

Congregation
Chevra Kadisha B'nai Jacob-Beit Hazikaron

www.ckbjbh.org

Saturday January 10, 2009

Parsha Vayechi ~ 14 Tevet

The Torah reading is on page 180 in the Hertz Chumash and on page 83 in the Hebrew Publishing

The Haftorah is on page 191 in the Hertz Chumash and on page 20 (back in the Hebrew Publishing

Shabbat Services

Mincha Services 4:15 p.m.
Shabbat ends 5:20 p.m.

Weekday Services

Morning Services 7:00 p.m.
Evening Services 4:25 p.m.
Next Friday 4:25 p.m.

Rabbi Asher Jacobson
Cantor Yitzhak Epstein
Reverend Benjamin Even-Hen
Rabbi Dan ~ Youth Director
Steve Goldstein ~ Executive Director

Yossi Milo-choir Master

Parnassim

Sisterhood President
Brotherhood President

Les Schiller -President
Dr. Wm. Steinman - 1st Vice President
Gary Polachek - 2nd Vice President
Gary Trestan - 3rd Vice President
Robert Feldstein - Honorary Vice
President
Pearl Rothenberg - Secretary
Martin P. Rosenthal - Treasurer

Jerry Sherman
Allan Tannenbaum
Morton Tannenbaum
Sally Raicek
Ralph Brookman

The Congregational Kiddush today will be in the Raicek Hall sponsored

by:

Catherine Matyas in honour of the yahrzeit of her beloved husband Herman Matyas
Sheldon Taiger in memory of his beloved son Lawrence Taiger
Bonnie and Joel Waxman and family in appreciation to the Congregation
Emmanuel Labelle in honour of Sandra, Miriam, Talia, the Halbwax family and Rabbi Jacobson
Irma Horvath Shulman in honour of her friend Erika Steiner's birthday
David Ceausu in honour of Gary Polachek chanting his Bar Mitzvah Haftorah
Berek Ajzenberg in honour of the yahrzeit of his beloved brother Israel Mechel Ajzenberg

The Shalosh Seudot today will take place in the Raicek Hall sponsored by Lori Einhorn in memory of her beloved husband Marcel

BABY SITTING FOR CHILDREN AGES 2-5 FROM 10:00-12:00
JUNIOR CHEVRA CLUB FOR AGES 6-12 FROM 10:00-12:00

PARSHA CLASS - with Rabbi Asher Jacobson will resume on January 14th, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. Refreshments following.

LUNCH & LEARN with Rabbi Asher Jacobson every Thursday from 12-1 p.m. at the Windsor on Peel St., Downtown. The topic is "Talmudic Ethics in the Business World". To register, please contact Ron Mayers by email: ron.mayers@vmd.desjardins.com

HOMEWORK PROGRAM: Grades 1-8 Tuesdays and Thursdays after school until 7 p.m., homework, supper, movies and games. The cost is \$5.00 per child per session. Please call Rabbi Dan at 514-482-3366 Ext. 226 for registration and further information.

SHABBAT SHIRA: We invite you to our annual festive service of Shabbat Shira "Sabbath of Song" which will take place on Saturday, February 7, 2009 at 8:45 a.m. featuring Cantor Yitzchak Epstein and the Synagogue Choir under the direction of Choir Master Yossi Milo. Torah Reading by Rev. Benjamin Even-Hen with Rabbi Asher Jacobson officiating. Festive Kiddush will follow the services. Everyone is welcome.

DAILY MINYAN: We urge everyone to help support our daily morning and evening minyans especially during this period when so many of our regulars are out of town. Following the morning minyan you are cordially invited to join us for breakfast.

OUR CKBJ-BH WEB SITE: We invite everyone to regularly visit our new and improved web site @ www.ckbjbh.org

“PARSHAT”

The Torah portion Vayechi

This week's Torah portion speaks of Jacob's death, yet it begins with “and Jacob lived.” The Hebrew word for ‘and he lived,’ Vayechi, has the numerical value of 34 Jacob lived for 147 years. Of those years, the ones he enjoyed most were the 17 years that Joseph lived at home before his brothers sold him, and the 17 years after Jacob was reunited with Joseph until his passing, totaling 34 years. (*Ba'al Haturim*)

And the days of Israel drew near to die, and he called his son Joseph and said...deal with me kindly and truly (Gen. 47:29)

The *mitzvah* of accompanying the dead is called an “act of true kindness” (“*chesed shel emet*”), as its motivation can never be the expectation of reward. Furthermore, the Hebrew word for truth, *emet*, is an acronym for *aron* (casket), *mita* (bier), and *tachrichin* (funeral shrouds). (*Baal HaTurim*)

And Israel strengthened himself and sat up in bed (Gen. 48:2)

From where did Jacob derive this extra strength? The Talmud explains that when someone visits a sick person, one-sixtieth of the illness is taken away if the visitor is his ‘astrological twin.’ According to our Sages, Joseph resembled his father in many ways. Thus, when he visited him, a sixtieth of his father's illness was removed and he was able to sit up in bed. This is alluded to in the Hebrew word for bed, “*mita*.” The numerical value of which is 59.

And let them grow into a multitude (*v'yigdu*) in the midst of the earth (Gen. 48:16)

This blessing alludes to the fact that the existence of the Jewish people is not dependent on the forces of nature, but is a supernatural phenomenon. The word ‘*v'yigdu*’ is derived from the Hebrew word for fish ‘*dag*,’ the intent being that there should be as many Jews as there are millions of fish. Fish, however, cannot live “in the midst of the earth.” Jacob's blessing therefore, intimates that his children will survive even under conditions that would annihilate another nation. (*Chatam Sofer*)

And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger (Gen. 48:14)

“The deeds of our forefathers are a sign for their children.” Like Jacob, we should always try to draw the younger generation closer with our “right hand,” symbolic of love and affection, to the light of Torah. (*Daat Chachamim*)

He blessed Joseph saying, “The angel who redeemed me from all evil should bless the lads [Menashe and Ephraim]” (Gen. 48: 15-16)

Jacob began by blessing Joseph, but ended up blessing Joseph's sons. Jacob's blessing to Joseph was that his children, Menashe and Ephraim, would be righteous and G-d fearing Jews of whom Joseph could be proud. This is the greatest blessing for a parent (*Zohar*)

And Joseph went up to bury his father (Gen. 49:1)

A person is judged with the same yardstick he uses to judge others. Joseph, the most respected of the brothers, involved himself personally in the burial of his father. He thereby merited that none other than Moses himself would later carry his bones back to the land of Israel. (*Sotah, 9:4*)

YAHREIT FOR THE WEEK JANUARY 10-16

Louis Feldstein, Michael Mikelberg, Tillie Ekstein, Louis Kravitz, Mavis Gasco, Rae Lazarus, Amram Amsallag, Lillian Dardick, Clifford Gordon, Vera Keller, Agnes Sallai, Louis Himes, Eva Takefman, Frances Meltzer Geltman, Harry Mazer, Jean Takefman, Ethel Fuchs, Yehudith Gossack, Fruma Richer, Sandra Migicovsky, David Helfenbaum, Hyman Rabinovitch, Allan Satim, Herman Porper, Imre Abonyi, Carrye Kandestin, Leah Florkevitz, Dezso Linder, Celia Blum, Max Neiman, Minnie Coblentz, Ben Herman, Isaac Mendelsohn, Jacqueline Benshabbat

“I’ve been closely monitoring the situation in Gaza. I understand Israel’s desire to protect itself, and that the situation now taking place in Gaza was caused by Hamas. Instead of caring about the people of Gaza, Hamas decided to use Gaza to launch rockets to kill innocent Israelis. And Israel has obviously decided to protect herself and her people.... Of course, we would like to see violence stopped—but not at the expense of an agreement that does not prevent the crisis from happening again. I know people are saying ‘let’s have that cease-fire’, and those are noble ambitions. But any cease-fire must have the conditions in it so that Hamas does not use Gaza as a place from which to launch rockets.”—U.S. President *George W. Bush*, while meeting the First Vice-President of Sudan in the Oval Office, addressing reporters regarding the situation in Gaza, and rejecting the calls from other leaders to halt the Israeli operation. (*Press Release, The White House, Jan. 5*)

“Israel could not stop its military activity before it reaches the goals it has set. This can be reached through further military measures or diplomatic measures which the international community must formulate.”—Israeli Prime Minister *Ehud Olmert*, telling Russian President Dmitry Medvedev that Israel will not halt its operation in Gaza unless it can be guaranteed that Hamas will halt its attacks against Israel. Speaking on behalf of the government, *Mark Regev* told reporters, **“We have no love for Hamas, but the goal of this operation is purely defensive... The minute we can be sure the civilian population in the south of Israel is not going to be on the incoming end of Hamas rockets from Gaza, this operation can be over.”** (*Globe and Mail, Jan. 5*)

“Europe needs to open its eyes with respect to the fighting in Gaza... None of the European countries would tolerate rocket fire on their citizens, and they must understand that Hamas is a terror organization of the worst order that uses its population of women and children as human shields.”—Israeli President *Shimon Peres*, during a meeting with an EU delegation led by Czech Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg, explaining why Israel is rejecting European calls for an immediate ceasefire. “We are fighting with terror, and we are not reaching an agreement with terror.... Hamas targets Israel whenever it likes and Israel shows restraint... This is no longer going to be the equation in this region. When Israel is being targeted, Israel is going to retaliate,” added Israeli Foreign Minister *Tzipi Livni*. (*Jer. Post, National Post, Jan.6*)

“Any civilian suffering in any corner of this tragic territory called Gaza, Canada laments... The burden of responsibility lies now with Hamas and an end to the terrorist rocketing. Israel has said—and Canada would support—an immediate ceasefire. But only if it's a permanent ceasefire, if it's a sustainable ceasefire and if it's a durable ceasefire and if Hamas doesn't—as it has in the past—use it to rearm and continue rocketing.”—*Peter Kent*, Canada's junior foreign affairs minister and the Canadian government's designated spokesman on the latest Middle East conflict, in an interview with Canwest News. (*National Post, Jan. 7*)

“Hamas often uses 14-, 15-, 16- and 17-year-olds, as well as women, as terrorists. Israel is entitled under international law to treat these children and women as the combatants they have become. Hamas cannot, out of one side of its mouth, boast that it recruits children and women to become terrorists, and then, out of the other side of its mouth, complain when Israel takes it at its word. The media should look closely and critically at the number of claimed civilian victims before accepting self-serving and self-contradictory exaggerations. ... “Hamas does everything in its power to provoke Israel into killing as many Palestinian civilians as possible, in order to generate condemnation against the Jewish state. It has gone so far as firing rockets from Palestinian schoolyards and hiding its terrorists in Palestinian maternity wards. ... “The reality is that the elected and de facto government of Gaza has declared war against Israel. Under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, it has committed an ‘armed attack’ against the Jewish state. The Hamas charter calls for Israel’s total destruction. Under international law, Israel is entitled to take whatever military action is necessary to repel that attack and stop the rockets.”—*Alan M. Dershowitz, law professor at Harvard. (National Post, Jan.7)*

HAMAS REJECTS CALLS FOR CEASEFIRE—(*Jerusalem*) *Moussa Abu Marzouk*, the deputy head of Hamas’ political bureau, stated that Hamas’ “resistance” would continue as long as Israel continued its “occupation”, and he demanded that Israel immediately halt its offensive, withdraw from the Gaza Strip, and open all of the border crossings. The crossings were closed in 2007 when Hamas seized control of the territory from the Palestinian Authority in a bloody civil war. They were reopened in July, 2008 on the condition that Hamas discontinue its rocket and mortar fire at Southern Israel, but were periodically closed as rocket attacks persisted. (*Jer. Post, Jan. 7*)

ANTISEMITISM IN EUROPE & U.S. ON THE RISE—(*Paris*) In Toulouse, France, a burning car was rammed into a synagogue gate late Monday. There were no injuries. Also, in Lyons, France, a cedar tree planted in memory of the late Israeli PM Yitzhak Rabin was damaged by criminals using a saw. Meanwhile, Belgium police reported that a gang had tried to set fire to the door of a Brussels synagogue. On Sunday, slogans including "murderers... You broke the cease-fire" and "don't subject Palestine to ethnic cleansing" were daubed on Israel's embassy in Stockholm. In Britain, the spokesman for Community Security Trust, an antisemitism monitoring centre, reported that violence against Jews and their property was running at four times the normal level for this time of year. Last week, in the U.S., Temple Shalom, one of Chicago’s oldest synagogues, was firebombed; no injuries were reported. At a Montreal pro-Hamas rally (a group defined as terrorist by the government of Canada) on Sunday, an Israeli flag was burned. (*Jer. Post, Jan. 6; Ha'aretz, Agence France-Presse, Montreal Gazette, Jan.7*)