

THE OXFORD SYNAGOGUE-CENTRE

20 North Avenue, Riviera

✉ P.O. Box 87406, Houghton, 2041

☎ 011-646-6020 📠 086-580-2624

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

📘 facebook.com/oxfordshul

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER September & October 2022

Elul 5782 & Tishrei 5783

SHABBAT TIMES

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

9 & 10 September – 14 Elul

🕒 Ki Teitzei

🕒 5:40 – 🕒 6:30

16 & 17 September – 21 Elul

🕒 Ki Tavo

🕒 5:43 – 🕒 6:33

23 & 24 September – 28 Elul

🕒 Nitzavim

🕒 5:46 – 🕒 6:36

30 September/1 October – 6 Tishrei

🕒 Vayeilech (*Shabbat Shuva*)

🕒 5:49 – 🕒 6:39

7 & 8 October – 13 Tishrei

🕒 Ha'azinu

🕒 5:52 – 🕒 6:42

14 & 15 October – 20 Tishrei

Chol Hamoed Sukkot

🕒 5:56 – 🕒 6:46

21 & 22 October – 27 Tishrei

🕒 Bereishit

🕒 6:00 – 🕒 6:50

28 & 29 October – 4 Cheshvan

🕒 Noach

🕒 6:04 – 🕒 6:55

4 & 5 November – 11 Cheshvan

🕒 Lech Lecha

🕒 6:08 – 🕒 7:00

RABBI'S MESSAGE

In March of 2020 I was invited to a meeting of the Jewish leadership of our community, to prepare for the onslaught of a new disease that had just arrived on our shores. The heads of the various branches of our community—religious, educational, welfare etc. (I was there representing the SA Rabbinical Association)—gathered to

ensure we would be as ready as we could for what was about to face us. Quick, difficult and painful decisions had to be taken.

I have no doubt that through the tight co-operation between the heads of all the organisations that serve our beautiful Johannesburg Kehila, numerous lives were saved. But nobody had any idea of the force of the tsunami about to engulf us. At that stage we had not yet heard the term 'social distancing' nor been asked to wear masks. The most important thing we could do to fight the epidemic, we were told, was to wash hands and sanitise often—as it later turned out, one of the least effective ways of preventing infection.

Top virologists and medical professionals briefed us on the road ahead. We were shown graphs based on historical pandemics, in particular the Spanish Flu of a century ago. We were told about waves and timelines. Little made sense because most of us were in total shock and absolute denial. Then someone dared to address the elephant in the room. How long would this last? Would we be back in our shuls, as normal, for the Yomim Tovim of September 2020? Unlikely, was the answer. In fact, there was a pretty good chance that even the Tishrei season of 2021 would not quite be back to the norm.

2022, they said, by then it will have subsided. That year, PG our synagogues will be filled

again with worshippers, with this awful disease relegated to history.

For the most part, the experts were correct. PG they are correct about their prediction regarding the High Holiday season of 2022. But this, my friends, is up to you...

The new Jewish year, 5783, is a Hakhel year. As long as a Temple stood in Jerusalem, a massive assembly, ("Hakhel") took place every seven years. At the conclusion of the Sabbatical year, the entire Jewish nation, men, women and children, gathered in the Temple courtyard, where they were addressed by the King. The year now drawing to a close, 5782, was such a Sabbatical year which farmers across the Holy Land observed by letting their land lay fallow.

Now we are heading into the Hakhel ingathering year. Let us all gather in our Shul for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot. Men, women and children. Yes, we are all out of the habit. And many of us have enjoyed praying at home. For a long time this was totally justifiable. But at this stage, none of the excuses that were valid in 2020 and 2021 apply. This year, we need to be in G-d's home, where we will meet each other and Him.

I, for one, look so forward to seeing you all. Please do not let me down.

Wishing you Shana Tova—a year of good health, prosperity and revealed blessings.

Rabbi Yossi Chaikin

FROM THE REBBETZIN

I love this time of year. In our little garden, the grass is green again. There are purple, white and red flowers. The sky is very blue and the air is full of the fragrance of jasmine and of yesterday, today & tomorrow. That plant blossomed so suddenly. Just today I went outside and saw that, from having nothing on it at all, it is now covered in its glorious three different colours. So has the neighbour's bush and even the one in the abandoned garden next door. You see, it does not need expert or tender gardening. It just blossoms when its time is right.

I have been home the last two weeks, doing a lot of thinking and introspection about yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Watching our children and my students doing what I was doing "yesterday." Thank G-d. Tending to their homes, their spouses and families. Working hard, finding their ways, moaning about sleepless nights and snotty noses. Cooking up elaborate meals. Work joys and frustrations. Promotions, disappointments and successes.

Then there is "today." The house is quiet. I wait for the phone calls and WhatsApp messages. I watch the cute video clips over and over. I check my blood pressure and I can feel my knees and shoulders when I have been sitting for too long. This too, however, is a glorious time. Baruch Hashem. Time and experience has made me more comfortable and secure in my love and relationships. I thank Hashem for the people who make me and shape me into who I have become.

Then there are the hours and energy I put into praying and dreaming about the "tomorrow." Begging and pleading with Hashem, as I face Rosh Hashanah and another new year, for a glorious, happy, healthy and blessed tomorrow.

It is this combination of yesterday, today and tomorrow that makes a beautiful, fragrant bush of life. It blossoms whether or not we are good gardeners but is even more magnificent when tended to carefully.

May we all be blessed with beautiful yesterdays, todays and tomorrows. Leshana Tova Umetuka. Ketiva Vachatima Tova.

Rivky

DVAR TORAH

Chanah's Prayer

By Tzvi Freeman (chabad.org)

Some people see the human being as a lonely creature in an indifferent, and even hostile, universe. They need to look deeper, for the two are essentially one: The soul of man is G-dly, and the soul of the universe is G-d. Only in their outward expression does a conflict appear—or even that which may resemble indifference. But within is a love affair, an eternal, inseparable embrace. It is a drama King Solomon entitled "The Song of Songs," for it is what lies at the core of every song, every human expression and all the cosmos: the longing to reunite, to be one, to create a harmony in the outer world that matches the perfect union that lies beneath.

This, too, is the work of prayer: We have our concerns. G-d seems so distant from them. There is a vast chasm between our world and His. But then He says, "Speak to me about what bothers you. Tell me with all your heart what you desire, and I will listen. For what is important to you is important to me. Speak to me. I wish to dwell within your world."

The chasm merges and seals. Outer and inner, higher and lower, spiritual and physical, holy and mundane, heaven and earth, kiss and become one.

There is a condition, however, to this healing of lovers' hearts: that first we must find the inner sanctity that lies behind our own desires and strife. For there is nothing of this world that does not contain a divine spark, no movement of the soul without G-dly purpose.

Only once we have made this peace within ourselves, between our inner souls and our outer desires, between the sanctuary of our hearts and the words of our lips, only then can we create this cosmic peace between the Essence of All Being and our busy, material world.

This is why prayer is called throughout the Psalms "an outpouring of the soul." That which lies within pours outward, with no dam to obstruct it, no mud to taint it, nothing to change it along the way. The entire world may be ripping apart at the seams, but the beseecher's heart and mouth are at

peace as one. And then that peace spreads outward into all things.

There are many things we learn from the prayer of Chanah (recounted in I Samuel, chapter 1, and read as the haftarah for the first day of Rosh Hashanah). We learn that our lips must move in prayer, that we must be able to hear our own prayer but no one else should. We learn that prayer is to be said standing. But most important, we learn how to pour out our soul.

Eli thought Chanah was drunk with wine. He was the high priest, the holiest member of the Jewish nation. The divine spirit rested upon him, and he was able to see within the hearts of men and women. Yet, he saw Chana as a drunkard—drunk with a worldly desire, a desire for a child so that she would no longer suffer the shame and ridicule afforded her by Peninah.

But Chanah answered, "No, it is not wine, but my soul, that pours out to G-d. For my desire for a child has purpose and meaning beyond the pursuits and follies of man. My child, the precious jewel of my heart's desire—I have already given him to G-d."

So it is with our prayers: we pray for material things, but it is not the material, but the spiritual within them, that our soul desires.

The mission of every human being is to bring the many things of this chaotic world into harmony with their inner purpose and the oneness that underlies them. To do this, each of us must have those things related to our mission: our family, our health, our homes, our income. We pray for these things from our innermost heart; our soul pours out for them—because our soul knows that without them, she cannot fulfill her mission in this world.

And G-d listens. Because He wishes to dwell within our mundane world.

SERVICE TIMES SHACHARIT (A.M.)

Monday & Thursday	7:15
Shabbat & Festivals	9:30

MINCHA AND MAARIV (P.M.)

Friday from 7/10	5:45 6:00
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MAZAL TOV

We wish a hearty Mazal Tov to:

BIRTHS

- Shmuel & Shoshy Chaikin and Rabbi & Rivky Chaikin on the birth of a son and grandson in Florida.
- Doris Samson on the birth of a great granddaughter in Jerusalem.

ENGAGEMENT

- Philip & Rilla Jacobson and Jeanette Markovitz on the engagement of their granddaughter Chasya Markovitz to Daniel Friedland in Jerusalem

BIRTHDAYS

- Russel Wolpe on the occasion of his 85th birthday on the 5th September.
- Jennifer Levy on the occasion of her 60th birthday on the 10th September.
- Danielle Fobel on the occasion of her 50th birthday on the 21st September.
- Joel Levy on the occasion of his 60th birthday on the 30th September.

ANNIVERSARIES

- John & Brenda Brick on the occasion of their 65th anniversary on the 1st September
- Ronald & Estelle Katz on the occasion of their 55th anniversary on the 3rd September.

REFUAH SHLEIMA

We wish a Speedy recovery to:

- Rivky Chaikin

**BEREAVEMENTS**

We wish long life to:

- Rolene Lamm, Basil Wolk, Leslie Meisler and their families on the death of their mother, Annette Wolk

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



TISHREI 5783 CALENDAR						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBAT
25 September EREV ROSH HASHANA 🕞 Shacharit: 8:00 a.m. ⚡ Annulment of vows 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. 🍏 Apple & Honey in evening 🕞 5:47 p.m.	26 September 1 Tishrei ROSH HASHANA 🕞 Shacharit: 9:00 a.m. 📖 Torah Reading: 10:00 a.m. 🎺 Shofar: 10:30 a.m. 🕞 Musaf: 11:00 a.m. 🕞 Mincha: 5:30 p.m. ⚡ Tashlich 6:00 p.m. 🕞 Maariv: 6:35 p.m. ⚡ Eat new Fruit in evening 🕞 6:37 p.m.	27 September 2 Tishrei ROSH HASHANA 🕞 Shacharit: 9:30 a.m. 📖 Torah Reading: 10:00 a.m. 🎺 Shofar: 10:30 a.m. 🕞 Musaf: 11:00 a.m. 🕞 Mincha/ Maariv: 5:45 p.m. 🕞 6:37 p.m.	28 September 3 Tishrei FAST OF GEDALYA ⚡ Fast begins: 4:42 a.m. 🕞 Shacharit: 6:45 a.m. 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:30 p.m. ⚡ Fast ends: 6:24 p.m.	29 September 4 Tishrei 🕞 Shacharit: 6:45 a.m.	30 September 5 Tishrei 🕞 Shacharit: 6:45 a.m. 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. 🕞 5:49 p.m.	1 October 6 Tishrei SHABBAT SHUVA 🕞 Shacharit: 9:30 a.m.. 🕞 6:39 p.m.
2 October 7 Tishrei	3 October 8 Tishrei	4 October 9 Tishrei	5 October 10 Tishrei	6 October 11 Tishrei	7 October 12 Tishrei	8 October 13 Tishrei
🕞 Shacharit: 8:00 a.m.	🕞 Shacharit: 6:45 a.m.	EREV YOM KIPPUR 🕞 Shacharit: 7:00 a.m. ⚡ Fast begins: 5:51 p.m. 🕞 Kol Nidrei: 5:45 p.m. 🕞 5:51 p.m.	YOM KIPPUR 🕞 Shacharit: 9:00 a.m. 📖 Torah Reading: 10:00 a.m. 🕞 Yizkor: 10:45 a.m. 🕞 Musaf: 11:00 a.m. 🕞 Mincha: 5:00 p.m. 🕞 Neilah: 5:45 p.m. ⚡ Fast ends: 6:41 p.m. 🕞 Maariv: 6:45 p.m. 🕞 6:41 p.m.	🕞 Shacharit: 7:15 a.m. 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m.	🕞 Shacharit: 7:15 a.m. 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m.	SHABBAT HA'AZINU 🕞 Shacharit: 9:30 a.m. 🕞 6:42 p.m.
9 October 14 Tishrei	10 October 15 Tishrei	11 October 16 Tishrei	12 Octoberr 17 Tishrei	13 October 18 Tishrei	14 October 19 Tishrei	15 October 20 Tishrei
EREV SUKKOT 🕞 Shacharit: 8:00 a.m. 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. ⚡ Eat Dinner in Sukkah 🕞 5:53 p.m.	SUKKOT 🕞 Shacharit: 9:30 a.m. ⚡ Shake Lulav & Etrog ⚡ Eat all meals in Sukkah 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. 🕞 6:43 p.m.	SUKKOT 🕞 Shacharit: 9:30 a.m. ⚡ Shake Lulav & Etrog ⚡ Eat all meals in Sukkah 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. 🕞 6:44 p.m.	CHOL HAMOED 🕞 Shacharit: 7:00 a.m. ⚡ Shake Lulav & Etrog ⚡ Eat all meals in Sukkah	CHOL HAMOED 🕞 Shacharit: 7:00 a.m. ⚡ Shake Lulav & Etrog ⚡ Eat all meals in Sukkah	CHOL HAMOED 🕞 Shacharit: 7:00 a.m. ⚡ Shake Lulav & Etrog ⚡ Eat all meals in Sukkah 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 6:00 p.m. 🕞 5:56 p.m.	CHOL HAMOED 🕞 Shacharit: 9:30 a.m. ⚡ Eat all meals in Sukkah 🕞 6:46 p.m.
16 October 21 Tishrei	17 October 22 Tishrei	18 October 23 Tishrei		<i>Wishing you Shana Tova</i> <i>May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year</i>		
HOSHANA RABBA 🕞 Shacharit: 8:00 a.m. ⚡ Shake Lulav & Etrog ⚡ Eat all meals in Sukkah 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 5:45 p.m. 🕞 5:57	SHEMINI ATZERET 🕞 Shacharit: 9:30 a.m. 🕞 Yizkor 10:15 a.m. 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 6:00 p.m. 🕞 6:47	SIMCHAT TORAH 🕞 Shacharit: 9:30 a.m. 🕞 Mincha/Maariv: 6:00 p.m. 🕞 6:48				