

# THE OXFORD SYNAGOGUE-CENTRE

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

5773

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October 2012

Cheshvan 5773

## SHABBAT TIMES

🔊 Parasha - 🕯 Candle Lighting  
🕯 Shabbat ends (Maariv & Havdalah)  
*For service times see page 2*

19 &amp; 20 October – 4 Cheshvan

🔊 Noach

🕯 5:59 – 🕯 6:49

26 &amp; 27 October – 11 Cheshvan

🔊 Lech Lecha

🕯 6:03 – 🕯 6:54

2 &amp; 3 November – 18 Cheshvan

🔊 Vayera

🕯 6:08 – 🕯 6:59

9 &amp; 10 November – 25 Cheshvan

🔊 Chaye Sara

🕯 6:12 – 🕯 7:04

16 &amp; 17 November – 3 Kislev

🔊 Toldot

🕯 6:15 – 🕯 7:10

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

### Shalom Aleichem from Zurich

(11/10/2012)

I'm sitting in the Zurich Airport in transit to Lisbon, watching Swiss Air planes landing and taking off in overcast and wet weather. It's strange to think that a few hours ago I was in JHB and only three days ago was Simchat Torah... talk about getting caught up in the wave of modern day technology and activity!

There is a tinge of sadness, though, to leave the high we had over Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Succot and rush off onto the everyday treadmill. Rav Soloveitchik offers some consolation. Shemini Atzeret is referred to as "Ach Sameiach". "Ach" in Hebrew has the numerical value of 21 referring to the 21<sup>st</sup> of Tishrei which is the date of Shmini Atzeret. Ach Sameiach however means "joy with a 'but,'" and not the complete joy we experience on Shemini Atzeret having just come through the High Holy days. Why

would Shemini Atzeret then be referred to as "Ach Sameiach"? The explanation he gives is that the complete joy of Shmini Atzeret must be remembered and used to carry us through the year when we do experience "Ach Sameiach", joy with a 'but'. When things are not going as well as we'd like and could be better, just remember 'Ach Sameiach' for a boost!

The atmosphere on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur was incredible, as were the Succot celebrations. Our Simchat Torah Maariv, and the dinner that followed, were amazing with energy and enjoyment by all. Mazaltov to our Chatanim David Jacobson and Alan Shkudsky.

We need to acknowledge and thank everyone who put in a tremendous amount of work to make it all happen. Firstly to the Rabbi who was the backbone of the entire organising; to Cecile and Lily in the office who coordinated everything; to Charles, Petrus and Connie who worked tirelessly, built and decorated the succah, served brochas, tidied up afterwards etc. ; to Chazan Tzvi, Bryan Isakow and the choir for their moving services; to Avi and Menachem Gudelsky who have added a new dimension to the Shul for the Oxford kids; to Amir Livneh and all our security volunteers and to Velvy Bokov for assisting in the davening over Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. It could never have happened without all their efforts.

The update on the remedial school is that they have found premises at Eden College and won't be making use of the nursery school. We wish them everything of the best and hope they have success.

Wishing you everything of the best for the year ahead.

Regards

Brian Levy

## RABBI'S MESSAGE

The month of Tishrei is a lot of hard work for a rabbi. There are many additional services to conduct, especially when the holidays are midweek, as was the case this year. Numerous sermons to (prepare and) deliver. Lots of extra congregants to meet and greet, attend to and inspire. A shift from Days of Awe to a Season of Rejoicing; from the serious and somber to the joyous and merry. Needless to say, little sleep and leisure time over this month.

So, you would think we all look forward to the month of Cheshvan, to the normal routine, to catching up on sleep, rest, seeing the family... No question about that. But...

It's easy to be rabbi during Tishrei. You just have to follow the prescribed formula: prepare inspiring and insightful sermons, make sure the services are run according to Halacha and that everything is organized properly; blow Shofar; read the Torah; supervise the building of a Sukkah; arrange the catering; jump and dance. It is all laid out. And of course, the congregants will come to participate--they always do.

But then comes Cheshvan and our job becomes far more complicated. For some reason worshippers are not streaming through the doors in their hundreds. Everyone has gone back to routine, to work. It's

much harder to reach out, to connect, to inspire. There are no Chagim to liven up the Synagogue and to draw the congregation to shul. Now the rabbi's real job begins.

The month of Tishrei is a lot of hard work for a Jew. So many Mitzvot to perform; so many Shul to attend; so many pages of the machzor to go through. Appeals for tzedakah stream in from every worthy cause. Our dining room (and Sukkah) tables are groaning under platters of Yom Tov foods. Oy! It's not easy, or cheap, to be a Yid.

So no wonder we all look forward to the month of Cheshvan. No intense festivals. Regular, shorter Shul services, which we can bunk occasionally with less guilt. But...

It's easy to be a Jew during Tishrei. We have a structure, we know exactly what to do and when to do it. Stand/sit; fast/eat; be serious/rejoice; hear shofar/shake lulav/dance with Torah... Listen to the Chazan, listen to the rabbi, listen to the banter around the Yom Tov table.

But then comes the month of Cheshvan and we're on our own. No Chagim, no laws, customs and lore to guide us day after day and give us the framework to express our Jewish identity. It is back to the work place, its stresses and pressures. As the inspiration we gleaned over the Chagim begins to wear off, we feel exposed and vulnerable.

Tishrei we were sheltered, Tishrei we were cocooned, Tishrei we were held by the hand. Now G-d says, "Go my child... I'm still there, next to you, you just can't see Me as easily. Face the world and rise to the challenge."

*Rabbi Yossi Chaikin*

## FROM THE REBBETZIN

We were so blessed with beautiful weather this Sukkot! Over the years I have grown enough to realize that I can not control, nor take responsibility for the cold or rain in the sukkah.

Nevertheless black clouds, thunder-in-the-distance, low temperatures, and bleak weather forecasts still make me uptight, don't allow me to sleep.

But this year we were blessed. Not only did we manage every meal comfortably in the sukkah, we didn't even have to stress about it.

And then, on Shemini Atzeres we prayed for rain - and immediately were answered. Hopefully this is a good omen for this year.

May Hashem make it easy for us to fulfill His mitzvot and may He hear our prayers and requests and answer them quickly!

On the first day of school I joked to a fellow teacher that it was almost December holidays - and you see, I was right - it is almost the December holidays. We just have a few weeks left.

I wish success to all those who are writing exams. May your efforts be rewarded with good results. It is almost the holidays!

Have a great month

*Rivky*

## FROM THE YOUTH DIRECTOR

Dear Oxfordians

Wow what a month it's been! Baruch Hashem there was a great turnout over the chagim. The youth had a great time—they learned about the chagim and had good fun while parents were able to daven. What more could you ask for....

Over Yom Tov I was told by one of the congregants that it makes his Friday night when he sees the next generation come into Shul for Kiddush. He said, "the kids bring so much life to my Friday night experience".

With that said, please don't wait until next year to bring the kids along to shul. We want to see them on a weekly basis, let's keep the excitement going!!

I would like to thank the Rabbi and Chairman for being so supportive. Also a big thank you to my brother Menachem for the many hours he put in to ensure that this year's youth programme was the success that it was.

May it be a year of only happiness and goodness.

Best wishes

*Avi Gudelsky*

<b>SHACHARIT (A.M.)</b>	
<b>Sunday and Public Holidays</b>	8:00
<b>Monday to Friday</b>	7:15
<b>Shabbat &amp; Festivals</b>	9:00
<i>16/10 &amp; 17/10 (Rosh Chodesh): 7:00</i>	
<b>MINCHA AND MAARIV (P.M.)</b>	
<b>Sunday to Thursday</b>	6:00
<b>from 04/11</b>	6:15
<b>Friday</b>	5:45
<b>Shabbat</b>	5:45
<b>from 03/11</b>	6:00

## DVAR TORAH

### *And Yakov Went on His Way*

We have concluded the month of Tishrei, which is designated in our sacred texts as a "comprehensive month" for the entire year, and which is filled with a variety of festive days and experiences embracing all areas of a Jew's spiritual life throughout the whole year.

The month begins with awe and submission to the Heavenly Reign, the main point of Rosh Hashana: teshuva [repentance], the essence of the Ten Days of Return, and Yom Kippur; the performance of mitzvot with diligence and joy, culminating with the highest expression of joy with the Torah -- the essential aspects of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah.

It is time to recall the custom that was prevalent in many communities to announce at the termination of Simchat Torah: "And Jacob went on his way."

The point of this custom was to call attention to the fact that, inasmuch as the time has come to return to the routine of the daily life ("his way"), it behoves a Jew to know that he is Jacob, a Jew, and that he has his own way, a way that originates in Simchat Torah and is guided by the joy of Torah and mitzvot.

This means that whatever a Jew undertakes, even his ordinary day to day affairs, must always be conducted in the spirit of "All your

actions should be for the sake of Heaven" and "Know Him (and serve Him) in all your ways."

The month of Tishrei is a "comprehensive month" also in the sense that in this month the Jew acquires "goods" for the whole year.

Immediately afterwards one must begin to "unpack" and draw from one's stock according to the needs of each day in all details.

One cannot consider himself free from further obligation on the basis of the accomplishments of the comprehensive month.

Similarly, there are also "comprehensive mitzvot," although each and all mitzvot have to be fulfilled with the fullest measure of diligence and excellence. A comprehensive mitzva should be performed with still greater excellence and still greater diligence, for its performance is of greater concern to all Jews and the Jewish people as a whole.

One of the main comprehensive mitzvot is the mitzva of ahavat Yisrael (love of a fellow-Jew).

Of this mitzva it has been said that it is a "great principle of the Torah," and the "basis of the entire Torah."

The basis of this mitzva is the fact that all Jews constitute one entity, like one body, so much so that every Jew sees every other Jew as "his own flesh and blood."

Herein is also the explanation why the fulfilment of a mitzva by every individual Jew affects the whole Jewish people;

how much more so the fulfilment of comprehensive mitzvot...

May G-d grant that all the good wishes which Jews wished one another for the new year should be fulfilled, that it be a good and sweet year in every respect, with the realization of the above-mentioned pattern of Jewish conduct:

"And Jacob" -- an appellation that includes all Jews, not only those who have already attained the higher status of "Israel" and "Jeshurun";

"Went" -- in accordance with the true concept of motion, namely, moving away from the previous state to a higher state; (for however satisfactory a state is, one should always strive to advance to an ever higher state in all matters of Holiness);

"On his way" -- that "his way," even in non-obligatory matters, becomes a G-dly way, as stated immediately after:

"And G-d's angels met him" -- in keeping with every Jew's purpose in life to be an "angel" messenger -- of G-d, to make for Him an "abode" in this earthly world.

May all the above be done with joy, derived from Simchat Torah, and Jacob "will sing (and praise) the G-d of Jacob," and merit the speedy fulfilment of the continuation of the verse, "The glory and strength of the tzadik will be uplifted," the coming of our righteous Moshiach.

*(From a letter of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, 7 Cheshvan, 5737 - www.chabad.org)*

**MAZAL TOV**

We wish a hearty Mazal Tov to:

**BIRTHS**

- Ann Kopelowitz on the birth of a great grandson

**BAR/BATMITZVAHS**

- Ralph and Lynette Zulman on the barmitzvah of their grandson, Levi Zulman, in Israel on 6<sup>th</sup> October
- Sheldon and Karen Sundy and Earle and Gillien Saks on the barmitzvah of their son and grandson, Jonathan, on 20<sup>th</sup> October

**ENGAGEMENTS**

- Michael Rothschild on the engagement of his grandson Aaron Rothschild to Nechama Taiven in Israel

**BIRTHDAYS**

- Cynthia Katz on her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday on 18<sup>th</sup> October
- Perl Zaltzman on her 99<sup>th</sup> birthday on 31<sup>st</sup> October

**REFUAH SHLEMAH**

We wish a Speedy Recovery to:

- Rabbi Bernhard
- Theo Rutstein
- Jessie Meltzer



- Gertie Feinstein
- Marion Gordon
- Dawn Nates
- Fern Zev

**BEREAVEMENTS**

Our condolences to the following who have suffered bereavements recently:



- Balfour Margow on the death of his wife, Fay

May Hashem comfort them and their families among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem and grant them long life.

**OXFORD'S HALL OF REMEMBRANCE**

*The plaques in the Hall of Remembrance record the names and the date of death of departed loved ones. The lights on the plaques are lit on the Yartzeit and also whenever Yizkor is recited. A special Hazkara memorial prayer is also recited during Yizkor.*

*Cost of a plaque is R540 for the first plaque ordered  
R360 for subsequent plaques*

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*For details and bookings contact Lily at the Shul office*

