



SHABBAT ZEST

Parshat Re'eh 30th Av 5776

Torah Reading / Haftara:

Artscroll – p.998/1199

Living Torah – p.924/1232

SHABBAT TIMES:

Candle Lighting:
7:25pm

Kabbalat Shabbat
Davening: 7:00pm

Pre Shacharit Parsha
Shiur: 8:45am

Shabbat Morning
Davening: 9:15am

Mincha: 6pm

Shabbat Ends 8:33pm

NEXT SHABBAT
SHOFTIM

CANDLE LIGHTING
@ 7:09 PM

This week the
Haftorah will be
read by David
Viniker

Mazel Tov to
Shirley and Lewis
Lane on the birth
of their Grandson

Mazel Tov to
Karen and Austin
Posner on the
occasion of the
Engagement of
Rachel and Joshua

Parsha In a Nutshell

Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17

"See." says Moses to the people of Israel, "I place before you today a blessing and a curse"—the blessing that will come when they fulfil G-d's commandments, and the curse if they abandon them. These should be proclaimed on Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal when the people cross over into the Holy Land.

A Temple should be established in "the place that G-d will choose to make dwell His name there," where the people should bring their sacrifices to Him; it is forbidden to make offerings to G-d in any other place. It is permitted to slaughter animals elsewhere, not as a sacrifice but to eat their meat; the blood (which in the Temple is poured upon the altar), however, may not be eaten.

A false prophet, or one who entices others to worship idols, should be put to death; an idolatrous city must be destroyed. The identifying signs for kosher animals and fish, and the list of non-kosher birds (first given in Leviticus 11), are repeated.

A tenth of all produce is to be eaten in Jerusalem, or else exchanged for money with which food is purchased and eaten there. In certain years this tithe is given to the poor instead. Firstborn cattle and sheep are to be offered in the Temple, and their meat eaten by the kohanim (priests).

The mitzvah of charity obligates a Jew to aid a needy fellow with a gift or loan. On the Sabbatical year (occurring every seventh year), all loans are to be forgiven. All indentured servants are to be set free after six years of service.

Our Parshah concludes with the laws of the three pilgrimage festivals—Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot—when all should go to "see and be seen" before G-d in the Holy Temple.

Haftorah

Isaiah 54:11-55:5

This week's haftorah is the third of a series of seven "haftarot of Consolation." These seven haftarot commence on the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av and continue until Rosh Hashanah.

G-d addresses the "afflicted and storm-tossed" Jerusalem "who has not been comforted," assuring her that she, and her people, will be restored to full glory. The foundation, walls and ground of Jerusalem will be laid with precious stones. Her children will be "disciples of the L-rd," and will enjoy abundant peace. Any weapon engineered against her will fail.

The prophet then invites the thirsty to acquire "water," namely those who are thirsty for spirituality should study the quenching words of Torah. He promises the nation an everlasting covenant similar to that made with King David. This is also an allusion to the Messiah, David's descendant, who will be revered by all of the nations of the world.

UPCOMING EVENTS

6th September - Leslie

Kleinman Talk - Reserve your place now by contacting the office with number of tickets to admin@loughtonsynagogue.co.uk. £5 donation per ticket.

27th September - Rabbi Dr

Rafi Zarum Talk - Reserve your place by contacting the office with number of tickets to admin@loughtonsynagogue.co.uk. £5 donation per ticket.

30th October – Quiz Night -

Prices TBC. Reserve Seats/Tables with the Office now.

12th November - Shabbat UK.

Do not miss out!!! This is an extremely popular event so book fast!!! Reserve Seats/Tables with the Office now.

29th January 2017 - The return

of Shir. The fabulous klezmer band are coming back for an encore. Reserve Tickets with the Office now.

Recurring Events

Cheder Open

Yahrzeits for the coming week 30th Av – 6th Elul:

30. David Viniker – Mother

2. Andrea Kovler – Father

3. Edna Collins – Husband

3. Robert Rogers – Brother

5. Michael Goldstone – Father

5. Cyril Laderman – Father

6. Sharon Berg – Mother

6. Simon Klein – Father

6. Raymond Rains – Father

Stonesetting

22nd Elul – 25th September

– Howard Diamond – Daughter – 10:00am
Waltham Abbey

A Little Deeper – War & ?

One of the most difficult topics in the Torah is described in this week's Parsha (Deut. 13:16): the commandment to destroy the "Wayward City," a place whose residents are devoted to worshipping idols. Today, it is hard for us to picture such a city, since we probably imagine idolaters as normal families who just happen to worship a statue instead of going to synagogue. In reality, idol worship was much worse. Part of ancient cult worship involved various sexual immoralities like public orgies, temple prostitutes, incest, bestiality and carnal molestation (Leviticus 18:27). They also were known to sacrifice children to the gods (Deut. 12:31). Rabbi Akiva (2nd century CE, Israel) reported that he saw a son bind up his father and feed him to ravaging dogs in service of idols. Indeed, modern archaeologists have found mounds of children's bones by pagan altars.

All of this is not a good foundation for the Jewish nation trying to build its home in the Holy Land of Israel. That's why God commanded that the Wayward City be totally destroyed along with its inhabitants. **But** If Jews are so committed to peace, how is it that the Torah can also command the destruction of the Wayward City – even in theory?

Sometimes war is necessary. Judaism teaches that while the supreme value is life, we're not pacifists. Wiping out evil is also part of justice. Dangerous disputes must be resolved, because if you choose to leave evil alone – it will eventually attack you (Rashi, Deut. 20:12). People today don't relate to the concept that if you don't destroy evil, it will destroy you. Today, most Westerners grow up in quiet neighbourhoods, and never experience war, persecution and racism. So it's easy to pontificate peace and brotherhood at the expense of defence. It is ironic that the Torah – which introduced to the world the concept of the sanctity of life – is now criticized as being "cruel" by today's Western civilizations which are built on that Jewish moral foundation! People today can only criticize ancient Hebrews because those very Hebrews taught them that murder, conquest, and abuse are wrong. The values such as equality, freedom and brotherhood all stem from Judaism. The mindset that wiping out a city is "immoral" because Jews taught that to the world!

People mistakenly think that the Torah's directive was to wipe out the Canaanites cruelly and indiscriminately. In truth, the Torah prefers that the Canaanites would avoid punishment; they were given many chances to accept peace terms. Even though abominable inhuman practice had been indoctrinated into the Canaanite psyche, the hope was that they'd change and adopt the seven universal laws of humanity. These "Laws of Noah" are basic to any functioning society. Even as the Jews drew close to battle, they were commanded to act with mercy, as the Torah states, "When approaching a town to attack it, first offer them peace." (Deut. 20:10)

The reality is that war makes one callous and cruel. Therefore, since G-d Himself commanded the Jews to rid the land of evil, G-d likewise promised the soldiers that they would retain their compassionate nature. In the words of our Parsha: "G-d will have compassion on you, and reverse any display of anger that might have existed" (Deut. 13:18). Waging war with enthusiasm has always been a Jewish test. King Saul lost his kingdom by showing misplaced mercy and allowing the Amalekite king to live. And in modern times, when Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir was asked if she could forgive Egypt for killing Israeli soldiers, she replied, "It is more difficult for me to forgive Egypt for making us kill their soldiers." Let us ensure that we always feel that way despite sometimes having to make difficult decisions.

Shabbat Shalom.