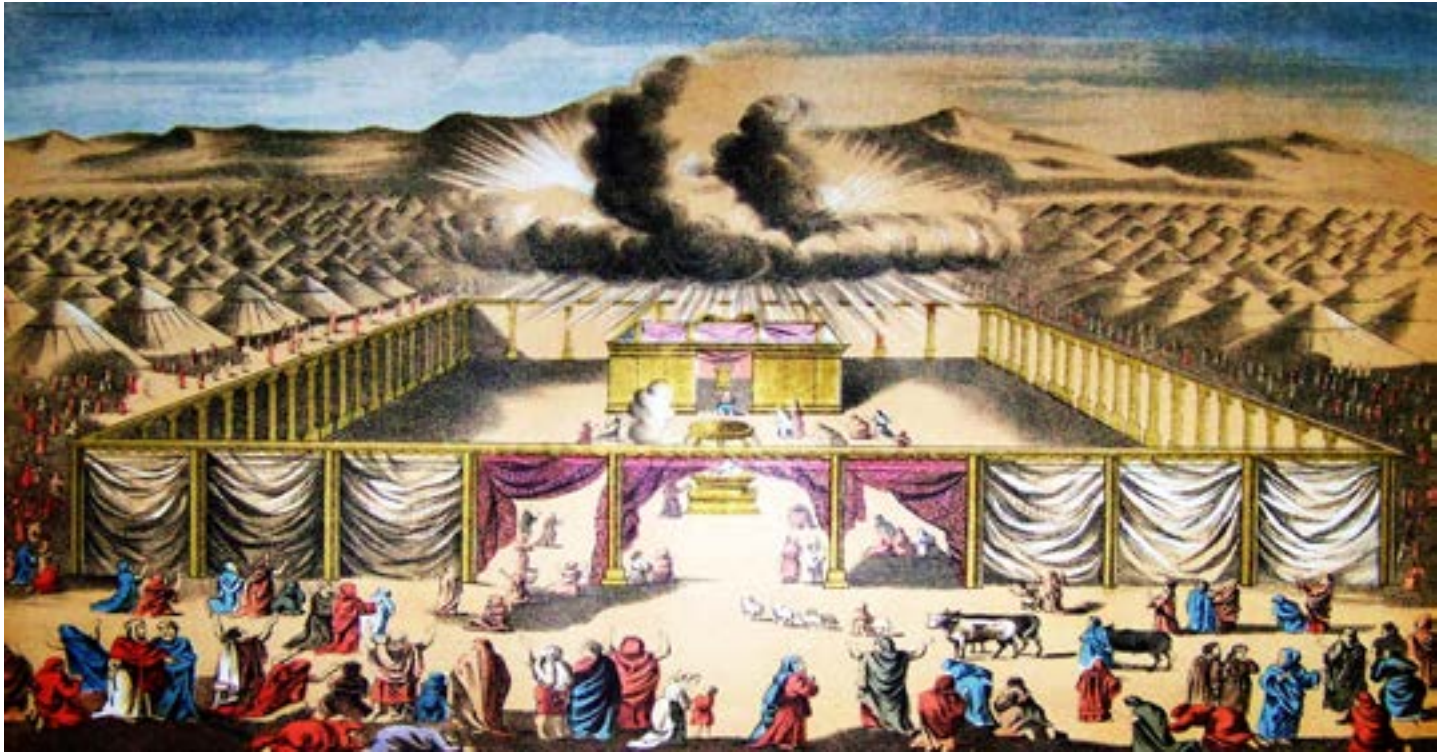


Shearith Israel
**SPANISH &
PORTUGUESE**
Synagogue of Montreal
Est. 1768

SHABBAT BULLETIN

March 5, 2022 | 2 Adar II, 5782



Parashat Pekudei

"Be Strong"
By: Rabbi Marc D. Angel

Many years ago, a young lady came to my office to discuss the possibility of her conversion to Judaism. She was raised in Saudi Arabia to American parents in the American military. She grew up hating Israel and hating Jews—although she had never met either an Israeli or a Jew.

When she reached college age, she came to the United States to study here. She met Jewish students and found that they were nice people, not at all like the stereotypical Jews she had learned to hate as a child. She began to study Judaism. She learned about Jewish history and about modern Israel. She eventually met, and fell in love with, an Israeli man.

In due course, she converted to Judaism, married the Israeli, established a religiously traditional household, and had children who attended Jewish day schools when they came of age.

We discussed the remarkable transformation of her life...from a hater of Jews and Israel, to an actively religious Jew, married to an Israeli Jew. In one of our conversations, she mused:

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if all haters could suddenly find themselves in the shoes of the ones they hate? If only people really understood the hated victims by actually living as one of them!"

She came to this insight through her personal experiences. She overcame blind hatred by literally becoming one of those she had previously despised. She wished that all haters would at least try to see their victims as fellow human beings rather than as inhuman stereotypes. If only people could replace their hatred with empathy!

While this is an important insight, it obviously eludes many people. Our societies are riddled with racism, anti-Semitism, anti-nationality x or anti-ethnicity y. It seems that many people prefer to hate rather than to empathize. They somehow imagine that they are stronger if they tear others down. In one of his essays, Umberto Eco suggests that human beings need enemies! It is through their enemies that they solidify their own identities.

Yet, if we truly want to be strong individuals, we need to define ourselves by our own values—not by who we hate or who we see as our enemies. A person with inner strength is a person who can empathize with others, can overcome hatred, and can find fellowship even with those of different religion, race or nationality. Hatred is a

sign of weakness, a defect in our own souls.

This week's Parasha brings us to the end of the book of Exodus. It is customary in some congregations for congregants to call out at the conclusion of the Torah reading: "Hazak ve-nit-hazak, hizku ve-ya-ametz le-vavhem kol ha-myahalim la-do-nai." Be strong, and let us strengthen ourselves; be strong and let your heart have courage, all you who hope in the Lord. This is a way of celebrating the completion of a book of the Torah, and encouraging us to continue in the path of Torah study so we may complete other books as well.

I think that a phrase from the above-quoted text can be interpreted as follows: hizku--strengthen yourselves, be resolute; ve- ye-ametz levavhem--and God will give courage to your hearts. First, you need to strengthen yourselves, develop the power of empathy and love. Then, God will give you the added fortitude to fulfill your goals. If we strengthen ourselves, we may trust that the Almighty will give us added strength.

Be strong, unafraid, empathetic; if we hone these values within ourselves and our families, we may be hopeful that the Almighty will grant us the courage to succeed in our efforts.

Shabbat shalom!
Reverend Hazan Danny Benlolo

SHABBAT SHALOM

Start/Debut End/Fin
5:27 p.m. **6:31 p.m.**

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HAFTARAH KINGS I - HERTZ PAGE 382



WEEKLY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Shabbat
Shahrit: 8:30 a.m. Mincha: 5:15 p.m.
Sunday
Shahrit: 8:30 a.m. Mincha: 5:00 p.m.

MONDAY - FRIDAY
Shahrit: 7:30 a.m.
Mincha: 5:00 p.m.

CHEVRA SHAAS Service Schedule

SHABBOS, MARCH 5TH
Schachris 9:30 a.m.

SUNDAY, MARCH 6RD
Schachris 8:00 a.m.

Junior Hebrew School

An educational & fun afterschool program for *children ages 3 - 5 years old*.

Your children will learn about the ALEPH-BET, Shabbat & Holidays as well as other Jewish values in an interactive, creative & engaging way.

Our first semester is starting on **February 24 for 6 weeks**.

For more information, please refer to the *flyer on our website*.

Thank you,
Gali Pinto

To contact Reverend Hazan
Daniel Benlolo:
cantorbenlolo@thespanish.org
(514) 892-2859



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Peace cannot be kept by force;
it can only be achieved by
understanding.

Albert Einstein | Aish HaTorah

OPINION

Chevra Shaas

Words From
Rabbi Menahem White
PEKUDEI 5782

So... Putin has a net worth of billions of dollars, but he has done a masterful job of hiding his assets. [among many reports, an article this week in CNN Business News states the Russian leader's wealth to hover around \$200 billion in assets, which would make him



among the wealthiest people on the planet!

"One theory of Putin's wealth suggests that he has strong armed Russia's oligarchs, threatening them with arrest or worse unless they fork over cash or stakes in their companies to him. Still, tracking his wealth has proven next to impossible. Forbes magazine, which counts sleuthing the personal fortunes of the world's elite as part of its core mission, said figuring out Putin's net worth is 'probably the most elusive riddle in wealth hunting.'"]

Too bad Putin never learned the Midrash Tanhuma on this week's parasha: the midrash tells us that when the people would see Moshe walking, the *leitsanei ha-dor*, that is the "scoffers," would say one to another: "hey, look at that man! We have been contributing all of those valuable materials for the mishkan. Surely, he has taken some of it for

himself, from which he became rich!"

When Moshe heard those reports, he realized that he must give a detailed account of everything, which is why our parasha of Pekudei gives this account of everything that had been collected. And that is why, when later on, after Moshe's siblings criticized him (Bamidbar chapter 12,) HaShem testifies that there is no one like Moses, "in all My house he is faithful."

From here we learn that a leader is obligated to give an accounting of everything he has collected from the community. Too bad Putin never learned that!

And of course, our prayers are with the people of Ukraine: *shalom `al yisrael*, and peace for the whole world.

Shabbat shalom



S&P Shabbat Kiddush is Sponsored by:

Penina & Claude Helwani, in memory of his brother, Joseph Helwani z'l.

C.S. Shabbos Kiddush is Co-Sponsored by:

Coty Finegold, in honour of her husband, Ronald Finegold.

Congregation Maghen Abraham

Thoughts: Mayer Sasson - PERASHA PIKUDEI

“These are the schedules of the Tabernacle מִשְׁכַּן the Tabernacle of the Testimony מִשְׁכַּן הָעֵדוּת which were listed according to the command of Moshe...” (38, 21)

Why hasn't He returned it?

Rashi asks – Why does it say מִשְׁכַּן twice? And he answers – This is an allusion to the Temple that was pawned נִתְמַשְׁכָּן by the two destructions of the Beit Hamikdash that occurred due to Israel's sins.”

Concerning what Rashi wrote the Gaon Rabbi Zalmla of Volozhin asked a strong question: Rashi explains that the word Mishkan (Tabernacle/pawn) was written twice to allude to the Beit Hamikdash that was taken due to our sins. This means that

the Temple was the pawn that G-d take due to our many sins.

In the Parsha of Mishpatim the Torah wrote about a person who took a pawn from his friend – “you shall return it to him until sunset”. If so, after so many years why hasn't G-d returned the Beit Hamikdash to us? He answers : The Torah itself explains later why a person must return the pawned item until sunset – “Were he to cry unto Me I will hear for I am gracious” – therefore, it is not worth the lender's while to keep the pawned item by him because G-d will listen to his cries and He will get back to the lender.

Our problem is that with this pawn, the Beit Hamikdash, that G-d took from us – almost

Our Condolences To:



The Paperman Family, on the loss of Leila Paperman z'l.

The Bassal Family, on the loss of Moise Bassal z'l.



no one is crying! So why should G-d return it?

He continues: I am certain that even if one individual prays and cries, G-d will return the Beit Hamikdash to him – He will give him prosperity and Divine Inspiration that he would have received if the Temple was built!

And certainly if there is a massive cry and plea to G-d “Redeem us! We want You to return our pawn to us! Bring back Your Divine Presence to Your city!” – we will then merit the Redemption and the building of our Beit Hamikdash, speedily in our days, Amen!

Shabbat Shalom!!

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COMMUNITY

Jewish Wisdom

HALAKHA
Pekudei - Purim
Reverend Hazan Daniel Benlolo

Purim is preceded by the Fast of Esther, which begins at dawn on the 13th of Adar and continues until nightfall. When the 13th is on Shabbat, the Fast of Esther is observed on the preceding Thursday. It is forbidden to eat and drink on this day (one may, however, wash, and wear leather shoes).

The Scroll of Esther is read publicly in the evening and the morning of Purim.

It must be read from a scroll written in accordance with Halakha (Parchment)

The reader and the audience must have intent to fulfil the mitzvah of reading and the obligation of the blessings before and after.

It is customary to make noise when the name of Haman is mentioned.

It is forbidden to speak from the time of the blessings before the reading, until the end of the blessings after the reading.

Ideally the scroll should be read in the presence of a minyan (Quorum)

One is obligated to give at least one gift to one fellow Jew. More is better.

The gift must consist of at least 2 items of food, ready to eat.

It is preferable to send the gift through a third party.

One is obligated to give a gift of money, sufficient for one meal, to at least 2 poor people. The more the better.

It is preferable to take care of this obligation early in the day.

It is obligatory to partake of a festive meal on the day of Purim.

One should drink more wine than one is accustomed to.

It is correct to invite guests, especially the needy and the conversation should be focused on words of Torah.

Got A Question for Reverend/Hazan Daniel Benlolo?

Dear Danny, What is the significance of the Star of David?

Dear reader, As I was responding to your question, I looked this specific topic up and came upon this very intersetng explanation from by Ariela Pelaia and updated by Chaviva Gordon-Bennett.

The Star of David is a 6-pointed star made up of 2 equilateral triangles superimposed over each other. It also is known as a hexagram. In Hebrew, it is called the Magen David (מִגְן דָּוִד), which means the “shield of David.” It doesn't have any religious significance in Judaism, but it is one of the symbols commonly associated with the Jewish people.

Origins of the Star of David The origins are unclear. We do know that the symbol hasn't always been associated exclusively with Judaism but was used by Christians and Muslims at various points in history as well. Sometimes it was even associated with King Solomon instead of King David.

The Star of David is not mentioned in rabbinic literature until the Middle Ages. It was during the latter part of this era that Kabbalists, the Jewish mystics, began to associate the symbol with a deeper spiritual meaning. One siddur (a Jewish prayer book) dated from 1512 in Prague displays a large Star of David on the cover with the phrase: “He will merit to bestow a bountiful gift on anyone who grasps the Shield of David.”

The Star of David was eventually cemented as a Jewish symbol when it became a favorite architectural decoration on Jewish buildings throughout the Middle Ages. According to German-born Israeli philosopher and historian Gershom Sholem, many Eastern European Jews adopted this symbol in an effort to match the prevalence of the Christian cross.

Then, during World War II, when Hitler forced Jews to wear a yellow Star of

David as a “badge of shame,” the symbol became prominently cemented as a Jewish symbol. Jews were also forced to wear identifying badges during the Middle Ages, although not always a Star of David.

Jews reclaimed the symbol, beginning with Zionists at the First Zionist Congress in 1897, where it was chosen as the central symbol of the flag of the future State of Israel. Likewise, many Jews wear jewelry that prominently features the Star of David today.

What Is the David Connection? The association with King David comes mostly from Jewish legend. For instance, there is a Midrash that says that when David was a teen he fought an enemy, King Nimrod. David's shield was composed of two interlocking triangles attached to the back of a round shield, and, at one point, the battle became so intense that the two triangles were fused together. David won the battle, and the two triangles were henceforth known as Magen David, the Shield of David. This story, of course, is just one of many.

Symbolic Meanings There are several ideas about the symbolic meaning of the Star of David. Some Kabbalists thought that the 6 points represented G-d's absolute rule over the universe in all 6 directions: north, south, east, west, up, and down. Kabbalists believed that the 2 triangles represented humanity's dual nature—good/evil—that the star could be used as protection against evil spirits.

The structure of the star, with 2 overlapping triangles, has also been thought to represent the relationship between God and the Jewish people. The star that points up symbolizes God, and the star that points down represents Jews on Earth. Yet others have noticed that there are 12 sides on the triangle, perhaps representing the Twelve Tribes.

Upcoming Events



Tuesdays, MARCH 8 / 15 / 22 / 29 | 7:00 - 8:00 pm
Improve your Arabic. First of many Tuesday nigh sessions
Registration required: sisterhood2020@hotmail.com OR Grace at (514) 979-9779
Meeting ID: 881 1057 1315 Passcode: SUPERSIS



Wednesday, March 16 | 6:00 P.M.
PURIM FEST - Festive Purim Celebration for all ages
6:45 Megillah Reading - 7:30 End of Fast - Buffet & Music
Prizes for kids in costume! *Registration Required*



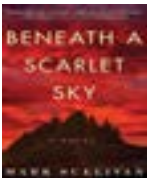
Thursday, March 17 | 3:45 - 7:30 P.M.
PURIM IN ITALY - JOIN US FOR A FAMILY STYLE DINNER& PURIM CARNIVAL! \$18 PER PERSON (OVER 2) MEGILLAH READING 3:45
KIDS' CARNIVAL: AINTABI 4:00 - PURIM FEST: LAWEE 5:30
INTERACTIVE MAGIC SHOW 6:00 - KIDS PERFORMANCE 6:30
Registration Required



Tuesday, March 22 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
Sisterhood Book Review: "The Dogs of Winter"
By Ann Lambert - Reviewer: TBA
RSVP: sisterhood2020@hotmail.com
Zoom ID 895 2182 1866 - Password: SISBOOK



Thursday, March 31 | 7:00 - 8:30 P.M.
S&P Education Committee presents: "Shlomzion"
The Greatest Jewish Queen - with Carole Basri, Visiting Professor & Meir Soloveichik, Rabbi of S&P NY
Moderated by Sandra Koukou
Join on Zoom ID 861 0905 6217



Tuesday, April 26 | 12:00 - 1:00 pm
Sisterhood Book Review: "Beneath A Scarlet Sky" By Mark Sullivan - Reviewer: Wilma Mashal
RSVP: sisterhood2020@hotmail.com
Zoom ID 895 2182 1866 - Password: SISBOOK