

the SHABBAT Talk

MAKE A NOTE OF IT

Shabbat 25th February
 Ben Sanders' Bar Mitzvah

Wednesday 7 March
 Purim Megilla Reading and Party 6:30pm

Thursday 8 March
 Purim Shacharit and Megilla Reading and Party 7:00am and Kosher English Breakfast

There is No Cheder this week

PARSHAT "YITRO"
 18 SHEVAT 5772 - 11 FEBRUARY 2012
 FRIDAY EVENING: 7:00PM - SHABBAT MORNING: 9:00AM

THIS WEEKS' SEDRAH
 Soncino Chumash: p445 Hertz Chumash: p288 Living Torah: p344 ArtScroll: p394
 Haftorah:
 Soncino Chumash: p464 Hertz Chumash: p302 Living Torah: p1115 ArtScroll: p1154

Yitro: Yitro (Jethro), Moshe's father-in-law, brings Moshe's wife Tziporah, and their two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, back to Moshe in the wilderness. Yitro observes that Moshe is the sole judge of any disputes. He says that this system cannot work in the long term, and helps Moshe set up a new system of law, by training and appointing judges at various levels to judge simpler cases, thus only the most complicated disputes will actually come before Moshe. He refuses Moshe's offer that he stay with the Jews in their journey through the desert, and returns to his own land.



In the third month after leaving Egypt the Children of Israel come to the Sinai desert and encamp at the foot of Mount Sinai. Moshe ascends the mountain. G-d tells Moshe to tell the people to spend three days preparing themselves, and to set up fences to prevent them going near the mountain. On the third day, G-d reveals Himself in a cloud of smoke and fire, accompanied by the blast of a shofar. G-d gives the Ten Commandments to the people. The people tremble with fear from hearing G-d's speech, and ask Moshe to act as an intermediary, relaying the Divine words to them. The portion ends with instructions prohibiting making idols, and instructions for building the altar.

This week's Haftorah is from Yishaya (Isaiah) 6 and 7. Continuing the theme of Revelation, the Haftorah recounts the famed vision known as Maaseh Hamerkavah - the vision of Hashem as He sits upon His throne surrounded by various angels singing His praises.

Yishaya prophesied during the reign of Achaz, the King of Judah. This vision is repeated in greater detail in Yechezkel (Ezekiel), and is usually associated with Yechezkel, rather than Yishaya. However, in this awesome vision, Yishaya is told of the eventual destruction of Jerusalem. He is sent to relate this prophecy to the new King Achaz, who would prove to be an evil and wicked monarch.

The concluding prophecy is far more optimistic than the beginning one. Achaz is told not to fear the coming war with Aram and Israel. In the merit of his, yet to

Shabbat Times

Shabbat Begins:
 4:51 p.m.
Shabbat Ends:
 5:56 p.m.

Next Week:
Shabbat Begins: 5:04 p.m.
Shabbat Ends: 6:08 p.m.

be born son, Chizkiyahu, their alliance would fail. Chizkiyahu would eventually be crowned as "The Prince of Peace," and return the Jewish people to an unprecedented devotion and commitment to Torah scholarship and observance. Unfortunately, the Jewish People would return to their evil ways and Jerusalem would be destroyed.

Proper Treatment of the Convert by Rabbi Berel Wein

The Torah describes for us in detail the visit of Yitro to the encampment of the Jewish people in the desert of Sinai. It also details for us the advice given to Moshe by Yitro as how to organise the justice system of the Jewish people.

Though there is a divergence of view among the rabbinic scholars as to whether Yitro came before or after the revelation and the granting of the Torah at Mount Sinai, there is general agreement that Yitro remains the template and role model for converts to Judaism.

Part of the reason is not only Yitro's sincerity in joining the Jewish people and his abandonment of the pagan gods that he had worshipped earlier in his life but in his willingness to give advice and counsel for the benefit of the administration of justice in his newly adopted society.

Many times a new convert is most hesitant to give advice or counsel to the Jewish society. After all, the word "ger"- convert - in Hebrew, has the connotation of being a stranger, an outsider, someone who is only a sojourner and not yet necessarily a full fledged citizen. Therefore it is most understandable that such a person may feel somewhat reticent at giving suggestions and advice to those who have been Jews for generations and since their birth.

Yitro's boldness in asserting himself immediately into advising and improving Jewish society is a testimony to his comfort level, sincerity and commitment regarding the Jewish people and its Torah values and strictures. That is why he is given so much respect and prominence in the Torah of the Jewish people.

Converts bring with them a different range of experience and mindset to Jewish life than do generational and born Jews raised exclusively in a Jewish society. In Yiddish there is a famous phrase that "a guest for a while sees for a mile." Jewish society always needs constant revitalisation and freshness. Our Torah is eternal and ageless but the tactics for promoting and teaching it vary from time to time and from locality to locality.

Many times it is the newcomer, the former stranger that has newly entered the fold of Judaism and Jewish society that provides that new spark of energy and innovativeness that powers Torah Judaism forward even more. It is no coincidence that the Gaon of Vilna is buried next to the grave of the Ger Tzedek - the righteous convert to Judaism in eighteenth century Vilna.

The Gaon was an innovator, a departure from the other scholars of his time and even from many of those who preceded him. Converts on the whole - those who are sincerely attracted to Judaism and not influenced by other factors or are converted by ersatz methods and insincere and non-observant courts - are an inspiration to Jewish society and a prod for further progress and accomplishments.

This is also an important lesson that we can glean from the events described in this week's parsha. Proper treatment of the convert is mentioned thirty six times in the Torah - more than any other commandment or value. We should take heed of this and assess the new convert correctly and not condescendingly.

Something to think about.... Shabbat Shalom





Wednesday, 7 March 2012 6:30pm
 Purim Megillah Reading, Fancy Dress, Buffet Party
 Fun for all the family and your friends too!

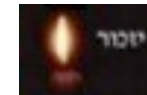
Thursday, 8 March 2012
7:00am - Shacharit (Bring Tefillin)
8:00am - Megillah reading followed by
Kosher English Breakfast £5 p.p.

R.S.V.P. to The Synagogue Office
 admin@loughtonsynagogue.com
 0208 508 0303

THOSE OBSERVING YAHRZEIT IN THE COMING WEEK:

18 Shevat [11 February] Mrs Lesley Adams for her father ר"ע Reuven ben Avraham HaLevi
 Mr Nigel Tobias for his mother ר"ע
 20 Shevat [13 February] Mr Vincent Coen for his brother ר"ע
 21 Shevat [14 February] Mrs Gill White for her mother ר"ע
 Mrs Irene Rose for her mother ר"ע Sarah bas Yitzchok
 Mr Stephen Franklin for his mother ר"ע
 22 Shevat [15 February] Mr David Medalyer for his father ר"ע Shmooel ben Yoel
 Mrs Sally Teller for her father ר"ע

PLEASE HELP PERPETUATE AND RESPECT THE MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES BY ENSURING THAT KADDISH IS SAID FOR THEM ON THE APPROPRIATE DATE AND ON THE SHABBAT PRECEDING THE YAHRZEIT.



Children's Service @ Loughton!
 on the first Shabbat of each month, there is a children's service on Shabbat Morning
10:30am - 11:30am
 Followed by a sweets kiddush (and cholent for the adults!)
KIDDIES DAVENING - FUN - GAMES - ACTIVITIES

Join us for an **in depth parsha shiur**
 Every Thursday evening at 8:pm
 Rabbi Aronovitz gives a 45 minute interactive, contemporary and in-depth study on the week's parsha.
 3 Alderton Mews
No experience necessary!

Have you visited the new up-to-date website?
www.loughtonsynagogue.com

Save the Date!
 On **Sunday 20th May** Loughton Synagogue will be visiting The Holocaust Centre in Laxton. There will be a charge of £22.50 per person (includes coach and entrance fee) Full details to follow separately.



Shiurim
Discuss - Learn - Grow
@ 8 p.m.
 @ Dennis & Shelley Posner 67 Church Lane
 The Written Word & The Jewish Library - Torah, Mishna, Talmud, Medrash and Shulchan Aruch - What are they?
13 February 2012
 Zionism and the rabbis why were some pro and others anti?
27 February 2012

See you there **BRING A FRIEND**

Security Rota:

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| FRIDAY 10TH FEBRUARY DANIEL SELLER | FRIDAY 17TH FEBRUARY AUSTIN POSNER SIMON KLEIN |
| SATURDAY 11TH FEBRUARY ROBERT LADERMAN STANLEY BASKIN | SATURDAY 18TH FEBRUARY DANIEL LADERMAN |

Mazel Tov!
 Rabbi Aronovitz, the Honorary Officers and the Board of Management wish a hearty Mazel Tov to **Ros & Ivan Martin** on the occasion of the birth of their grandson to Matthew and Hannah.
 May your grandson be a constant source of simcha and grow up to give you all much nachas.

The new format **Shalom Magazine** has proven to be very popular. Once again we are requesting that members contribute articles of Jewish, Zionist or other themes featuring interesting experiences, reflections or trips for the Pesach edition. Please forward your proposed article to: Michael Newman michaelhnewman49@aol.com

This Pesach send a "Chag Sameach" message to the whole community!
 Personal Yomtov Greetings £10 - 1/4 page , £25 - 1/2 page and £40 for a full page. Commercial Adverts £25 - 1/2 page and £40 for a full page. Please submit your advert or message to :
 Michael Newman michaelhnewman49@aol.com

We need your article/advert by Thursday March 15th to ensure it gets into this edition.