

4th Teveth 5771/11th December 2010.

Minister: Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld

Emeritus Chazan: Rev. Moshe Dubiner

Parashat Vayigash

	Hertz	Cohen	Stone	Gutnick		
Sedra	169	277	250	298		Shabbat begins 3.37pm
Haftarah	178	293	1144	1395		Shabbat ends 4.45pm

"And Pharaoh asked Jacob 'How old are you?'" (Genesis 47:8)

Imagine the scene: Pharaoh is preparing to meet the renowned father of his right hand man Joseph for the very first time. He has heard so much about this patriarchal figure, and now this great sage stands before him. The tension mounts as all await Pharaoh's opening words. Yet all Pharaoh can manage is an inquiry regarding Jacob's age; surely he could have begun with a more appropriate greeting?

The Rashbam, the grandson of Rashi explains that Pharaoh was taken aback by Jacob's unusually aged appearance, and could not help but wonder about its cause. Jacob, discerning Pharaoh's astonishment, responds that although he has not lived all that long, his life has been filled by so many troubles and worries which all have taken their toll on his body, causing the aged appearance.

With this response, Jacob has effectively summarised his life story. Although the other forefathers certainly experienced their share of pain and sorrow, it appears that Jacob endured the most suffering. Even his early life is marked with difficulties as he must struggle with his twin brother Esau, eventually leading to Jacob's hasty departure from his own home. Next he must contend with his scheming uncle Laban, who takes advantage of Jacob at every turn. Upon finally returning to his homeland, Jacob must deal first with the loss of his beloved wife Rachel, and later, his cherished son Joseph. There seems to be hardly a moment of respite throughout Jacob's life, only struggle after struggle.

Yet despite the hardships, Jacob's life is clearly not devoid of accomplishments. On the contrary, in many respects, it appears that Jacob's achievements surpassed both his father's and grandfather's. The rabbis explain that although Abraham epitomised the attribute of *chesed* (loving kindness), and Isaac that of *din* (strict adherence to the will of G-d), Jacob attained the level of *emet* (truth) - a perfect synthesis of the two. In addition, while Abraham and Isaac both fathered a son who went off on his own way, every one of Jacob's twelve sons remained true their family's traditions. It is no coincidence that we are called by Jacob's other name: *B'nei Yisrael*, the *Children of Israel* -, for it was Jacob who completed the foundation of the Jewish people begun by the other forefathers.

At first glance, Jacob's unparalleled success seems almost implausible given his difficult path. Jacob's greatness, however, came not *in spite* of his struggles, but rather *because* of them. Jacob learned early on that nothing worthwhile ever comes easy. His hardships forced him to turn inward and invest himself in life. Jacob met his challenges head-on, and by overcoming them, he emerged a more complete and fulfilled person. Rather than allow himself to be crushed by his difficulties, Jacob used them as fuel to propel himself to greatness.

Western society embraces the dream of "living on easy street". Unfortunately, such a location does not exist: life is not easy. The rabbis appropriately describe our mission in life as our *avodah* (work), for we must labour and toil to achieve the ultimate goal. We tend to delude ourselves into thinking that by simply going through the motions, performing the mitzvot by rote, we are absolved of our obligation to ourselves and to our Maker. However, a perfunctory observance of the commandments quickly becomes "easy" and ignores the complexities and confusion of life. Only once we recognise the difficulties inherent in the world and within ourselves can we begin to move forward. Only when we are prepared to stop disregarding our problems and shortcomings and strive to deal with them, are we ready to experience the true "dream world".

Shabbat Shalom !

From a D'var Torah by Rabbi Yoel Spotts of Atlanta.

Next Shabbat - Vayechi

17th—18th December 2010

Commences 3.37pm (before Fast of Tevet ends) **Please note: Mincha & Torah Reading for Fast at 3.30pm** followed by Kabbalat Shabbat

Announcements

We thank our Kiddush Sponsors

The Rayden family invite the congregation to Kiddush to commemorate the Yahrzeit of Wolf Rayden z"l

Engagement Announcement—Mazal Tov

To Georgina & Michael Djanogly on the engagement of their son David to Debbie Shamash and to grandmother Sonia Shalam

Breakfasts After Morning Minyan—No Sponsor

Regretfully we have no breakfast sponsor as yet this week. If you would like to help us by donating breakfast, there is still time! Kindly contact the office

Birthdays—Mazal Tov to:

Jonathan Winton	Elliot Woolf
Nathalie Esfandi	Alison Hanbury
Deborah Wallace	Stuart Levy
Jaime Gilinski	Adrian Wallace
Marcia Green	Marion Reichwald
David Sage	Michael Lewis
Ruth Phillips	Lorna Larn
Rebecca Lewis	

Wedding Anniversary—Mazal Tov

Susan & Clive Truman
Iris & Georgio Laurenti Levi
Angela & John Kessler
Naomi & Harold Klug
Elissa & Anthony Isaacs

Refuah Shlemah

CM	Chaya Beila bat Esther
Renata Knobil	Mereleh bat Raizel Berel
Gemma Levine	Tsipora Chana bat Eliezer
Lisbeth Morgan	Chaya bat Miriam
Gala Colover	Chana bat Yehudit
M.A.	Devorah bat Yocheved

Arnold Lee
Lewis Clein
Stuart Caplan
Aitan Cobb

Aharon ben Esther Halevi
Yehudah Yonah ben Liba
Zelig ben Etta Rasha Hacohe
Aitan Gavriel ben Shulamit
Aviva

Paul Simons
Nat Winsor
Seymour Freed
Alex Guberman
Benny Ollech

Pinchas ben Anita
Noah ben Miriam Chaya
Shmuel Zeev ben Sara Rivka
Natan ben Miriam
Ben Zion ben Yitta

Friday 10th December

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast & Haftarah Shiur by Ervin Landau
3.45 pm Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat & D'var Torah by Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld followed by Pirkei Avot Shiur

Shabbat 11th December

- 8.45 am Shiur with Ervin Landau
9.15 am Shacharit
3.45 pm Mincha, followed by Seudah Shlishit & D'var Torah by Rabbi Rosenfeld
4.45 pm Maariv & Havdalah

Sunday 12th December

- 8.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast and D'var Torah by Alan Goldberg
10.00am Cheder Aged 4—12 years. Contact Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld for further information on 07811202244 or email rabbilr@marblearch.org.uk or Miriam Kaye marblearchcheder@hotmail.com

Monday 13th December

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast & D'var Torah by Michael Milston
10.30 am Shiur for Ladies led by Rabbi Rosenfeld

Tuesday 14th December

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

Wednesday 15th December

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

Thursday 16th December

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast & D'var Torah by Ervin Landau

Friday 17th December—Fast of Tevet

- 6.11am Fast begins
7.15 am Shacharit and Selichot
3.30 pm **Please help us by ensuring a Minyan for Mincha & Torah Reading for the Fast**
4.40pm Fast ends

Come and strengthen our Friday night and Shabbat Afternoon Minyanim—

Mincha & Ma'ariv through the week
Sun 12th—Thurs 16th December 3.45pm

Kiddush Rota

Linda Sharpe

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

Our Website: For full details of times of services and events by month, go to www.marblearch.org.uk

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

SPECIAL EVENTS

Consecration—Willesden Sunday 12th December

The consecration of the tombstone in loving memory of Eric Rayman z"l (Ruth Hanbury's father) will take place at 12 noon

Communal Dinner and Evening with Santa- Sebag Montefiore— 17th January 2011

In support of the charity Ovarian Cancer Action Funding research, raising awareness, giving a voice.
Reception 7.15pm, Dinner 7.45pm, £45 per head. Please call or email the office today to make your booking. 020 77239333, office@marblearch.org.uk

Choral Shabbat Weekend 21st—22nd January with Stephen Glass of Montreal

Make a note now to join us for Choral Friday night and Shabbat morning services

Bar & Bat Mitzvah Classes begin next term

Rabbi Rosenfeld begins a new once- weekly class for boys and girls a year away from their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, beginning January 2011. All interested families should contact him

ONGOING EVENTS

Pirkei Avot Shiur— 10th December after Kabbalat Shabbat (for 30 minutes)

We are looking at the timeless wisdom of the 'Ethics of the Fathers'. All are welcome to attend.

Rabbi Rosenfeld's Shiur for Ladies

Next Shiur Monday 13th December at 10.30am. Ladies who have not previously attended are most welcome.

Monday Mornings -Healing at WMA

Sonia Shalam continues with her healing sessions on Monday mornings. Please phone her on 07799353708 to book a session or for further information.

GCSE—'Judaism' weekly course for teenagers taught by Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld every Thursday at 6.00pm

Winter Minyan Rota

Gentlemen will soon be needed to help in ensuring that we have a Minyan for morning and afternoon services during the December/January holiday period, when our Suburban attendees are away, yet members still have to say Kaddish and have Yahrzeits. Please therefore be responsive when Rabbi Rosenfeld contacts you

Office hours over the Public Holidays

Please note that the Synagogue office will close at 1.00pm on Friday 24th December and reopen at 9.00am on Wednesday 29th December. Between the hours of 9.00am—12 noon on 26th, 27th and 28th December please call 07932318448 **in cases of emergency only**

The office will again close at 1.00pm on Friday 31st December reopening on Tuesday 4th January 2011 at 9.00am. Again, **in cases of emergency only**, on the 2nd and 3rd January between 9.00am—12 noon please call 07981011007

