M. Gold

Mr. N.D. Shaffer

20 Tammuz-2 July 2010

Mrs. S.H. Berman

Miss J. Grace

Mrs. H. Jacobson

Mr. E. Leviten

Times of services

Shacharit: Sunday 8.45 am, Monday & Thursday 7.20 am, **Tuesday 7.00 am**, Wednesday & Friday 7.30 am.

Mincha & Mariv: Sunday to Friday (excluding Tuesday) 8.05 pm (candle lighting on Friday should be done between 8.17 pm 8.35 pm) and **Tuesday 7.45 pm**

This Weeks **Kiddush** is in celebration of **Maurice Marks' 80th birthday**, and is sponsored by his **grandchildren Tessa and Fergal, Eve, Elliot, Naomi and Gemma."**

FAST OF TAMMUZ, Tuesday 29th June

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|----------------------------|----------|
| Fast begins | 1.21 am |
| Shacharit | 7.00 am |
| Minchah followed by Maariv | 7.45 pm |
| Fast terminates | 11.23 pm |

Student Chaplaincy Shabbat

A home away from home by Rabbi Garry Wayland
So what does that mysterious guy at the front of shul do? (The one without the big black beard)?
A fascinating story is told about Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik – one of the founders of the famous Brisk dynasty. Although famous for his incisive mind and penetrating Talmudic commentary, he searched for every opportunity to do kindness to others. One day, just before Pesach, a lady came to the rabbi, and asked if it was permissible to use milk for the Four Cups of wine during the Seder. He replied yes, but gave her a sum of money, purportedly to buy wine. After she had left the room, his assistant asked in surprise why he gave so much – after all, it was far more than the money for four cups of wine. Rav Soloveitchik answered that if she was asking whether one may use milk, then she obviously does not have the money to buy meat for the meal, and so gave her money to buy meat for the Chag as well.

This story, for me, in many ways encapsulates what a rabbi should aspire to. An astute mind is great, but to use it to be sensitive and caring, and to understand the problems, challenges and opportunities that arise should be the goal.

Being a chaplain is a bit like being a rabbi of a community – except my community is spread out (over a very, very large area!) and a bit (just a bit!) younger. It comes with similar challenges, and gives similar opportunities.

The job really divides up into a few areas. It is important to note that Suzanne and I view it as something we endeavour to do together.

Social support: being a Jewish student, especially in Scotland, can sometimes be a bit lonely. Away from home and the regular infrastructure, it is easy to get lost. We work with the J-Socs to foster a vibrant Jewish life, both running events and helping the individual J-Socs. Bagel lunches, pub nights, pizza making and transcendental meditation are standard fare.

The religious stuff: Shabbat meals, arranging for places to go for the Chagim, what time does Shabbat go out on the Orkney Islands (never?), helping with kosher food and exams on Holidays. We help students create or recreate their Jewish experience, either going to them for Shabbatot, or inviting them to come to us. For those interested in broadening their knowledge, I regularly give shuirim on a range of fascinating topics.

University liaison: communicate regularly with the university chaplaincies, to ensure students get the best possible service. I also ensure that a strong line of communication is maintained, so that problems can be addressed, especially with anti-Israel motions regularly being proposed. We act as an official first port-of-call for various issues.

An ear! Part of the job is being there for when there is a crisis, or just a personal issue that is bothering someone. We are there so students can discuss in confidence any problems they may have, and, when necessary, to liaise with professional support.

For more information about Chaplaincy you can contact me by email garry@ujc.org.uk

Parsha General Overview:

In this week's Torah reading, *Balak*, King Balak of Moab retains the sorcerer Balaam to curse the Jewish people. Instead of curses, only blessings come out of his mouth—including prophecies concerning the Messianic redemption. Moabite women entice some of the Israelites to sin, resulting in a plague amongst the Jews. Phinehas zealously kills two of the high-ranking offenders, and the plague comes to an end.

First Aliyah: The Israelites have just conquered the Emorites and the Bashanites, the two mighty neighbours of Moab. Balak, king of Moab, worries that his nation would be the Israelites' next victim. He sends messengers to the Land of Midian, to Balaam, a famed non-Jewish prophet and sorcerer, asking him to come and curse the Jews. G-d appeared to Balaam that night and instructed him not to go to Moab. "You shall not curse the people because they are blessed!"

Second Aliyah: Balaam sent word with Balak's messengers that G-d doesn't permit him to go with them. So Balak sent more prestigious messengers to Balaam, promising him great riches in return for his services. Once again G-d appeared to Balaam. This time G-d allowed Balaam to go -- provided that he only speak the words which G-d dictates to him.

Third Aliyah: Balaam leaves together with the Moabite dignitaries. G-d sends an angel with a drawn sword to block Balaam's path. While Balaam couldn't see the angel, the she-donkey he was riding did, and refused to move onwards, causing Balaam to strike her. The donkey miraculously speaks, admonishing Balaam for striking her. Eventually, G-d "opens Balaam's eyes," and he sees the angel. A conversation between Balaam and the angel ensues, wherein Balaam is chastised for his behaviour towards his donkey, and again he is reminded only to say what G-d dictates to him. After this humbling episode, Balaam arrives in Moab where he is greeted by Balak.

Fourth Aliyah: Upon Balaam's instructions, Balak builds seven altars and offers sacrifices to G-d. G-d "chances" upon Balaam, and dictates to him the words he should repeat to Balak and his ministers: "From Aram, Balak the king of Moab has brought me, from the mountains of the east: 'Come, curse Jacob for me and come invoke wrath against Israel.' How can I curse whom G-d has not cursed, and how can I invoke wrath if the L-rd has not been angered?...". Balaam then proceeded to shower the Israelites with beautiful blessings and praises. When Balak responds angrily to the blessings, Balaam reminds him that he can only say that which G-d tells him to say.

Fifth Aliyah: Balak takes Balaam to another location, hoping that this new venue would be more inauspicious for the Jews. They again build altars and offer sacrifices, and again G-d dictates blessing for the Jews which Balaam repeats. "G-d does not look at evil in Jacob, and has seen no perversity in Israel; the L-rd, his G-d, is with [Israel], and he has the King's friendship..."

Sixth Aliyah: The entire process repeats itself once again, Balak takes Balaam to another place, hoping that Balaam can curse the Jews from there. For a third time they build altars and bring offerings, and for a third time, only blessings issue from Balaam's mouth: "How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel! ... G-d, who has brought them out of Egypt with the strength of His loftiness He shall consume the nations which are his adversaries ... Those who bless [them] shall be blessed, and those who curse [them] shall be cursed." At this point, Balak despairs of accomplishing his goal, and sends Balaam on his way.

Seventh Aliyah: Before leaving, Balaam prophesies about the end of days: "I see it, but not now; I behold it, but not soon. A star has gone forth from Jacob, and a staff will arise from Israel which will crush the princes of Moab and uproot all the sons of Seth..." He also speaks about the eventual destruction of Esau, Amalek and Assyria. Following Balaam's unsuccessful attempt to curse the Jewish nation, Moabite and Midianite women seduce many Jewish men. In the course of their seduction, they also entice the Jewish man to worship the *Baal Peor* deity. G-d commands Moses to execute the guilty people, and simultaneously a lethal plague erupts amongst the Jews. A Jewish leader, Zimri, publicly displays the Midianite princess with whom he was consorting. Phinehas, Aaron's grandson, kills them both, and the plague is halted.

Haftarah Micah 5:6-8:

This week's *haftarah* makes mention of the incident of Balak the king of Moab hiring the sorcerer Balaam to curse the Jewish people -- the main topic of this week's Torah reading.

The prophet Micah prophesies about what will occur after the war of Gog and Magog, the war which precedes the coming of the Messiah and the Final Redemption.

"And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples -- like dew sent by G-d, like torrents of rain upon vegetation that does not hope for any man and does not wait for the sons of men." The prophet describes how G-d will remove the idols and sorcerers and how He will destroy the Jews' enemies.

The prophet Micah then goes on to rebuke the Jewish people for not observing G-d's commandments, calling as witness the "mountains and hills" -- a reference to the Patriarchs and Matriarchs -- and reminding them of the great things G-d had done for them. He took them out of Egypt and replaced the curses that Balaam son of Beor wanted to utter against them with blessings.

The Jewish people respond by saying that they do not know how to serve G-d and ask for guidance. The prophet reminds them of the Torah, and that all they need to do is contained within it: "He has told you, O man, what is good, and what G-d demands of you: but to do justice, love kindness, and walk discreetly with your G-d."

Partial View by Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky

You have to approach something from the right view. At least that's what Balak, the king of Moab, tried to convince his prime sorcerer who futilely tried to curse the Jewish nation. Though Bilaam had a notorious reputation, with for curses that never failed and the ability to cast spells upon whomever he desired, this time it didn't work. He tried, for a large fee, to curse the Jewish nation, who were camped opposite of Moab; but each time he opened his mouth blessings and not curses were emitted. "How can I curse when G-d is not angry," he exclaimed (Numbers 23:8).

Each time the mission failed, Balak flew into a rage. Bilaam attempted to subvert G-d's intentions and appease Him with sacrifices -- all to no avail.

Balak tried another strategy. "Come with me to a different place from there you will see them; however, you will see its edge and not all of it -- and you will curse it for me from there" (Numbers 23:13). It didn't work either.

I had a difficult time understanding the new strategy. What's the difference if Bilaam were to see all of Israel or he would stand in a place that only offers a partial view? Is the G-d of Israel not ever-present, protecting them in part as well as in whole? Why would a curse work when Bilaam only viewed Israel from a partial perspective?

A pious and very talented Jewish scholar was placed on trial in a small Polish town outside of Lvov. The charges, brought by a local miscreant, were based on some trumped-up complaint. The young scholar was beloved to his townsfolk as he served in the capacity of the town's shochet (ritual slaughterer), chazzan (cantor), and cheder rebbe. Thus, many people in town were worried as he appeared before a notoriously anti-Semitic judge.

As he presented the charges, the judge mockingly referred to him as Mr. Butcher. In fact all through the preliminary portion of the kangaroo court, the judge kept referring to the beloved teacher and cantor as a butcher, meat vendor or slaughterer. Finally, the young scholar asked permission to speak. "Your honour," he began, "before I begin my defence, I'd like to clarify one point. I serve in many capacities in this shtetl. The people at the synagogue know me as the cantor. The children at the school and all of their parents know me as the teacher. It is only the animals that know me as the butcher!"

The commentaries explain that Bilaam knew that the power of his curses would only take effect by finding a small breach in the beauty of Israel -- a breach that he could expand with the power of his evil eye. He looked at all of Israel and could not find any flaw to amplify and use as a curse.

Balak advised him to use another ploy. He made a suggestion that would be followed for generations by all the detractors of Jews. "Only look at them," he said, "from a partial perspective. Go up to the edge of the mountain; you shall see their edge and not all of them -- and you will curse them for me from there" (Numbers 23:13).

Balak told Bilaam to concentrate on some poor aspects of the people. It is always possible to find a few exceptions to a most ethical and moral nation. There are those who stand on the edge of the mountain and take a partial view. They talk about Jews who may be accused of crimes or improprieties. They dissect individuals and embellish what they perceive as character flaws or personal faults. They point to those flaws as if they represent the entire person, as others point to harmful Jews as if they were the entire nation. And then they shout their curses. But Bilaam could not find the breach that he was looking for. Because Israel as a nation, as well as each individual Jew, cannot be judged by anything less than a total picture - for we are all one. Good Shabbos