

WEST LONDON SYNAGOGUE

ק"ק שער ציון

WELCOMES YOU



שַׁבַּת שְׁלוֹם

SHABBAT SHALOM

20/21 December 2019

23 Kislev 5780

SHABBAT SHALOM AND WELCOME TO WEST LONDON SYNAGOGUE

FRIDAY

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

Wardens:
Beadles: Julia and Julian Markson

SATURDAY

10.30am: **Coffee Morning**

11.00am: **Shabbat Morning Service**
Led by Rabbi David and members of WLS
Sermon by: Zachary Carruthers

Wardens:
Beadles: Julia and Julian Markson

Torah: Genesis 39:1-9
Haftarah: Amos 2:6-3:8

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.

SHABBAT VA- YEISHEV

Va-yeishev, which means “and he settled,” contains the story of Jacob and his sons, who have settled in Canaan. There is jealousy between the other brothers and Joseph, who dreams of ruling them. They plot Joseph’s death, but Judah persuades them to sell him to a caravan of Ishmaelites heading for Egypt. Later, they report to Jacob that Joseph was killed by a wild animal. Later, Judah’s son Er dies, leaving his wife, Tamar, a widow. Judah promises that his young son Shelah will marry Tamar, but Judah fails to keep his word, therefore, Tamar disguises herself and tricks Judah into sleeping with her. When Judah is told that Tamar has “played the harlot” and is pregnant, he orders that she be put to death. Defending herself, Tamar reveals to Judah that he is the father of the child she is carrying. Realizing that he has not treated Tamar fairly, Judah declares: “She is more in the right than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah.” The Torah portion continues with the adventures of Joseph in Egypt, where he is sold to Pharaoh’s chief steward, Potiphar, and quickly rises from being a slave to becoming manager of his master’s house. Potiphar’s wife is attracted to Joseph and tries to seduce him. Angry because Joseph refuses her advances, she reports to Potiphar that Joseph tried to force himself upon her. Potiphar has Joseph thrown into prison. There he meets Pharaoh’s chief cupbearer and chief baker. They tell him their dreams, and Joseph interprets them. (Later, as Joseph has predicted, the cupbearer is returned to Pharaoh’s service, but the chief baker is put to death.)

COMMUNITY NEWS

We wish a warm Mazel Tov to:

- Ariella Pacht on her baby blessing ceremony.

א וְיוֹסֵף הוֹבִיד מִצְרַיִם וַיְקַנְהוּ פְּוֹטִיפֶר סְרִיס פְּרַעֲהַ שֶׁר הַטַּבָּחִים אִישׁ מִצְרַיִם מִיַּד הַיִּשְׁמַעְאֵלִים אֲשֶׁר הוֹרְדָהוּ שָׁמָּה: ב וַיְהִי יַלְאֲת־יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי אִישׁ מְצַלִּיחַ וַיְהִי בְּבֵית אֲדֹנָיו הַמִּצְרַיִ: ג וַיֵּרָא אֲדֹנָיו כִּי יַלְאֲתוֹ וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־הוּא עֹשֶׂה יַלְאֲתִיחַ בְּיָדוֹ:

ד וַיִּמְצָא יוֹסֵף חֵן בְּעֵינָיו וַיִּשְׁרַת אֹתוֹ וַיַּפְקְדֵהוּ עַל־בְּיָתוֹ וְכָל־יֵשְׁלוֹ נָתַן בְּיָדוֹ: ה וַיְהִי מֵאֲזֵי הַפְּקִיד אֹתוֹ בְּבֵיתוֹ וְעַל כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יֵשְׁלוֹ וַיְבַרֵךְ: וַיַּלְאֲתֵהוּ אֶת־בְּיָת הַמִּצְרַיִם בְּגִלְגַּל יוֹסֵף וַיְהִי בְרַכְתִּי יַלְאֲתֵהוּ בְּכָל־אֲשֶׁר יֵשְׁלוֹ בְּבֵית וּבְשָׂדֵה: ז וַיַּעֲזֹב כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ בְּיַד־יוֹסֵף וְלֹא־יָדַע אֹתוֹ מֵאִוְמָה כִּי אִם־הִלָּחַם אֲשֶׁר־הוּא אוֹכַל וַיְהִי יוֹסֵף יָפֵה־תָאֵר וַיִּפֶּה מְרָאֵה:

ז וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וַתִּשְׂא אִשְׁת־אֲדֹנָיו אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ אֶל־יוֹסֵף וַתֹּאמֶר שִׁכְבָה עִמִּי: ח וַיִּמָּאֵן | וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־אִשְׁת־אֲדֹנָיו הֵן אֲדֹנִי לֹא־יָדַע אֶתִּי מֵה־בְּבֵית וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר־יֵשְׁלוֹ נָתַן בְּיָדִי: ט אִינְנוּ גְדוֹל בְּבֵית הַזֶּה מִמְּנִי וְלֹא־חָשַׁד מִמְּנִי מֵאִוְמָה כִּי אִם־אוֹתָךְ בְּאֲשֶׁר אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאִיךְ אֶעֱשֶׂה הֲרַעָה הַגְּדֹלָה הַזֹּאת וְחָטַאתִי לָאֱלֹהִים:

GENESIS 39:1-9

1 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh's officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there. 2 The Eternal One was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. 3 When his master saw that the Eternal One was with him and that the Eternal One gave him success in everything he did

4 Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. 5 From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Eternal One blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Eternal One was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. 6 So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph's care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate. Now Joseph was well-built and handsome

7 and after a while his master's wife took notice of Joseph and said, "Come to bed with me!" 8 But he refused. "With me in charge," he told her, "my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. 9 No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?"

AMOS 2:6-3:8

Thus said Adonai: For three transgressions of Israel, For four, I will not revoke it: Because they have sold for silver Those whose cause was just, And the needy for a pair of sandals. [Ah,] you who trample the heads of the poor Into the dust of the ground, And make the humble walk a twisted course! Father and son go to the same girl, And thereby profane My holy name. They recline by every altar On garments taken in pledge, And drink in the House of their God Wine bought with fines they imposed. Yet I Destroyed the Amorite before them, Whose stature was like the cedar's And who was stout as the oak, Destroying its boughs above And its trunk below! And I brought you up from the land of Egypt And led you through the wilderness forty years, to possess the land of the Amorite! And I raised up prophets from among your sons and Nazirites from among your young men. Is that not so, O people of Israel?—says Adonai. But you made the Nazirites drink wine And ordered the prophets not to prophesy. Ah, I will slow your movements As a wagon is slowed when it is full of cut grain. Flight shall fail the swift, The strong shall find no strength, And the warrior shall not save his life. The bowman shall not hold his ground, And the fleet-footed shall not escape, Nor the horsepeople save his life. Even the most stouthearted warrior Shall run away unarmed that day—declares Adonai. Hear this word, O people of Israel, That Adonai has spoken concerning you, Concerning the whole family that I brought up from the land of Egypt: You alone have I singled out Of all the families of the earth—That is why I will call you to account For all your iniquities. Can two walk together without having met? Does a lion roar in the forest When it has no prey? Does a great beast let out a cry from its den Without having made a capture? Does a bird drop on the ground—in a trap—With no snare there? Does a trap spring up from the ground Unless it has caught something? When a ram's horn is sounded in a town, Do the people not take alarm? Can misfortune come to a town If Adonai has not caused it? Indeed, my Sovereign does nothing Without having revealed Adonai's purpose To Adonai's servants the prophets. A lion has roared, who can but fear? My Ruler has spoken, who can but prophesy?

RABBI NEIL'S THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

The story of Joseph, which begins this Shabbat, shares a lot of links with the story of Esther for good reason. They both share stories of navigating the complex world of foreign political powers as Jews in exile. Joseph the young man is sold into slavery by his brothers and through his gifts he survives jail and becomes vizier of Egypt – saving his family from famine. Esther, the hero of the story of Purim, also survives the political uncertainty of Persia and she and her uncle, Mordechai, save the Jews and reach the heights of political power.

There is another biblical narrative that connects with the Joseph story and that is of Tamar, the daughter of King David. Again there are inner-biblical allusions between the stories and, just like Esther and Joseph, the personal is horrifically intertwined with the political. The account of Tamar's rape, by her half-brother, is situated within the wider context of the succession narrative – who will rise to the throne after David's demise. This story, one of the 'Texts of Terror' of the great feminist biblical critic Phyllis Trible, will be the focus of one of my Limmud conference sessions next week.

These stories are brought to mind as we also begin our celebrations of Chanukah on Sunday night with the first candle. Chanukah is a story of power and politics – the Jewish people's survival against Hellenising pressures. This time though the minority experience of the Jewish people is within the context of Empire not exile and leads to sovereignty of the Hasmonean dynasty.

We learn that politics and religion aligned with power make for complex worlds to navigate – they present opportunities and challenges. Ultimately, the experience of the Jewish people has always been one of caution vis-à-vis political power - that is why Rabban Gamliel, son of Rabbi Judah HaNasi, is recorded as saying, "Be careful [in your dealings] with the ruling authorities for they do not befriend a person except for their own needs; they seem like friends when it is to their own interest, but they do not stand by a man in the hour of his distress." (Avot 2:3) It is also why the State of Israel, the founders of which looked to the models of the Maccabees' success in establishing a sovereign state, is so precious and takes such work.

Chanukah is a time where we look to a future of light and hope – may we merit that time in our days. Chag Urim Sameach – a joyful festival of light to you all.

SEE YOU THERE

Monday 6 January

6.00pm: CBT Café

"The January Blues...When chicken soup is not enough?"

The CBT Café is a partnership between WLS and Emma, who co-founded, 'Unravelling Minds', in order to help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.

The CBT Café is a place for those with lived experience of mental health, whether in their own lives or in the lives of those close to them, to come and share experiences. It is a non-therapeutic environment for people to meet together.

So drop in, unwind and learn, and what better way to do this than over a cup of tea and a piece of cake. After all, mental health is for everyone, just like cake!

RSVP would be appreciated but not essential. Cake donations warmly welcomed. For more information and RSVP please contact Tirza Waisel on 020 7535 0278.

Thursday 23 January

5.30pm: Rabbis Drinks

All welcome to join the Rabbis for refreshments in the Samson Family Concourse

6.30pm: In Concert with Natalie Clein

Celebrated cellist and WLS member Natalie Clein illustrates beautifully with music her sister's readings of sacred and secular poetry. A lyrical evening in the magnificent setting of our Italian Moorish building. Tickets from £20, available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/eretz or contact Kathryn on 020 7535 0259.

Sunday 26 January

6.00pm: International Holocaust Memorial Day: Standing Together *How One Synagogue Saved Children's Lives*

Rabbi Baroness Julia Neuberger and Rabbi Neil Janes, on behalf of West London Synagogue and the Lyons Learning Project,

invite you to hear the incredible story of how West London Synagogue saved the lives of more than one hundred children in the Holocaust.

With guest speaker: Dr Jennifer Craig-Norton, world renowned scholar of the Kindertransport and refugee experiences.

RSVP for security and catering purposes by 16 January 2020 to Adi Ben-Naim on 020 7535 0291 or admin@lyonslearning.org.uk