

WEST LONDON SYNAGOGUE

ק"ק שער ציון

WELCOMES YOU



שַׁבַּת שְׁלוֹם

SHABBAT SHALOM

24/25 May 2019

20 Iyyar 5779

SHABBAT SHALOM AND WELCOME TO WEST LONDON SYNAGOGUE

FRIDAY

6.00pm: **Erev Shabbat Service**
Led by Rabbi Helen
Sermon by: Rabbi Helen

Wardens: David Chapman, Oliver Walton and Stewart Sether
Beadle: Ivor Epstein

SATURDAY

10.30am: **Coffee Morning**

11.00am: **Shabbat Morning Service**
Led by Rabbi Helen and Rabbi Neil
Sermon by: Rabbi Neil

Wardens: David Chapman, Oliver Walton and Stewart Sether
Beadle: William Campos-Ortega and Orlando Ortega-Medina

Torah: Leviticus 26: 3-13
Haftarah: Jeremiah 16:20-17:14

Please join us for Shabbat kiddush after the service.

Doctor or fully trained first aider?

If you are a doctor, trained first aider or fully trained mental health first aider please make yourself known to the wardens and beadle.

PARASHAT B'CHUKKOTAI

Parashat B'chukkotai is filled with God's promises to the people if they are loyal and faithfully follow all the commandments and with God's warnings if they disobey. The portion also includes brief discussions of the payment of vows and gifts made to the sanctuary.

COMMUNITY NEWS

We extend a warm Mazel tov to:

- Lynne and Mark Schaffer on their wedding anniversary.
- Caio Goldman (12) and Jacob Shalam (6) on their birthdays.
- Rachel Furst and her family on Rachel's Bat Mitzvah.

אִם־בַּחֲקוֹתַי תִּלְכוּ וְאֶת־מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם: וְנִתַּתִּי
 גִשְׁמִיכֶם בְּעֵתְכֶם וְנִתְּנָה הָאָרֶץ יְבוּלָהּ וְעַץ הַשָּׂדֶה יִתֵּן פְּרִיּוֹ: וְהִשְׂיֵג
 לְכֶם דְּיֵשׁ אֶת־בְּצִיר וּבְצִיר יִשְׂיֵג אֶת־זֶרַע וְאָכַלְתֶּם לַחֲמֶכְס לְשִׁבְעַ
 וַיִּשְׁבַּתֶּם לְבַטַח בְּאֶרְצְכֶם: [שני] וְנִתַּתִּי שְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ וּשְׁכַבְתֶּם וְאִין
 מִחֲרִיד וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי חַיָּה רְעָה מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְחָרַב לֹא־תַעֲבֹר בְּאֶרְצְכֶם:
 וְרָדַפְתֶּם אֶת־אֲיֻבֵיכֶם וְנִפְּלוּ לְפָנֵיכֶם לַחֲרַב: וְרָדְפוּ מִכֶּם חֲמָשָׁה
 מֵאָה וּמֵאָה מִכֶּם רַבְּבָה יִרְדְּפוּ וְנִפְּלוּ אֲיֻבֵיכֶם לְפָנֵיכֶם לַחֲרַב:
 וּפְגַמְתִּי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְהִפְרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם וְהִרְבִּיתִי אֶתְכֶם וְהִקִּימְתִי
 אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם: [שלישי] [חמישי כשהן מחוברין] וְאָכַלְתֶּם יִשְׁן
 נוֹשָׁן וְיִשְׁן מִפְּנֵי חֶדֶשׁ תּוֹצִיאוּ: ^אוְנִתַּתִּי מִשְׁכָּנִי בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְלֹא־תִגְעַל
 נַפְשִׁי אֶתְכֶם: ^בוְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְהִיִּיתִי לְכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וְאֶתְכֶם
 תִּהְיוּ־לִי לְעַם: ^גאֲנִי יי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
 מֵהֵיטֵל לָהֶם עֲבָדִים וְאֲשַׁבֵּר מִטַּת עַלְכֶם וְאוֹלֹךְ אֶתְכֶם קוֹמָמִיּוֹת:

LEVITICUS 26:3-13

³If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, ⁴I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees their fruit. ⁵Your threshing will continue until grape harvest and the grape harvest will continue until planting, and you will eat all the food you want and live in safety in your land. ⁶I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid. I will remove wild beasts from the land, and the sword will not pass through your country. ⁷You will pursue your enemies, and they will fall by the sword before you. ⁸Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you. ⁹ I will look on you with favor and make you fruitful and increase your numbers, and I will keep my covenant with you. ¹⁰You will still be eating last year's harvest when you will have to move it out to make room for the new. ¹¹I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. ¹²I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people. ¹³I am the Eternal One your God, who brought you out of Egypt so that you would no longer be slaves to the Egyptians; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk with heads held high.

JEREMIAH 16:20-17:14

Can a man make gods for himself, and they are no gods?" Therefore, behold I let them know; at this time I will let them know My power and My might, and they shall know that My Name is the Eternal One.¹ The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, with a diamond point, engraved on the tablet of their heart and on the horns of your altars. As they remember their children, [so do they remember] their altars, and their asherim by the green trees upon the high hills. You, who sit upon the mountain in the field, I will give your substance, all your treasures for a spoil! Your high places are made for sin within all your borders. And you shall release, and [I will avenge Myself] of you because of your heritage that I gave you, and I will make you serve your enemies in the land that you did not know, for you have kindled fire in My nostrils that shall burn forever. So says God: Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm, and whose heart turns away from the Eternal One.⁶ He shall be like a lone tree in the plain, and will not see when good comes, and will dwell on parched land in the desert, on salt-sodden soil that is not habitable. Blessed is the man who trusts in God,; the Eternal One shall be his trust. For he shall be like a tree planted by the water, and by a rivulet spreads its roots, and will not see when heat comes, and its leaves shall be green, and in the year of drought will not be anxious, neither shall it cease from bearing fruit. The heart is deceitful above all things, and when it is sick, who will recognize it? I, the Eternal One, search the heart, test the kidneys, to give everyone according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds. The partridge calls but has not laid, so it is he who gathers riches but not by right; he shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end he stands dishonoured. As a Throne of Glory, exalted from the beginning, so is the place of our Sanctuary. Adonai, who is the source of the hopes of Israel, all that forsake You shall be shamed, and they who turn away from me shall be marked out on the earth that they have forsaken the source of living waters, the Eternal One. Heal me, O God, then shall I be healed; help me, then I shall be helped, for You are my praise!

RABBI SYBIL'S THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

The portion this week summarises the classic message of Torah... If you do what God tells you, all will be well with your lives. 'If you walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit...' (leviticus 26:3-4).

It goes on to tell how there will be peace in the land. No wild animals, and no one will attack you. But after the long passage detailing blessings that will accrue from doing God's will, there are longer passages describing all the terrible things which will happen if you don't.

Of course, it's not true! We can see, among the homeless and the asylum seekers, ample examples of individuals who have fallen on hard times through no fault of their own. The second paragraph of the Shema, which has the same message as our Torah portion was cut out of earlier Reform prayers books because of its irrelevance - who amongst us, in the centre of London was dependent on rain for our crops?

But circumstances have changed. You don't need to grow things to feel the effect of global warming – and we know global warming is the result of human action. Last week's portion described the shemitah - the Sabbatical year. Israelites were to grow crops for six years, but in the seventh, let the land lie fallow in order that it replenish itself. Every fiftieth year, too it was to be left, teaching that we do not own the land, that we must treat it with respect. Only we haven't. Through human greed, not human need, we have exhausted the earth. Hunger leads to desperation. Lack of resources lead to war, just as our portion describes.

These statements in Torah were never meant as personal predictions. They are communal rewards and punishments, the result of community actions. If we move our gaze away from those unfortunate individuals we encounter every day and look at the bigger picture, we can see the awful truth behind the words. We are heading for a disaster of biblical proportions, the result of our casual and careless use of the worlds resources.

We know we must radically change the way we live our lives, otherwise, as our portion continues, 'Your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield her produce... I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your skies like iron, and your earth like bronze;' War will follow and famine... exile... homelessness. Can we change, before it is too late?

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday 2 June

6.00pm: Meet the Author: *'Where Moses Stood - Shattering Biblical & Historical Illusions'*, with Robert Feather

Robert Feather's explorations in the Sinai Desert over four years, have confirmed the Exodus did take place, and revealed the exact location where Moses stood to receive the Ten Commandments, and the circumstances of the progression of the Exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land.

Join us to hear these fascinating theories, from a seasoned author on the Copper Scroll of Qumran, who has also researched the origins of the Abrahamic faiths in the reign of the radical Pharaoh Akhenaton around 1350 BCE, and the role of Moses and a priestly community by the Dead Sea in the passing down of events and customs through the ages.

All warmly welcomed to this, the latest in our Meet The Author series.

For security reasons, please book you place in advance with Robert Feather at a8oct@btinternet.com.

BOOK NOW FOR DINNER!

**Saturday 8 - Sunday 9 June
Chosen? Tikkun Leyl Shavuot**

A NIGHT OF CHOICES...

18.00: Erev Shavuot Service

19.00: Communal Kiddush

19.15: Dinner - £25, £15 conc.

Please book ahead with Kathryn on 020 7535 0259 or
kathryn.forro@wls.org.uk

21.00: Ask the Rabbis Panel

21.30: Plenary - 'Are WE the Chosen People?'

22.15: Choose Your Pudding - Dessert Buffet

22.50: ALL NIGHT STUDY

04.45: Shacharit Rooftop Service