

Congregation Etz Chaim



74 Billings Street, Sharon, Massachusetts 02067
www.etzchaimsharon.com
(781) 784-7204

Treasurer: George Monat
Secretary: Janis Monat
Member at Large: Robert Dell
Member at Large: Michael Ferber
Member at Large: Rabbi Chuni Rappoport

Synagogue
Member



Parasha Chukas-Balak

June 27 2026 / 12th Tammuz

Shabbos lik ner 8:05 PM

Shabbos Day

Shacharis 9:00 AM

Latest Shema 8:57 AM

Latest Tefilla 10:13 AM

Mincha 8:05 PM

Shabbos ends 9:16/9:36 PM

Shabbos Day at Young Israel

Mincha 8:07 PM

Ma'ariv 9:12 PM

Havdalah 9:17 PM

Weekday at YI

Mincha/Ma'ariv 8:06 PM

Shabbos Day at Chabad

Mincha 8:00 PM

Maariv 9:17 PM

Weekdays at Chabad

Mincha/Maariv 8:05 PM

TORAH LEARNING

Rabbi Hartman's class is SUNDAY at 9:30 a.m.

Zoom ID: 903 917 1656

Password: 170 smain

SHMIRAS HALASHON class is Monday at 9:15 a.m.

Please contact Janis Monat: jbmonat@aol.com for the link.

DAF YOMI WEEKDAY ZOOM SCHEDULE

Via Zoom: Mon - Th 7:00 pm and Tu & Th 7:30 a.m.

Meeting ID: 822 979 966

Password: 727190

DAF YOMI LIVE SCHEDULE:

Shabbos mornings at shul, 8:00 a.m., one hour before shacharis;

Sunday mornings at shul, 7:00 a.m., one hour before shacharis.

Contact Melvyn Huff

(781) 784-6608) or

melvynhuff@comcast.net for more information

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ETZ CHAIM ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING this Sunday!

All paid members are invited to vote at our live, in-person Congregational meeting THIS Sunday, June 28, at 10:00 a.m. All positions are open! Enjoy the morning coffee/tea and pastries!

Our next monthly **board meeting** will be Sunday, **July 12** at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom to welcome returning and new board members! RSVP to Janis at jbmonat@aol.com for the link if needed.

RABBI MENDY ROSENFELD

Rabbi Rosenfeld will be giving his Sunday evening parasha talk at 6:45 p.m. It's the same link as last time. If needed please contact Chaim Stramer, Stramer@aol.com.

REFUAH SHELAIMA

Our prayers are with the armed forces of the United States and Israel for their swift victory and for their safe return home in peace. We pray for the healing of the wounded soldiers of the IDF, those who have been hurt in terrorist attacks, the Israeli survivors from 10/7/23 **and this Iran War**. We pray for the healing of our congregation members: Heidi Goldblatt, Rachel Chana bas Menucha; Robert Dell, Chana Reuven ben Leah; Tzila Pass, Tzila Chava bas Rachel; Marve Rudenstein, Menachem Yitzchak ben Raitza; and Burton Cusner. May they all heal soon and completely!

ETZ CHAIM BOOK CLUB

We are reading the historical fiction book, The Teacher of Lost Orphans, by M.Z. Daskal. The author will be joining us for the book discussion via Zoom on **Monday, July 20 at 7:00 p.m.** Copies can be picked up at the home of Merilee and Josh Maeir, 8 Deborah Sampson Street, Sharon. The books were purchased by Larry and Susan Cable **to honor the memory of their daughter, Michelle Cable, Michal Freidal a"h bas Eliezer**, whose yartzeit will be the day of the book talk, **the 6th of Av**. May her memory be for a blessing. Contact Merilee with any thoughts or questions at melmaeir@gmail.com. All are welcome to join our book club.

THOUGHTS on CHUKAS-BALAK

By Janis Monat

The red heifer's sacrifice to absolve someone who touched a dead person is in this parasha. So is the death of Miriam and Aharon. Those who prepared their bodies for burial may have been the first in the application of this "chok" law. Our parasha begins with, "...Zot **chukat** haTorah...This is the decree of the Torah..."

While Miriam was alive, as a sign of her merit, a well of water followed the Jewish people in the 40 years they traveled in the desert. They feared dying of thirst, though, when in the beginning of the 40th year Miriam died, ch. 20:1. They panicked and cried out their existential worries to Moshe. He and Aharon asked G-d what to do. Moshe was instructed to **speak** to a rock and **command it** to give water. Perhaps not in a calm mindset with his older sister having just died, Moses took his frustration out at the complaining Israelites by **striking** the stone. Water came forth, but Moshe was told by G-d that neither he nor Aharon would get to

enter the Promised Land. Our parasha offers the reason, *"Because you did not believe in Me, to uphold Me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the Land that I have given them."* ch. 20:12. It is not so much that Moshe did not have "bitachon", trust in Hashem, it was that he did **not act** like he did. As a leader he needed to instill in the Jewish people to have faith that Hashem would provide for them. To this day we also struggle at times, but we must try to grow in our commitment from all the lessons we have learned. Hashem has created us to become better people through our mistakes and teshuva.

We also have in our double parasha an example of a leader in another dramatic act. Pinchas, a great grandson of Aharon, stabbed to death Zimri, a Jewish prince/tribal head and Cozbi, a Midianite princess, to put an end to Jewish men having illicit sexual relations with female pagan worshipers and praying to the idol god, Pe'or.

Some commentators critique Pinchas for this "brash, sudden act". Chabad suggests that sometimes **people are being used as vehicles for G-d's message**. Pinchas may have been such a person. He was awarded the prize of Brit Shalom, the Covenant for Peace, for returning a sense of order and peace to the Jewish people. The plague of death Adomye brought to punish the immorally acting men was ended and the potential perpetrators were redirected to Hashem's mitzvot, the second one of the Ten Commandments, "You shall have no other gods beside Me." Shemot, 20:4-5

Another "man in charge", Bilaam, was also a messenger of Hashem. It was through his lips that G-d inspired blessings to come forth for the Jewish people and not the curses King Balak had sent and paid for him to spew out. "Ma Tovu ohalecha Yaakov, mishkenotecha Yisrael!... How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, and your dwelling places, O Israel!..." ch. 24:5. He surveyed the Israelite camp and saw a community living according to the values of Judaism. It was what the people did that transformed their ordinary "tent" space into a **makom kadosh**.

In our own times ordinary places can become "makom kodesh." During the early days of Covid when shuls were closed, I Zoomed in on morning shacharit services. I'd face east and look out the corner of my living room window when preparing to read the Amidah. I felt that space rising in holiness. I also felt it in my living room when the mohel circumcised my eldest son in that same spot 30 years before!

The way we interact with and treat each other can create the conditions for God's presence. When my dear friend and her two sons were in a hospital room with their dying relative on Thursday a connection with and a presence of Hashem was in that room and within their relationships. Wherever we come together to support each other as a community the space becomes a **makom kadosh - a sacred and holy space**.

On this shabbos may we feel Hashem's presence, making space in our lives for a **makom kadosh**.

Shabbat shalom!