

10th Cheshvan 5769/8th November 2008

Minister: Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld

Emeritus Chazan: Rev. Moshe Dubiner

Parashat Lech Lecha

Hertz Cohen Stone Gutnick Shabbat 4.08pm

Sedra 45 60 54 66  Shabbat ends 5.11pm

Haftarah 60 82 1133 1377

Writing and Dedicating a Torah Scroll

The introduction of a new *Sefer Torah* into a synagogue is often accompanied by celebratory dancing, singing, and prayer. This is a very ancient celebration; in First Temple times, around 1000 BCE, the Bible comments that the priests, and kings such as David, “danced before the ark” or “danced before the Lord”, celebrating and praying (often in an ecstatic manner) before the Ark of the Covenant, where G-d’s word was held. It is a tremendous merit to write (or commission writing of) a Sefer Torah, and a significant honour to have a Sefer Torah written in one’s honour or memory. Guests of the individual who commissioned the Torah are invited to a celebration to be given the opportunity to write one of the final letters.

The *Sefer Torah* (plural: *Sifrei Torah*) is a copy of the formal Hebrew text of the Five Books of Moses, hand-written on parchment (see below), using a quill (or other permitted writing utensil) dipped in ink. Producing a *Sefer Torah* fulfills the 613th final mitzvah of the Torah: “Write for yourselves this song ..” understood as a mitzvah devolving on every individual. The parchment on which the Torah scroll is written, together with the hair or sinew with which the panels of parchment are sewn together, must come from kosher animals. The parchment is ruled and cut to specifications. The ink for writing must be black and a quill pen is used.

A scribe may never use tools of ‘base metals’, for these are associated with implements of war. Most modern Sifrei Torah are written with forty-two lines of text per column (Yemenite Jews use fifty). Very strict rules about the position and appearance of the Hebrew letters are observed. Any of several Hebrew scripts may be used, most of which are fairly ornate and exacting.

A *Sefer Torah* contains 304,805 letters, all of which must be duplicated precisely by a trained sofer (“scribe”). An error of a single letter, ornamentation, or symbol renders the *Sefer Torah* ‘pasul’ - unfit for use, hence a special skill is required and a scroll takes considerable time to write and check. Of course, some errors are inevitable in the course of production. If the error involves a word other than G-d’s name, it can be rectified by scraping the letter off the scroll with a sharp object. But if G-d’s name is written in error, the entire page must be cut from the scroll and a new page added, and the page written anew from the beginning. The new page is sewn into the scroll to maintain continuity of the document; the old one is buried with respect rather than otherwise destroyed or discarded.

A completed Sefer Torah is treated with great honour and respect. It is housed in the Aron Kodesh (Ark) and veiled by an embroidered parochet (curtain). The scroll itself will often be girded with a strip of silk and “robed” with fine fabric, called the “Mantle of the Law”. It is decorated with an ornamental breastplate, scroll-handles (*etz chayyim*), and the principal ornament—the “Crown of the Law”, which is made to fit over the upper ends of the rollers when the scroll is closed. The gold and silver ornaments belonging to the scroll are collectively known as *k’lei kodesh* (sacred vessels), to resemble the ornaments of the Kohen Gadol (High Priest). A Yad, or pointer, is often hung from the scroll, since the Torah itself should never be touched with the bare finger. This ornamentation does not constitute worship of the Sefer Torah, but is intended to distinguish it as sacred and holy, as the living word of G-d. The text is chanted, rather than spoken, in a special melodic manner known as cantillation, which varies significantly depending on the tradition- Ashkenazi, Sephardi or Yemenite. **In the Sephardic tradition, the Sefer Torah is not robed in a mantle, but rather is housed in an ornamental case which protects the scroll. Also, the Torah is read in an upright position, allowing the congregation to see the words.**

Shabbat Shalom

Next Shabbat - Vayera

14th November— 15th November 2008

Commences 3.58pm Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat 4.00pm

Announcements

A warm welcome to Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan & Lady Sacks who will be with us this Shabbat

Kiddush Sponsor

Marion & David Khalili invite the congregation to a Kiddush in the Bloomstein Hall after the service to celebrate their Pearl Wedding Anniversary

Breakfast Sponsor

Breakfasts this week are sponsored by Eve & Malcolm Brenner to commemorate the Yahrzeits of Malcolm’s daughter Tania Brenner z”l and father Abraham Brenner z”l

Birthdays—Mazal Tov to:

Oliver Peters Joseph Mishon
Jacob Lyons Nicole Sharpe
Alison Goldberg Eve Brenner
Nigel Peters Simon Silver
Peter Steckelmacher
Stuart Lipton Jacqueline Kershaw
Hetty Spencer Jack Mautner

Wedding Anniversary— Mazal Tov to:

Barbara & Bernard Diamond
Aviva & Lewis Harris

Refuah Shelemah

Gertie Endfield Rachel bat Yehudit
Raphael Etesami Raphael ben Michal
Seymour Freed Shmuel Zeev ben Sara Rivka

Our Rabbi

You can contact Rabbi Lionel & Natalie Rosenfeld at rabbilr@marblearch.org.uk
Phone: 020 7535 0458
mobile: 07811202244

Our Website:

www.marblearch.org.uk

Friday 7th November

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast & Haftarah Shiur by Ervin Landau
4.00 pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat & D'var Torah by the Chief Rabbi

Shabbat 8th November

- 8.45 am Shiur with Henry Knobil
9.15 am Choral Shacharit
4.00 pm Mincha, followed by Seudah Shlishit, & D'var Torah by The Chief Rabbi
5.11 pm Maariv & Havdalah

Sunday 9th November

- 8.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast and Thought for the Day by Alan Goldberg
10.00 am **Cheder Age 4 – 12 years.** Contact Batsheva Burns for further information on 0796 88 555 96 or email cheder.marblearch@gmail.com

Monday 10th November

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast & D'var Torah by Michael Milston

Tuesday 11th November

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast & Shiur by Rabbi Yosef Vogel

Wednesday 12th November

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast and Parsha Shiur by Ervin Landau

Thursday 13th November

- 7.30am Shacharit followed by breakfast & D'var Torah by Bernard Silver
10.30 am Rabbi Rosenfeld's Parsha Shiur for Ladies. **Please note date change this week**
6.00 pm Rabbi Rosenfeld's GCSE Class in Judaism

Friday 14th November

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast & Haftarah Shiur by Ervin Landau

**Mincha & Ma'ariv through the week
Sun 9th - Thurs 13th November 4.00pm**

Security Rota

Henry Ejdelbaum. Alan Goldberg.

Kiddush Rota

Linda Sharpe

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Rabbi Rosenfeld's Parsha Shiur for Ladies

A weekly series has begun. New participants are most welcome.

Rabbi Rosenfeld's Hebrew Reading & Understanding the Siddur Class

This class will now begin on Tuesday December 2nd at 5.30pm. Those wishing to join should email Rabbi Rosenfeld on rabbilr@marblearch.org.uk or call the office

Rabbi Rosenfeld's GCSE Class in Judaism for post Bar & Bat Mitzvah teenagers

This class has now begun and is being held on Thursday's at 6.00pm. New participants are welcome. Please contact him at rabbilr@marblearch.org.uk or call the office

Bnei Akiva Shabbaton— 14th & 15 November

We welcome all those attending the Bnei Akiva Israel Machane Reunion and we look forward to them taking part in the services next weekend.

Monday 24th November at 7.45pm

"Ethics , Jews and Embryos" with Baroness Ruth Deech

Ruth Deech was chair of the UK Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority from 1994-2002, HFEA is a national committee charged with monitoring all IVF clinics and laboratories in the UK, and with approving assisted reproductive treatments and embryo research. In the period of her chairmanship to 2002 the HFEA oversaw the introduction of preimplantation genetic diagnosis and stem cell research. For further details please see our website www.marblearch.org.uk

Friday Night 5th December— Friday Night Live at Marble Arch

Another singles dinner in conjunction with Rabbi Israel Lew of Chabad Bloomsbury. For full details go to website

Choral Shabbat Service from Montreal, 6th December:

We are delighted to welcome world-renowned Composer and Choir Director Stephen Glass together with Chazan Gideon Zelermyer and I Choir from North America who will join Rabbi Rosenfeld for Choral Shacharit and Musaf

Luncheon Club Shabbat 6th December

Please make your reservation through the office to avoid disappointment.

Monday 19th January 2009 at 7.45pm

Medical Ethics by Rabbi Dr. Akiva Tatz

Further details to follow in due course. Keep the date free.