



CONGREGATION TIFERETH BETH DAVID JERUSALEM

Shabbat Bulletin

יב תמוז התשפ"ג
שבת פרשת חקת-בלק
Shabbat Parshat Chukat-Balak
June 30 - July 1, 2023 / 5783
Please print this bulletin before Shabbat.

Rabbi
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SHABBAT SHALOM • שבת שלום

Ta'anit Shiva Asar B'Tamuz is on Thursday, July 6 - fast begins at 3:25am and ends at 9:23pm

Shabbat Parshat Chukat-Balak

Haftara: Micha 5:6 - 6:8

Friday, June 30

- 6:30pm Minha et Kabbalat Chabat -
Minyane Sépharade - Chapel
- 6:55pm Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat
- Main Sanctuary
- 7:09pm Plag Hamincha
- 8:29pm Candle Lighting
- 8:47pm Sh'kiah

Shabbat, July 1 / 12 Tamuz

- 8:00am Shacharit - Hashkama Minyan
- 8:40am Parsha Shiur with Rabbi Claman
- 9:00am Shacharit - Main Sanctuary
and Minyane Sépharade
- 9:04am Sof Zman K'riyat Shma
- 9:30am Kef Club Shabbat Programs
for Kids - Lower Level
- 7:09pm Plag Hamincha
- 7:50pm Shiur with Rabbi Claman in the
Library - *Letters from the Rambam*
- 8:15pm Minha, Seudah Shleesheet
et Shiour - Minyane Sépharade
- 8:20pm Mincha, Seudah Shleesheet
and Maariv - Main Sanctuary
- 8:47pm Sh'kiah
- 9:44pm Havdala

COMMUNITY NEWS

Mazal Tov to **Isabelle & Moishe Punski** and Ernest Smith and their families on the wedding of their children Dov and Serach on Sunday, June 25. Sharing in their simcha are many delighted siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins in both families. Lovingly remembered at this time is Serach's mother Rebecca Smith z"l.

Mazal Tov to **Roslyn & David Guttman** and their family on the engagement of their grandson Eliezer Guttman to Chava Meth of Boca Raton, Florida. Proud parents are Rabbi Amir & Gita Guttman and Rabbi Avi & Tamar Meth. Sharing in their simcha are many siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins in both families. Lovingly remembered at this time are Eliezer's great-grandparents Nettie & Abe Dalfen z"l and Genia & Eliezer Guttman z"l.

Condolences to the family of TBDJ Member **Eva Brodsky Lieberman z"l** who passed away on Friday, June 23 in Toronto. Funeral took place on Tuesday, June 27 in Montreal. Shiva continues until the morning of Monday, July 3 at her daughter Hester's home; 2:00pm-4:00pm and 7:30pm-9:00pm on Sunday only.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS

Kiddush for the Hashkama Minyan is sponsored by **Celia & Stanley Nattel** in memory of Celia's beloved mother Miriam Brahms Reich z"l (Miriam bat Reuven v'Bassia - 4 Tamuz) and in memory of Stanley's beloved father William Nattel z"l (Zev ben Shlomo v'Blima - 13 Tamuz).

Seudah Shleesheet for the Main Sanctuary is sponsored by **Karen & Phillip Nadler** to mark the conclusion of shloshim for Phillip's beloved father Martin Nadler z"l (Moshe ben Yosef Halevi v'Masa - 7 Sivan).

Seudah Shleesheet for the Minyane Sépharade is sponsored by **Clairette & Joseph Bensimon** in memory of Joseph's beloved grandmother Solika Bensimon z"l (Solika bat Yamna - 16 Tamuz).

This Shabbat Bulletin is sponsored by **Rochelle & Jeffrey Rein** in memory of Jeffrey's beloved father Morris Rein z"l (Moshe ben Eliyahu v'Simcha - 10 Tamuz).

Rabbi Claman's Parsha Shiur on Shabbat morning is sponsored by **Isabelle & Moishe Punski** in honour of the wedding of their son Dov Punski and Serach Smith, and in honour of Rabbi Claman, Judah Aspler, Eitan Levy, Tal Levy and Zac Levy.

NEXT WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Please note that the TBDJ Office will be closed on Monday, July 3 for Canada Day.

Mincha / Maariv: 8:30pm
Except 8:15pm on Thursday for Ta'anit Shiva Asar B'Tamuz

Shacharit

Sunday and Monday (Canada Day): 8:00am
Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 7:00am
Thursday - Ta'anit Shiva Asar B'Tamuz: 6:30am

Friday, July 7

Minha - Minyane Sépharade: 18h30
Mincha - Main Sanctuary: 6:55pm
Plag Hamincha: 7:08pm
Candle Lighting is at 8:27pm

**Currently on hiatus -
resumes on Wednesday, July 12!**



**Weekly camaraderie,
lunch, and Parsha!**

Lunch & Learn

with Rabbi Claman

WEDNESDAYS
Lunch at 11:30am
Class from 12:00-12:30pm



Sins, Consequences and Mortality

It is impossible to read and learn commentary and comprehend the text of this week's Torah reading of Parashat Chukat without identifying, empathizing and sympathizing with the hardships of Moshe Rabeinu. He loses his sister Miriam (10th of Nisan) and Bnei Yisrael consequently lose the wells of water in the desert that were divinely and miraculously supplied through the merit of Miriam. After hearing Bnei Yisrael's complaint that there was no water following Miriam's passing, Hashem is prepared to provide the much-needed water for the nation. Moshe does not follow Hashem's exact instructions and he and Aharon are consequently punished by Hashem with this episode of *The Waters of Dispute - Mei Meriva*.

So what happened at Mei Meriva? B'nei Yisrael complained to Moshe and Aharon about not having water. Our leaders then fell on their faces in prayer and Hashem instructed Moshe to take his staff, gather the people and speak to the rock which was before their eyes, with the assurance that enough water will come forth from the rock to feed the people and their flocks. Moshe takes his staff, assembles the people, and he reprimands them angrily. Instead of speaking to the rock as divinely instructed, he then lifts his hand and strikes the rock with his staff not once but twice, and abundant water flows from the rock.

Hashem then expresses his disappointment with Moshe and Aharon. He tells them: *Since you did not have faith in Me to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly to the land which I have given them* (Bamidbar 20:12).

For Moshe and Aharon this is a shockingly severe punishment that they, after almost forty years of leading their beloved nation through the desert, will not enter the Land of Israel. Moshe's response to the punishment is recorded by commentary in Parashat Va-Etchanan which we will read on the Shabbos after Tisha B'Av. We learn that Moshe pleaded with Hashem over five hundred times to rescind the decree and to let him enter the land.

Rabbi Dr. Tzvi Hersch Weinreb writes about the difficulties that the commentaries have with the Torah's narrative of the *Mei Meriva* episode. What was Moshe's sin? Rashi's view is that Moshe's sin was striking the rock, and not speaking to it, as he was advised. Rav Dr. Aaron Ross cites several commentaries and their views regarding the sin of Moshe and Aharon at *Mei Meriva*. According to the Rambam the issue was not a failure to direct the people towards Hashem, but rather a failure on the part of Moshe to control his emotions. In the Rambam's view, this is exemplified by Moshe's angry statement referring to the people as rebels: *Now listen, you rebels can we draw water for you from this rock?*" (Bamidbar 20:10). Rav Ross writes that it is possible that in the view of Rambam, this anger is demonstrated best when Moshe not only hit the rock, but when he did so a second time.

Rav Ross brings Rabbeinu Chananel's view that the issue is not simply that Moshe (and by extension, Aharon) failed to exalt Hashem, but that they in fact stole Hashem's thunder by arrogating to themselves the central role in the miracle by hitting the rock in front of the people rather than speaking to it. Others have objected to this approach because drawing water from the rock in the desert is equally miraculous, whether it is accomplished by speaking to it or striking it. Water flowing from a rock when struck with a wooden staff is a wondrous miracle which is more than sufficient to impress the people with Hashem's miraculous powers.

For Rav Ross, Abarbanel's opinion is intriguing. Moshe and Aharon did not really do anything wrong at *Mei Meriva*. Their deviations from Hashem's command were indeed minor and were not inherently deserving of such a harsh punishment. Why, then, were they severely chastised and punished? And my view on this matter is that Moshe and Aharon were punished because of sins that they did - Aharon for the sin of the [golden] calf and Moshe our master in the matter of the spies. (Abarbanel, Bemidbar 20:1)

Rav Ross explains that Abarbanel's interpretation maintains that this entire incident was merely a cover-up for Moshe and Aharon. Each one had already lost his opportunity to enter Eretz Yisrael as a result of his involvement in an earlier, far more significant sin - either the Golden Calf (Aharon) or the sin of the Meraglim (Moshe). However, as their roles in those incidents were clearly not as great as the main

protagonists, Hashem wanted to allow them to save face by not punishing them along with the masses who were swept up in the excitement of the worship of the calf or the desperation following the negative report of the spies. Thus, only at the end of the forty-year sojourn in the wilderness did Hashem create a "set-up" so that they would fail in some way, which would allow Him to publicly justify denying them entry into Eretz Yisrael.

With respect to the question *what was Aharon's sin at Mei Meriva when it was actually Moshe who hit the rock?* Abarbanel further wrote that the incident was not Moshe's and Aaron's actual sin - as mentioned above - but a means of publicly revealing their absence of leadership and thus connecting to their lack of leadership in the past, which had disastrous results.

The Ramban understands that since Hashem told Moshe to take the staff, there was no problem with him hitting the rock. The miracle was to be accomplished through either medium. Rather, Moshe and Aaron's sin was that they said: *Can we draw water for you from this rock?* (Bamidbar 20:10), implying that they had the power to perform the miracle, and not that their power came from Hashem. Ramban supports his explanation with Hashem's opening words to Moshe: *Because you did not believe in Me* (Bamidbar 20:12) implying that this was a failure of faith rather than a lapse of obedience or a surrender to anger.

These were difficult times for Moshe Rabeinu. Adding to his agony, Aharon died a short time later (1st of Av) and Moshe, following the loss of his two precious siblings within four months finds himself at the age of 120 as the last remaining sibling of the exalted triumvirate that were the co-leaders of Bnei Yisrael. One can only imagine how difficult it was for Moshe to get from observing the mourning periods for his siblings, his partners in leadership and so much more, and to resume the leadership of his beloved nation, alone.

We read these words in the Torah and my feelings are similar to those when I finish reading a novel or watching a movie which I wish would end differently. The outcome of *Mei Meriva* and Moshe's not being able to enter the country weighs heavily. It would be interesting to know what Bnei Yisrael's reaction was to this decree. Did they cry, yell, or scream with anguish? Did they form a group to beseech Hashem, to pray and plead Moshe's case before the Almighty as Moshe prayed to Hashem to spare the people following the sin of the golden Calf? Maybe not. The verse following Miriam's death seems to indicate that Bnei Yisrael were not in a comforting *Moshe and Aharon* mood. The verse informs us that: *The congregation had no water; so they assembled against Moses and Aaron* (Bamidbar 20:2). Commentary notes that upon Miriam's passing the people did not comfort Moshe and Aharon, rather they complained about water. If they weren't comforting Moshe and Aharon after Miriam's passing, it's logical to assume that they didn't comfort or fight for him or for Aharon after the *Mei Meriva* decree.

Parashat Chukat marks a turning point in the young history of our nation and, if you will, the point where the *apron strings* of strong leadership are removed. Our ancestors are forced to face the immediate and difficult reality of entering the land without their inspirational leaders. Rabbi Morris B. Margolies wrote about the collective awesome leadership of Moshe, Aharon and Miriam: *One dares say that no more distinguished a triumvirate ever trod the corridors of history, certainly none that left so indelible an imprint upon the destiny and the aspiration of man.*

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks wrote that Parashat Chukat is about mortality. He wrote: *Nonetheless it seems to me that - here as in so many places in the Torah - there is a story beneath the story, and it is a different one altogether. Chukat is about death, loss and bereavement. Miriam dies, Aharon and Moshe are told they will not live to enter the promised land. Together they constituted the greatest team the Jewish people has ever known, Moshe the supreme prophet, Aharon the first High Priest and Miriam perhaps the greatest of them all. What the Parasha is telling us is that for each of us there is a Jordan River that we will not cross, a promised land we will not enter. "It is not for you to complete the task." Even the greatest are mortal...*

Shabbat Shalom,

Rev. Amiel



BRIDGE AT BAILY

IS ON HIATUS FOR TWO WEEKS
DUE TO THE HOLIDAYS -
THE NEXT GAME IS ON
MONDAY, JULY 10!

LIGHT BUFFET LUNCH BEGINS AT 11:30AM

GAME BEGINS AT 12:30PM

\$20 ADMISSION FEE

INCLUDES LUNCH

TO REGISTER, SEND AN EMAIL TO LINDA:

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