

11th Teveth 5771/18th December 2010.

Minister: Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld

Emeritus Chazan: Rev. Moshe Dubiner

Parashat Vayechi

	Hertz	Cohen	Stone	Gutnick		
Sedra	180	296	268	318		Shabbat begins 3.37pm
Haftarah	191	315	1145	1396		Shabbat ends 4.47pm

Giving our Children a Blessing on Friday Night- How and Why?

Put yourself in the following situation for just a moment: You have come to the end of a very difficult life, climaxed by 22 years of agonizing separation from your favourite son. Not only were you detached from him, but you yourself may have contributed to that separation through your preferential treatment of him, arousing jealousy in his brothers. And you now find yourself and your family in a foreign land as a result of that jealousy. Keeping all that in mind, which one *midah* (character trait) would you be most keenly aware of in attempting to prevent it from surfacing again? It must be 'Jealousy'.

Now, let's examine Jacob's behaviour in this week's Torah portion. He finds himself and his family in exile in the land of Egypt, and as the Talmud relates in Megillah 16b, it was because of the striped coloured coat that Jacob gave Joseph that our ancestors eventually ended up in Egypt. Yet we apparently find Jacob making the same exact mistake of showing preference to one son over the others. Menashe and Ephraim are to be singled out from amongst Jacob's many other grandchildren to be the recipients of a special blessing. How could Jacob have risked creating jealousy in his family, after everything that he has experienced, for a simple blessing? On top of that, it has become the custom for a parent to bless his or her son every Friday night with the same blessing Jacob gave Joseph's sons. Why was this blessing singled out as the one with which we bless our children?

Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky, one of the most respected rabbis of the past generation, answers as follows: The brothers and their children understood that Joseph's sons were in a uniquely difficult situation, as they were Jacob's only grandchildren to be born in Egypt. Menashe and Ephraim even spent their early years separated from the positive influences of Jacob and were raised, instead, surrounded by the corrupting influence of Egyptian society. Even with their father being the righteous Joseph, it was inevitable that they would absorb some of the negative influences from their environment. It was, therefore, clear to the entire family that Joseph's sons required an extra special blessing if they were to be capable of overcoming their handicap and prevent the assimilation of their own descendants.

Rav Kamenetzky offers a fascinating explanation, along these same lines, as to why Jacob afforded Ephraim with the revered right-hand status for the ensuing blessing, in place of Menashe who as first-born would normally receive it. Joseph gave his eldest son the name *Menashe*, which is purely a Hebrew name. On the other hand, his younger son's name *Ephraim*, although it has a Hebrew meaning, seems to have within it the same characteristics of many Egyptian names. If we examine the Egyptian names found in the Torah, almost every one bears an uncanny resemblance to the name *Pharaoh*. They are each composed of at least two of the same Hebrew letters in Pharaoh's name, namely *pay*, *ayin*, *resh*, and *hei*; The name of *Potiphar*, the Egyptian minister to whom Joseph was sold, includes *pay* and *resh*. *Potiphara*, Joseph's father-in-law includes *pay*, *resh*, and *ayin*. Pharaoh gives Joseph the Egyptian name *Pane'ach* which includes *pay* and *ayin*. The two midwives' names in next week's Sidra, *Shifrah* (*pay*, *resh*, and *hei*) and *Puah* (*pay*, *ayin*, and *hei*), are also excellent examples of the composition of Egyptian names. Finally the name *Ephraim* itself has two of the "Egyptian" letters, *pay* and *resh*. From this we can therefore infer that Ephraim was inherently a little more assimilated into the Egyptian culture than his brother Menashe. It was for this reason that Ephraim was given priority for Jacob's blessing.

Jacob's blessing transcends time: Every Friday night we recall it and invoke it as we pass it on to our children. We, like Joseph's sons, need all of the blessings we can get!

Shabbat Shalom

From a D'var Torah by Michael Alterman of the Ner Israel Rabbinical College, Baltimore

Next Shabbat - Shemot

24th—25th December 2010

Commences 3.40pm Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat 3.45pm

Announcements

We thank our Kiddush Sponsors

Susan & Robert Millner invite the congregation to Kiddush after the service to celebrate their annual visit to Western Marble Arch

We thank our Breakfast Sponsors

Breakfasts for the morning minyan this week are kindly sponsored by Eva Shore to commemorate the Yahrzeit of her father Julius Fishman z"l

Birthdays—Mazal Tov to:

David Sint	Nicholas Garfen
Daniel Lucas	Peter Roth
Peter Reichwald	David Khalili
Augusta Kaye	Ella Marks
Etty Jones	

Wedding Anniversary—Mazal Tov

Rosalyn & Nicholas Springer
Marcia & Michael Green
Katya & Bernard Silver

Refuah Shleimah

CM	Chaya Bella 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	Aharon ben Esther Halevi
Lewis Clein	Yehudah Yonah ben Liba
Aitan Cobb	Aitan Gavriel ben Shulamit Aviva
Paul Simons	Pinchas ben Anita
Nat Winsor	Noah ben Miriam Chaya
Seymour Freed	Shmuel Zeev ben Sara Rivka
Alex Guberman	Natan ben Miriam
Benny Ollech	Ben Zion ben Yitta
Ivan Leon	Yitzhak Aryeh ben Sarah Leah

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** followed by Kabbalat Shabbat & D'var Torah by Rabbi Lionel Rosenfeld and Pirkei Avot Shiur
4.40pm **Fast ends**

Shabbat 18th December

- 8.45 am Shiur with Rev Ari Cohen
9.15 am Shacharit
3.45 pm Mincha, followed by Seudah Shlishit & D'var Torah by Rabbi Rosenfeld
4.47 pm Maariv & Havdalah

Sunday 19th December

- 8.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast and D'var Torah by Alan Goldberg
Restarts 9/1/11 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 20th 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 21st December

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

Wednesday 22nd December

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast and Parsha Shiur

Thursday 23rd December

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

Friday 24th December

- 7.30 am Shacharit followed by breakfast & Haftorah Shiur

Come and strengthen our Friday night and Shabbat Afternoon Minyanim

Mincha, & Ma'ariv through the week
Sun 19th—Thurs 23rd 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

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.

ONGOING EVENTS

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.

Pirkei Avot Shiur— 17th 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 20th 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.