

Congregation Etz Chaim



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

Chaim Stramer - President
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 Shoftim

August 15, 2026 / 2nd of Elul

Shabbos lik ner **7:28 PM**

Shabbos Day

Shacharis 9:00 AM

Latest Shema 9:20 AM

Latest Tefilla 10:30 AM

Mincha 7:25 PM

Shabbos ends 8:30/8:57 PM

Shabbos Day at Young Israel

Mincha 7:29 PM

Ma'ariv 8:26 PM

Havdalah 8:31 PM

Weekday at YI

Mincha/Ma'ariv 7:19 PM

Shabbos Day at Chabad

Mincha 7:20 PM

Maariv 8:30 PM

Weekdays at Chabad

Mincha/Maariv 7:20 PM

TORAH LEARNING

Rabbi Hartman's class is this Sunday, 9:30 a.m.

Zoom ID: 903 917 1656

Password: 170 smain

SHMIRAS HALASHON class is on hold until 8-31-26.

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 informati

SHABBOS KIDDUSH SPONSOR

The Gerbers are sponsoring kiddush this week in honor of Len and Cindy's anniversary and for the birthdays of their children Svi and Tova! Mazel tov and Happy Brithday!

RABBI MENDY ROSENFELD

Rabbi Rosenfeld's Sunday evening parasha class this evening will be at 6:15 p.m.

ETZ CHAIM BOOK CLUB

Please join our group for our next read, ***A Bend in the Stars*** by Rachel Barenbaum, on Monday, August 24 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Copies are at SPL's circulation desk. Just ask the librarian for the Etz Chaim Book Club Selection. Any questions or thoughts contact Merilee at melmaeir@gmail.com.

ETZ CHAIM BOARD MEETING

Our next monthly **board meeting** will be **Monday, Sept. 7 at 5:00 p.m.** via Zoom. Please RSVP to Janis at jbmonat@aol.com if the link is needed.

REFUAH SHELAIMA

Our prayers are 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/Lebanon/Gaza 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; Burton Cusner, and Janis' sister, Chana Davida bas Rivka Petal, Ann Denise. May they all heal soon and completely!

HIGH HOLIDAY SEATING

With the Yamin Noraim beginning Friday evening, Sept. 11, **please RSVP by August 21** to George Monat at etztreasurer@aol.com to attend Etz Chaim's cost-free Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur services. Registration is needed for security reasons. **Todah and an early, "Lishana tova tikateyvu!"**

ROOM RENTAL

The "Mathes Room, a large modern space, is available for holiday celebration rentals, shiva meals, sheva bracha meals, children's parties, etc. Please contact George Monat, etztreasurer@aol.com for more info!

THOUGHTS on Shoftim

By Janis Monat

Shoftim means judges and the parasha offers guidelines of leadership for the Jewish people. Moshe, the outstanding leader, instructs the B'nai Yisrael on operating as a people after he passes away and they will have entered Eretz Yisrael. The rules for judges, kings, Levites, prophets, cities of refuge, witnesses, war, and the prohibition against needless destruction of property and unsolved murder victims get established.

In ch. 16:20 the parasha has the famous phrase, "Tzedek, Tzedek tirdof", "Justice, justice, shall you pursue," Jewish people are to appoint judges and law officers in every city. Justice has to be administered without corruption or favoritism.

In the Chabad Scroll there is a story where a Jewish woman pleads with a judge to have a certain man be brought into court so that her side of the case could be understood. She cries throughout her pleas, and the judge grants her wish.

The next day the man to be prosecuted arrives in court and the judge from the day before has excused himself from the case as he knows he could be biased in rendering an opinion.

I started to wonder since we Jews cry out to Hashem for forgiveness on Yom Kippur is the Adon Olam moved by our tears? And if so, is the greatest judge of all able to remain "unbiased"?

An answer the Rabbis have taught is that we can be absolved of our mistakes by admitting our wrong, apologizing to the person we hurt as well as to Hashem, and making a commitment to act in a better way should that type of situation come again. Teshuva, tzedakah, and tefillot are our "outs" from the intended judgement. Should we not feel remorse and take action to change our thoughts, speech, and actions we are liable to repeat the same mistakes.

Speaking of judgement in this parasha, did you know that the 71 judges of the Sanhedrin are to exonerate a person if all the 71 judges are certain the man or woman is guilty of the crime they're accused of? Why is this?

The answer is if not one judge can find any merit in this person, the judges are to fault themselves for not trying hard enough. Oral law has that every Jewish person's neshama deep down has some merit, some golden shine. **If the judges can't find it, they must let him/her go.**

Convolved as this sounds, if the person does teshuva, then at least one of the judges could point out that good quality. That judge, ironically, becomes the "executioner". (There were no prisons in Eretz Yisrael for "life in prison", just "ir miklat", cities for the inadvertent murderer).

Rabbi Menachem Mendle Schneerson explains that in order for the neshama to go to Olam Haba it must be cleansed. It is not cleansed when no one brings up some positive aspect of the defendant. From Bereishis 4:13, we have the defendant's "iniquity is too great to bear". His or her sinful state is so extreme that even execution from the court cannot atone for their sin. Therefore, he or she is exonerated.

The rabbis wanted the person's soul to be released in order to rise to Heaven. Without personal remorse and/or a judge not seeing some merit in this person's life their neshama would just linger, wandering back and forth.

And that's the segue for the Yamin Noraim. May we each find in our hearts a cleansing for ourselves and in others. All our inner truths are holy. May our neshamas radiate their **golden shine** to our thoughts, speech and actions.

A wonderful shabbos!