



CONGREGATION TIFERETH BETH DAVID JERUSALEM

Shabbat Bulletin

שבת פרשת חקת
ט תמוז ה'תשפ"א

Shabbat Parshat Chukat
June 18-19, 2021 / 5781

Please print this bulletin before Shabbat.

Rabbi
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Chazzan Sheini
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SHABBAT SHALOM • שבת שלום

Shabbat Parshat Chukat

Haftara: Shoftim 11:1 - 11:33

All minyanim on Shabbat are restricted to those who have pre-registered. When davening at home, it is preferable to do so at the same time as the rest of the community.

Friday, June 18

- 4:00pm Daf Yomi on Zoom
- 7:00pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv - Main Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat and Maariv - Tent
- 7:08pm Plag Hamincha
- 8:28pm Candle Lighting
- 8:46pm Sh'kiah

Shabbat, June 19 / 9 Tamuz 5781

- 8:00am Shacharit - Upper Social Hall
- 9:00am Shacharit - Tent
- 9:01am Sof Zman Kriyat Shma
- 9:15am Shacharit - Main Sanctuary
- 7:08pm Plag Hamincha
- 8:25pm Mincha and Maariv - Sanctuary
- 8:25pm Mincha and Maariv - Tent
- 8:46pm Sh'kiah
- 9:44pm Havdala
- 9:45pm Daf Yomi on Zoom
- 10:15pm Musical Havdala and Kumzitz on Facebook with Rev. Bender

SCHEDULE FOR THE NEXT WEEK

Mincha will be at **8:30pm** in the Main Sanctuary and on Zoom.

Candle Lighting on Friday, June 25 will be at **8:29pm**.

Due to changing regulations and necessary adjustment of our scheduling, please visit our website (TBDJ.org) and check your emails for up-to-date schedules and information on minyan locations and registration.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Mazal Tov to **Alison & Daniel Gal, Rhonda & Leslie Gal** and **Angela Nathaniel** and their families on the birth of a son and grandson on Monday, June 14. Sharing in their simcha are great grandmother Albertine Mooallim and many delighted aunts, uncles and cousins. Lovingly remembered at this time is Alison's beloved father Robert Nathaniel z"l.

Mazal Tov to **Gabby & Binyamin Suissa, Lauren & Alvin Suissa** and **Debbie & Ronnie Cons** and their families on the birth of twins - a daughter and granddaughter, and a son and grandson - on Friday, June 11. Sharing in their simcha are great grandparents Sue & Kamal Gabbay, Bluma & Ted Lebovics, Helen & Stanley Cons and many delighted aunts, uncles and cousins. Lovingly remembered at this time are great grandparents Yvette & Jacob Suissa z"l.

Mazal Tov to **Millie Pearson** and **Laraine & Harlan Tessler** on the occasion of their grandson Russell Chaim becoming a Bar Mitzvah on Thursday, June 17 in Toronto. Proud parents are Shoshana & Adam Chaim. Sharing in their simcha are Russell's sister Jordyn Sage, his great grandmother Irene Epstein and many delighted aunts, uncles and cousins. Lovingly remembered at this time is Donald Pearson z"l.

Mazel tov to **Rabbi Baruch & Rosette Solnica** and their families on the engagement of their granddaughter, Sara Gelman to Adir Shimon of Pittsburgh. Sharing in their simcha are Sara's parents Chani & Meir Gelman, and many delighted siblings, aunts, uncles and cousins in both families.

SPONSORSHIPS AND THANK YOU'S

Kiddush is sponsored by friends of the Berk Family in honour of **Ariella & Tovi Berk** and their daughters "with heartfelt gratitude for all you have done to support our community since coming to Montreal, and with our sincerest wishes for *hatslacha raba* as you begin a new chapter in your lives in Pittsburgh. We will miss you and hope you will return to visit us in the years to come!"

This Shabbat Bulletin is sponsored by **Shirley & Reuben Spector** and by **Ilana & Mike Cohen** in honour of the graduation of their granddaughter and daughter Alexandra Cohen from McGill University's Faculty of Medicine.

Rabbi Freundlich's Drashot on Shabbat are sponsored by **Avi Whiteman** and Michelle Whiteman to mark the conclusion of the daily recital of Kaddish for their beloved mother Simone Perez Whiteman z"l (Simha bat Avraham v'Iza - 10 Av).

Please note that Rabbi Freundlich's weekly shiurim are on hiatus from Monday, June 21 until Monday July 12.

We Need You, We Need Your Tefillah

The words of the title of this week's Dvar Torah come from a Miami Boys Choir song written in the nineties:

*The shul is packed with people who have come to pray
But unfortunately some have lots to say
The Rav bangs on the bima and he asks for silence
"This is wrong you must be strong..."
The noise that filled the room begins to die down
The Rav thankfully relaxes his frown... then it all starts up again
We need you we need your Tefillah (!)
Each and every yid can bring the geulah
Don't talk SH SH!!! Just daven, so your Tefillah can reach Hashem...*

Flash! People tend to talk during services in the synagogue! Please permit me to offer my sincerest apologies to anyone who I have put into extreme shock with this revelation. We have been educated and reminded time and again that talking in shul is a no-no as we should afford the ultimate respect to the Almighty in his holy sanctuary and our full attention should be concentrated on our prayers to the Almighty. It is also prudent to take note that our conversations in shul are a distraction and an interruption to others who seek proper concentration and intent when approaching Hashem in prayer.

Noting the comments of our great rabbis and sages over the years we find that talking in shul is certainly not a product or phenomenon of modern times. People spoke to each other in shul long before the heroics of the Montreal Canadiens in Vegas and the Monday morning NFL chats. It would seem that talking and kibitzing in shul is older than an actual prayer of blessing, a *Mi Shebayrach*, for those who refrain from conversing in shul composed by Rav Yom Tov Lippmann Heller, the Rav of Cracow in the seventeenth century:

מי שברך אבותינו, אברהם יצחק ויעקב, משה ואהרן, דוד ושלמה, הוא יברך את כל מי ששומר פיו ולשונו שלא לדבר בעת התפילה, הקב"ה ישמר מהו צרה וצוקה ומכל נגע ומחלה, ויחולו עליו כל הברכות הכתובות בספר תורת משה רבינו ובכל ספרי הנביאים והכתובים, ויזכה לראות בנים חיים וקיימים ויגדלם לתורה לחופה ולמעשים טובים, ויעבוד את ה' אלוהינו תמיד באמת ובתמים ונאמר אמן.

He who blessed our forefathers Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, Moshe and Aaron, David and Shlomo, He will bless those who guard their mouth and tongue from speaking during prayers. the Holy One Blessed be He shall guard him from every trouble and distress and from every plague and illness, and he shall be subject to all the blessings written in the Torah of Moshe and all the Prophets and Scriptures, and he will merit live and healthy children whom he shall educate to nurture them to [become] Torah [scholars], marry them off and educate them to do good deeds, and he shall eternally serve Hashem truthfully. Amen.

This prayer was composed during the Chmielnitski Massacres of 1648-1649 when some 300,000 Jews were murdered by Cossacks. The Chida explains that it was revealed to Rabbi Heller from heaven that the talking in shul was the cause of the terrible tragedy. This special *mishebeirach* is said to this day in many communities throughout the world. It has been written about the composition of this prayer: *Unfortunately, not all of us have reached this ideal yet (of not conversing in shul), which is why the Tefilah of Rabbi Heller was necessary and that instituting this prayer was an effort to promote decorum during worship.*

The question arises, however, as to when the ideal time for this *mishebayrach* is to be recited. Many shuls recite it in between the aliyot that are called up to the Torah on Shabbos morning. There are shuls that recite it after the silent Amidah, but before the Ba'al Tefillah begins the repetition.

Rabbi Efrem Goldberg of Boca Raton cites an old joke about an atheist who goes to shul every Shabbos and sits next to his friend Ginsburg. One day, someone asks the atheist why he keeps coming to services if he doesn't believe in G-d. He replies: *Ginsburg goes to shul to talk to G-d. I go to shul to talk to Ginsburg.* Rabbi Goldberg further writes that there are many believers who come to shul to talk to both G-d and to their friends, most of whom they haven't seen the entire week. However, as saying goes: *if you come to shul to talk, where do you go to daven?* Rabbi Goldberg muses that the saying could be emended to read: *if you come to shul to talk, where should your friends and neighbors go to daven?* Rabbi Goldberg brings different sources which admonish and warn about talking in shul. The Tzlach, R' Yechezkel Landau (1713-1793) writes: *There is no greater rebellion against the King of the world than to speak in His sanctuary, in His presence. Speaking during davening is like placing an idol in the Temple.* The Chafetz Chaim (1838-1933) quotes the Kol Bo: *Woe to the people who speak during davening. We saw several shuls destroyed because of this sin. There should be people appointed to work on this issue.* The Chasam Sofer (1762-1839) writes that only shuls that are homes of prayer, not conversation, will be rebuilt in Israel in the Messianic era.

At this point, my dear reader, you may be thinking: *Amiel! We've seen you speak in shul!* While I confirm your accusations I will also state that as of late, and ironically I should say, with the pandemic's imposition of masking and social distancing, I have improved and intensified my tefillah experience. In many ways the pandemic forced this change in my davening. This is possibly a function of praying for the welfare of so many people out there, people that are afflicted with the terrible virus. Maybe the COVID-19 davening setup in our tent and in our synagogue - where strict social distancing is mandated - is limiting my conversations in that I can't walk around the shul during certain parts of the davening like I used to. Maybe it is due to the fact that there have been limited numbers in shul attendance and less people to talk to. At any rate, in this rare confessional moment I will share the fact that my davening has been better over the past sixteen months.

Rabbi Dr. Abraham J. Twerski (1930-2021) wrote the following: *Some years ago, I attended services in a large, impressive-looking synagogue in a New York suburb. But while the actual building was quite magnificent, the congregants' decorum was appalling. During davening, people were conversing fairly loudly with their neighbors, with apparently no consideration for those who had, in fact, come to shul to pray. Several times the rabbi had to stop the chazzan in order to restore silence. I thought to myself: If these people were watching a television program and there was chattering in the room, would they tolerate being disturbed? Assuming that the talkers were simply not interested in prayer - at the very least, they should give the people who are interested in praying the same courtesy that they themselves would demand when watching a television program. I was told that the rabbi had raised the issue several times with his congregants, but he was simply ignored. I could not help but think: If a non-Jew were in attendance, wouldn't the talkers remain quiet so that he wouldn't view them as irreverent? Obviously, then they are aware that conversing during prayer is a sign of extreme disrespect. Yet they don't seem to care. On what basis do these talkers expect their children to respect them if they show no respect for G-d?*

Talking during davening is prohibited. There is no way to justify talking to your neighbor when the reason that you are in shul is to pray. Our human psyche should understand that dedicating two or three hours of uninterrupted prayer on a Shabbos morning and a total of about two hours a day during the week for our three daily prayers is a sound time investment considering the positive benefits of well offered prayers and the negative ramifications of disrespect to prayers and our time in shul. I believe that it is helpful to keep in mind that we are privileged to have this open line to Hashem who hears our prayers.

Still, in another moment of thoughtful confession, with the COVID-19 restrictions, I miss walking around the shul on Shabbos morning at different intervals in our prayers, extending a hearty *Good Shabbos* to our members and sharing in a warm handshake. This lends itself to the idea that we are comfortable in shul and besides the primary purpose of prayer, the camaraderie and the social aspect of going to shul is a significant factor not only in our wanting to go to shul, but in choosing the right shul that suits us as individuals and families. I shouldn't write this, but I feel that there is a positive twist to the camaraderie in shul which sometimes leads to conversation and it is good that we enjoy the company of our neighbours in shul. Besides the infectious sound of prayer around us which affords us a well needed spiritual boost, the idea of being united in prayer with those in physical proximity whom we care about is a positive catalyst in our overall shul experience. I like to think that the idea of ten people forming a minyan brings us together, not only in prayer, but as a people. We are Hashem's chosen people and as we, though diverse and unique as individuals, received the Torah אחד בלב אחד כאיש אחד as one person with one heart we accordingly congregate in shul together. I believe that this is what Hashem wants for us, a nation which stands together in harmony, prayer and much more.

One of my favourite places to daven is in the Zürich airport at Gate 46 or Gate 52 as I wait for the 8:45 AM connecting flight to Tel Aviv. You see, the ten men or more that come together to daven in a minyan are diverse in looks and practice and in general are from different walks of Jewish life. The airport minyan people very possibly wouldn't converse or even acknowledge each other in their own venues. I have marvelled at this venue of diversity, where teenagers in jeans, Chassidim, Mizrachnikim and others come together, elevating themselves as a congregation, uniting in prayer.

How do we stop talking in shul? Here's a thought: The time spent in shul davening on a weekly basis only adds up to fifteen and a half hours a week (9%) and about one and three-quarter hours a day (7%)! Can we not take ourselves away from our other vocal pursuits and utilize that small amount of time to praise and thank our Creator for all of the good bestowed upon us? According to my calculations we still have about 91% of our week and 93% of our day at our disposal outside of shul to talk to everyone! While we shouldn't talk in shul, we can catch up on our conversations following services after shul at Kiddush etc.

There is one time in my life where I actually regretted not talking in shul. It happened on Rosh Hashanah at Congregation KJ in New York City when I was in grade ten. I was sitting in one of the side pews with my father, who sat in the aisle seat. There were four seats in the pew and there was an empty seat between myself and an older gentleman who sat by the wall. The gentleman wore dark glasses and was very quiet during the service. I remember at the time thinking that he seemed rather subdued, even sad, like he had the weight of the world on his shoulders. His silence in shul was intense and respectful. I wanted to reach out to the gentleman but as we sat a stone's throw away from the shul's rabbi, the eminent Joseph Lookstein, it wasn't a good place for conversation. Following services I shook the hand of the gentleman next to me and wished him a *Gut Yor*. A moment later my father shook the gentleman's hand and asked me if I said a *Gut Yor* to Elie Wiesel! As a high schooler who delved into Holocaust research, I mouthed the words to my father in shocked amazement: *That is Elie Wiesel!?* Wow...to engage in conversation with the legendary Elie Wiesel...

I should mention that I am a family descendant of Rabbi Heller, the author of the above-mentioned Mishebayrach prayer for those who refrain from talking in shul. This may serve as a sign and a message directed towards me: *Amiel! Don't talk – SH! SH! Just daven so your tefillos can reach Hashem!*

Shabbat Shalom,

Rev. Amiel