

THE OXFORD SYNAGOGUE-CENTRE

20 North Avenue, Riviera

✉ P.O. Box 87406, Houghton, 2041

☎ 011-646-6020 📠 011-486-2214

🌐 www.oxfordshul.com 📧 info@oxfordshul.com

📘 facebook.com/oxfordshul

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

October 2018

Cheshvan 5779

SHABBAT TIMES

🔊 Parasha - 🕯 Candle Lighting
🕯 Shabbat ends (Maariv & Havdalah)
For service times see page 3

19 & 20 October – 11 Cheshvan

🔊 Lech Lecha
🕯 5:58 – 🕯 6:49

26 & 27 October – 18 Cheshvan
Vayeira

🕯 6:02 – 🕯 6:54

2 & 3 November – 25 Cheshvan

🔊 Chayei Sarah
🕯 6:07 – 🕯 6:58

9 & 10 November – 2 Kislev

🔊 Toledot
🕯 6:12 – 🕯 7:04

16 & 17 November – 9 Kislev

🔊 Vayetze
🕯 6:15 – 🕯 7:09

RABBI'S MESSAGE

Last night after Maariv, I went into the big shul. My intention was to tidy up, put away my machzorim, collect some speech notes and other documents left in the rush home after Neila... But the main lights were off (18 years down I do not know, nor wish to know, where they switch on) and the glow of the single eternal flame above the ark was insufficient for me to see my way. So I sat down in the empty, dim sanctuary and prayed, reading Psalms off my mobile phone.

It was quiet, but not eerie. I was alone, but did not feel lonely. As I read the words of Tehilim, I felt presence,

warmth and radiance. There was only the faint sound of my whispered words. But the shul was filled...

I have long been in awe at the structure and architecture of the Oxford. And as my eyes got used to the darkness, I could make out the grandeur and majesty of the hallowed space. But this was not about empty volume. It was a sense of fullness.

For over 50 years, hundreds of thousands of prayers have been uttered within those walls. Each has journeyed to its destination, reaching the One on High and hopefully achieving what the worshipper had beseeched. But holiness never fully departs; it leaves an indelible mark that never goes away. Over half a century, the successive prayers of the many congregants have left layer upon layer of remnants of sanctity—saturating the area with more light and more kedusha.

Just a month ago, we gathered there once again, entreating, imploring, wishing and acknowledging. Hundreds of us, through our thanks yous, our pleases, or our simple “I love You Hashem” contributed to make Oxford even holier.

And continue we will. PG for years to come, our Tefilot

will continue to leave their traces on their way up to Heaven, in one of the most magnificent and awe-inspiring synagogues in the world.

I sometimes hear rumours about Oxford and my personal future. Our turnouts over the High Holidays are testament to the fact that there are many hundreds who see our Shul as their spiritual home. And while it is true that I will stepping down as principal of the Torah Academy Boys High School at the end of the current school year, I will most definitely be continuing on as this community's Rav and spiritual leader.

We are not going anywhere here—neither the Oxford community nor the Chaikins—as long as there will be worshippers and as long as it will financially viable (and maybe even beyond that!) There is just way too much invested here.

Reluctantly I closed the Tehilim app on my phone. The silence and the darkness had become comforting and cocooning. I literally had to tear myself away. The family was at home, waiting for me to start dinner and I had to leave this special place. I will be back. Please come too.

Rabbi Yossi Chaikin

FROM THE REBBETZIN

For about eight years now we had a large canvas picture gracing our dining room wall. It is a picture from our daughter Chaya's wedding and it has all the children and one granddaughter in it. Every Friday night I light my Shabbos candles in front of it – and as I look at each face I whisper a unique prayer for each of them

Last week, Chanale and Shmuly gifted us with an updated version of the picture. A new canvas, TG and ka”h, our tribe has grown.

I have spent lots of time just standing in front of this new picture and looking at it. It isn't a neat, posed picture. BH too many people of too many ages to all look at the photographer and smile at the same time.

But this picture tells a story. The story of a group of people, who are a group of individuals, each on their own mission, yet each a beloved, important part of the same family.

And as I stand in front of this picture, I whisper a prayer for each individual, unique in my hopes and prayers for each one and also a 'communal' prayer: May I be worthy to raise this family, children and grandchildren (and great grandchildren one day PG) who are wise, who love G-d, who are honest and hardworking and may they each brighten the world and make it a better place through their deeds.

Meanwhile I will repeat King David's words, "Let me thank and bless Hashem at all times."

May we all be blessed always.

Wishing you a good month.

Rivky

DVAR TORAH**APPRECIATING THE MONTH OF CHESHVAN**

by Shalvi Waldman (chabad.org)

The Hebrew month of Cheshvan is by far my favorite month of the year—and not only because my birthday falls in Cheshvan. Cheshvan comes after summer vacation, after the busyness and excitement of the High Holidays. It's a time to settle down and get things done. The kids are back at school, and it's possible to create and maintain a schedule.

I am fascinated by the balance between being and doing. It's easy to feel important, significant, when you are accomplishing something. When you are done with your "doing," you can look back and take pride and satisfaction in having achieved. At least for a moment you can feast your eyes on the project you have completed for work, or the neatly stacked piles of family laundry. The Western world certainly has great respect for doing and accomplishing. Our accomplishments make our bank accounts stable and our homes pleasant.

On the other hand, what would a life look like if it were only about doing, with no emphasis on being? I would define "being" as those moments when you just "are." You stop trying to accomplish long enough to appreciate what you have. It could be a long walk with a husband, or a moment in the playground with the children.

I look forward to a moment of being each Shabbat when I light my candles. After rushing around the whole day to prepare the food and clean the home, I stop. I gather my three little girls around me, and we prepare to light the candles. My girls watch with wide eyes and open hearts as I strike a match and light the flames. Together we wave our hands in the air, sending light to family and friends in faraway places around the world. I make the blessing, with their sweet voices echoing mine, ushering in the holiness of Shabbat. Then I pull each of them in close and say a special prayer for them for the present and the future, ending with a kiss and a Shabbat treat.

In that moment, there is nothing left to accomplish. I have worked hard, but my work is done. Whoever said that a woman's work is never done was right, with one exception. We can decide that for now we will take a break from doing and just be, and for that moment, in my mind and heart, the work both in the home and outside of it simply do not exist. For now, time is mine—to just be.

Personally, I'm more comfortable doing. Really, I like to do. Doing allows me to enjoy the moments of being later. It is much harder to enjoy moments of quiet when I can't look back at a week and mentally take note of what I have accomplished. When I am doing, I am a partner in creation. G-d created the world, and I am creating a reality within my life and my home through my doing.

In the time of King Solomon, the Jewish people labored for seven years to build the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. Their work was finally completed in the month of Cheshvan. The Holy Temple epitomized the balance between doing and being. There were many detailed commandments about how the Temple must be built, and how one must go about bringing a sacrifice, a korban, in the Temple. A pilgrim would spend the year raising his flocks and tending his orchards and vineyards before choosing the choicest of his accomplishments to bring to the Temple, yet the goal of all of the work and preparation was the moment of being that happened during the korban. A soul that had done all it must to prepare to come close to its Creator could, for a moment, just bask in the light and the depth of that connection.

Interestingly, we learn what work is prohibited on Shabbat from the work that was done to build and maintain the service in the Holy Temple. We don't create fire on Shabbat, as fire was kindled on the altar. We do not build on Shabbat, as we built the Temple, and we do not wash clothing, as the wool was washed and cleaned to create the beautiful tapestries that decorated the Temple. Thirty-nine types of labor were included in building the Temple, and the commentaries tell us that those are the same types of labor that G-d used when creating the world. An interesting question arises: These thirty-nine types of

work are clearly holy and important, since they are the foundations of creation and were essential in forming the place where G-d's presence was revealed in this world. Our sages teach that, in fact, doing these types of labor is very important, and when we work in the world using them to do good, we are indeed partners with the Creator. If so, on Shabbat, why do we stop doing them?

Shabbat is a time to be. When we stop doing, we are able to appreciate who we are and what we have. When we are being, we are able to notice the people in our lives, and not push them out of the way as we run to another meeting, or to pick up the phone, or to the carpool. When we are being, we are able to feel that we are intrinsically more than just the sum of our accomplishments. In being, the soul shines.

When we stop, we acknowledge that there is an internal factor to our lives. The six days of the week have been compared to the six directions: right, left, front, back, up and down. The seventh, Shabbat, is the inner dimension. On the holy Shabbat we are able to see and acknowledge that life pushes and pulls us in many directions in order to enhance our inner essence and divine connection. So while doing may be important, it is only while we are being that we assess where our doing has gotten us, and where we truly need to be.

Still, like I said, I'm a doer. To be honest, there have been times in my life that my doing has gotten out of hand.

In my rush to accomplish, I have pushed aside my nearest and dearest. Now I am glad that no matter how crazy things get, I have a weekly reminder that doing is not the end goal in and of itself. Over the years, the ability to stop doing and to be has seeped into my consciousness enough that, while I may be feeling very driven and enthusiastic about an important project, I am able to stop myself and go into "being mode" when my children rush in the door and are excited to tell me about their day—at least sometimes!

So I love the month of Cheshvan. All my schedules and lists come out, and everything that was pushed aside for summer vacation and the holiday rush finally gets my full attention. Perhaps I'll tell you more about it another time, but for now, I've got things to do . . .

Shalvi (Weissman) Waldman, M.Sc., is a writer, therapist and teacher living in Tzfat with her family. She counsels women and couples in a process of accessing and actualizing their "soul-prints."

SERVICE TIMES

SHACHARIT (A.M.)

Sunday and Public Holidays	8:00
Monday to Friday	7:15
<small>08/10, 09/10: 7:00 (Rosh Chodesh)</small>	
Shabbat & Festivals	9:00

MINCHA AND MAARIV (P.M.)

Sunday to Thursday	6:00
from 04/11	6:15
Friday	5:45
Shabbat	5:45
from 27/10	6:00

MAZALTOV

We wish a hearty Mazal Tov to:

BIRTHS

- Kyle & Sarah Woolf and Simon & Nan Woolf and Jenny Berkenfeld on the birth of a daughter and grand-daughter.
- Yehuda & Batsheva Glick and Rabbi Yossi & Rivky Chaikin on the birth of a daughter and grand-daughter.
- Philip & Rilla Jacobson on the birth of a great grandson in Jerusalem.
- Doris Samson on the birth of a great grand-daughter.
- Phillip & Aileen Shifren on the birth of a grand-son.

ENGAGEMENT

- Blima Nudelman on the engagement of her granddaughter, Elisheva Schwartz.
- Naomi Schmidt on the engagement of her grand-daughter, Alexa.

BIRTHDAYS

- Alicia Thomas-Woolf on her 45th birthday on the 4th October.
- Gary Epstein on his 60th birthday on the 14th October.

REFUAH SHLEIMA

We wish a Speedy recovery to:

- Michael Hirschowitz

**BEREAVEMENTS**

We wish long life to

- Inna and Jonathan Orlanski and Isa Witz on the death of their husband and father, Zalman Orlanski.
- Sam Kretzmar on the death of his mother, Mary.
- Rhona Solomon on the death of her mother, Vera Wainer.
- Val Bloom on the death of her husband, Michael.

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

STOP DOING. START BEING.

26-27 October 2018

Join the world in celebrating
one complete Shabbat, together.
theshabbatproject.org

