

# THE OXFORD SYNAGOGUE-CENTRE

20 North Avenue, Riviera

✉ P.O. Box 87406, Houghton, 2041

☎ 011-646-6020 📠 086-580-2624

🌐 [www.oxfordshul.com](http://www.oxfordshul.com) 📧 [info@oxfordshul.com](mailto:info@oxfordshul.com)

📘 [facebook.com/oxfordshul](https://facebook.com/oxfordshul)

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

September 2020

Elul/Tishrei 5780

### SHABBAT TIMES

🔊 Parasha - 🕯 Candle Lighting

🕯 Shabbat ends (Maariv & Havdalah)

For service times see page 2 & 4

4 & 5 September – 16 Elul

🔊 Ki Tavo

🕯 5:39 – 🕯 6:29

11 & 12 September – 23 Elul

🔊 Nitzavim & Vayealech

🕯 5:41 – 🕯 6:31

18 & 19 September – 1 Tishrei

Rosh Hashonah Day 1

🕯 5:44 – 🕯 6:34

25 & 26 September – 8 Tishrei

🔊 Haazinu (Shabbat Shuva)

🕯 5:47 – 🕯 6:37

2 & 3 October – 15 Tishrei

Sukkot 1<sup>st</sup> Day

🕯 5:50 – 🕯 6:40

### RABBI'S MESSAGE

I have been spending a lot of my time going through the photo gallery of my mobile phone the past few days.

A couple of years ago, the salesman at the MTN shop had tried to convince me I needed to get a phone with more storage space. The jump in price for a monthly contract, from an iPhone with 64Gb of memory to the next model up was considerable. I estimated that the lower model would suit me, based on my needs and past history.

All was well, until March 2020. As people all around the world retreated into their

homes for safety and to comply with lockdown, WhatsApp videos became the glue that held society together. Family videos, funny videos, cute videos, motivational videos, nature videos. Each no longer than 64Mb in size (that's the maximum the app allows, I think.) Combined, gigabytes and gigabytes of electronic data, clogging up my phone quicker than I could have expected.

My phone has virtually stopped working. Thus I have been going through the stored videos to free up space, deleting the funny ones, the cute ones, the motivational ones, the nature ones—zealously preserving the family ones. Grandchildren's first steps and first words. Bris ceremonies we should have been at; upsherenish parties we had planned to be at months ago. Photos of family trips, birthday parties and Sunday outings. A note by our 5-year old Melbournian grandson, written a few days ago, with the words "This weekend we went out of the house" (after a Sunday walk on the beach, as lockdown rules have just been relaxed to allow driving up to 5 km from home), that we will keep for posterity.

As we near the end of a year, we customarily reflect back on the months that have passed. My retrospective has involved scrolling through the year in pictures and videos, remembering and reminiscing. Memories, some happier, some less so, have been flooding back.

Most powerful is the transition between life BC and since the end of March. It is not just in the sheer volume of material; their nature is also very different. I look back at the careless life we led (and cannot help but notice how close humans stood next to each other, sometimes even touching and hugging). I contrast that with what many are calling the new normal but which is really an abnormal form of new.

Did we know what lay in store for us when we read out the powerful words of Unetane Tokef, 11 months ago? Did we know what we were saying when we cried out, "On Rosh Hashanah [our fate] is written up and on Yom Kippur [it] is sealed."

In one of my sermons over the last High Holidays, I spoke of how we must make sure that the year ahead is not just a duplication of the year past. Our circumstances have ensured that this was not the case. The challenges

we have had to face are different from any we have had to overcome to date.

Yet the questions we have to ask ourselves this Elul are the same as every year: Am I, at the end of this year, a better person than I was a year ago? Have the obstacles I had to surmount improved me or weakened me? Am I ready for self-judgment and Divine judgment over these coming Days of Awe?

As we scroll through the gallery of our own memories for this year 5780, let's make sure we can reply in the affirmative to each. And if the answer is not a resounding "yes" there is still time to change that.

So today I get an email from my local MTN store, advising me that I now qualify for an early upgrade. I might just take them up. I have reached the limit of what can be deleted. But I hope the memories of 5781 will fit into the 64Gb model. May it be a year free of tumult and blessed with revealed Divine blessing.

Shana Tova

*Rabbi Yossi Chaikin*

## SERVICE TIMES

*All services are currently by prior booking only. Phone the office for details and to book. For services 18/09-11/10 see page 4.*

### SHACHARIT (A.M.)

<b>Sunday &amp; Public Holidays</b>	8:00
<b>Monday to Friday</b>	7:15
<i>14/09 &amp; 17/09: 6:45 (Selichot)</i>	
<i>15/09 &amp; 16/09: 7:00 (Selichot)</i>	
<b>Shabbat &amp; Festivals</b>	9:30

### MINCHA AND MAARIV (P.M.)

<b>Sunday to Friday</b>	5:45
<b>Shabbat</b>	5:00

## FROM THE REBBETZIN

Will we still remember how to give a hug? When will we ever share a Shabbos or a Yomtov with our friends? When will we comfortably roam the malls or feel relaxed as we choose our fruits and vegetables? Or have we changed forever?

Traditionally the Yomtov season, besides being a time of celebration, is a time of change.

This is the time of year when we are supposed to take stock, look at the year that was, look at our actions and commit ourselves to change.

This year, all around us we hear everyone speaking about getting back to how it was. After months of lockdown, social distancing, closed borders, we are still waiting for some regular life again.

I have resolved to try not to go backwards. This year though, I think I will make a proper list. Things I used to do, that I hope to leave behind; things I have learnt to do during these past few months that I hope to make part of my life for always; and of course, things I want to do again soon!

I want to wish you all a K'siva Vachasima Tova. May the coming year herald happiness, health, parnossah and all that you wish for yourselves good and sweet!

Shana Tova

*Rivky*

## DVAR TORAH

### *The High Holidays*

*(chabad.org)*

### **Yamim Nora'im (Days of Awe) or High Holy Days**

If the year is a train, the High Holidays (AKA High Holy Days) are its engine. A delicate blend of joy and solemnity, feasting and fasting, prayer and inspiration make up the spiritually charged head of the Jewish year.

The High Holiday season begins during the month of **Elul**, when the shofar is sounded every weekday morning, a clarion call to return to G-d in advance of the sacred days that lay ahead.

The two-day holiday of **Rosh Hashanah** is the head of the Jewish year, the time when G-d reinvests Himself in creation as we crown Him king of the universe through prayer, shofar blasts, and celebration.

A week later, the High Holidays reach their crescendo with **Yom Kippur** (the Day of Atonement). Like angels, we neither eat nor drink for 25 hours. Dressed in white, we pray in the synagogue—united as one people, children of One Father.

But it does not end there. The otherworldliness of the High Holidays is then channeled into the festive holidays of Sukkot and Simchat Torah, which bring the annual fall holiday season to a most joyous conclusion.

**MAZALTOV**

We wish a hearty Mazal Tov to:

**BIRTHS**

- Annette Angel on the birth of great twin grandchildren, a granddaughter and a grandson, in Washington.
- Blima Nudelman on the birth of a great grandson in Israel.
- Rene Gamsu on the birth of a grandson.
- Ivan & Jo-An Epstein and Chookie & Veronica Brenner on the birth of a grandson and great grandson in London.

**MARRIAGES**

- Doris Samson on the marriage of her grandson Yonason Samson to Shifra Lieberman in Gateshead, England.
- Louis and Sybil Gecelter on the marriage of their grandson Ryan Gecelter to Ashira Gordon in Israel on 9th September.

**BIRTHDAYS**

- Barney Gordon on his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 7<sup>th</sup> September.
- Jules Schneid on his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 14<sup>th</sup> September.
- David Jankelow on his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 20<sup>th</sup> September.
- Percy Bloom on his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

- Annette Wolk on her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**ANNIVERSARIES**

- John & Brenda Brick on their 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary on the 1<sup>st</sup> September.
- Ronald & Estelle Katz on their 53<sup>rd</sup> birthday on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**BEREAVEMENTS**

We wish long life to

- Lynette Zulman on the death of her husband Ralph.
- Hazel Benard on the death of her brother Cecil Alexander.
- Della Berkowitz on the death of her husband Reginald.

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

