



KOL EZRAS ISRAEL



Rabbi's Message

As I sit here and think about what the month of Elul means to me today, I recall the feelings that I had about this time of the year during my days in yeshiva. The increased focus on studying works of mussar (moral ethics) and teshuva (repentance) brought about a serious atmosphere, which stood in stark contrast to the summer months. During my early years at yeshiva, this was a feeling that I was apprehensive about, and did not look forward to. However as the years went by, this feeling began to dissipate. I began to realize how meaningful Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur can be when the days of Elul are properly utilized. I began to look at Elul differently. I began to look at Elul as an opportunity rather than a burden. And this realization is what can make all the difference.

The Rabeinu Yonah in his classical work on repentance,

the Shaarei Teshuva , (Gates of Repentance) writes that the concept of Teshuva, is one of the many kindnesses that Hashem bestows upon us. Teshuva is the ability not just to be forgiven in the literal sense, but to completely erase our misdeeds from our account before G-d as if it was never done. We were given the days of Rosh Hashana through Yom Kippur to achieve this teshuva. However, Rosh Hashana can only be fully utilized when it is preceded by an Elul. Achieving teshuva requires effort on our part. Elul is an opportunity to position ourselves so that we are in the proper frame of mind to achieve this teshuva on The High Holy Days. Although Elul is a month that requires us to reflect on our actions, and seek to improve ourselves, which is a difficult task, it is part of a process through which we can experience total renewal at the end.

May we all be blessed with a year of growth, success, and happiness.

Shana Tova to all!
Eliezer Kreiser



President's Message

I had a friend who frequently would speak of the five P's

Prior planning prevents poor performance.

It's another way of saying without doing our homework preparation, we may very well fail the test.

At this time of year, doing our homework involves several things:

- ◆ Self reflection – examining our behavior and attitudes
- ◆ Education – learning about the meaning and purpose of the holidays
- ◆ Saying the special penitential prayers, selichot and ledovid, on a daily basis
- ◆ Helping out with setting up for services and construction of the Succah

With greater involvement in one or more of these activities, we can expect a much more satisfying experience during the holiday season.

Prayer itself has many layers of depth. At the most shallow we can mouth the words quickly, with little thought just to get it over with. At a deeper level we can think about the simple meaning of the words as we say them. At yet another level we can think of the ideas and concepts behind the words. The greater the level, the better able we are to make an emotional connection between

the words , our lives and our aspirations for the future.

Furthermore, the Talmud says that the acceptance of our prayers depends on the thought and emotion we put into it, not just how much time we spend in the synagogue.

As a synagogue we have a responsibility to provide a foundation for our members and friends to experience the holidays in all its potential. We do this through educational classes by Rabbi Kreiser prior to the holiday, meaningful holiday services where Rabbi Kreiser explains various texts and their interrelationships, and through our hazzan, Larry Shor, whose melodies inspire us. All this comes together with attentive listening and participation in the services.

The more thought we put into anything we do leads to a better outcome. It is never more true than during the high holiday season.

Wishing everyone a joyous holiday season and new year!

Sheldon Needle
President

Upcoming Opportunities to volunteer your time to the shul: (ask Sheldon)

- Help With Child Care on Holidays and Shabbat
- Help set up RH Social Hall for High Holidays (9/16 and 9/25)
- Help build the shul Succah 9/23 & 30
- Help with Chanukah Dinner 12/14
- Help with Minyan every Friday Night and Shabbat Mincha

Maftir Yonah – Yom Kippur

The Mishnah Berurah explains that the reason we recite ‘Sefer Yonah’ as the *‘haftarah at the Yom Kippur Mincha service is to show us the concept of teshuva and the fact that you can’t run away from HaShem’s will’*.

Chasidic tradition holds that this Maftir is the most important Aliyah of the whole day. The story of Jonah teaches that sincere repentance can reverse even the harshest heavenly decrees. It is also a *segulah* for wealth. In many communities people compete to contribute the most for this Maftir, since according to your investment, so does G-d reward

The highlight of the Yom Kippur Mincha (Afternoon Service), is the moving account of Repentance as expressed by Yonah in the belly of the Whale. As we prepare for Yom Kippur, let us focus here on the importance of “Maftir Yonah,” and the special role and privileged status it enjoys today in the Jewish community.

Read at a most auspicious time on the holiest day of the year, Maftir Yonah is the longest Haftarah ever. It is far bigger than the shorter weekly Haftarah selections from Isaiah or Jeremiah that usually feature only part of one chapter.

Maftir Yonah runs through the full four chapters of the Book of Jonah, plus concluding bonus verses from Micah. It recounts the dramatic story of Jonah the Prophet who tried to run away from G-d and escape his responsibility to reach out to save the wicked people of Ninveh from punishment.

Jonah set sail from the port of Jaffa, but turbulence on the high seas thwarted his escape. Identified by the sailors as the reason for the storm, Jonah was cast overboard into the sea, where he was swallowed by a big fish. He prayed and repented from the depths of his heart. By G-d’s command, Jonah alighted on land, went to Nineveh and called on its residents to change their evil ways, saving them from destruction. The story concludes with the episode of the withering vine that protected Jonah from the beating sun, demonstrating G-d’s sympathy and compassion for those repenting. ‘Maftir Yonah’ is truly a treasure. We listen carefully to its reading, and try to absorb and personalize its deep and profound lessons.

Maftir Yonah is in big demand. It is said that Maftir Yonah represents a good omen that endows the reader with riches, success and prosperity. No wonder that ‘Maftir Yonah’ has become a sought after commodity, considered to be the Grand

prize among the various Synagogue Honors.

The problem is that the Haftarah reader is only one person, so the lucky individual who happens to get the coveted Maftir Yonah becomes the envy of the congregation.

What to do? Much thought and deliberation is thus invested in determining the right Maftir Yonah awardee. The Shul President, a distinguished Rabbi, or an exceptional and highly deserving individual is carefully chosen as the recipient of this rare and singular honor.

“Getting Maftir Yonah” is a Yiddish idiom (also known as a yidiom) for striking it rich, hitting pay dirt or winning the jackpot. As the demand exceeds supply, the custom in some communities is to auction off the Maftir Yonah honor to the highest bidder. The rivalry and competition sparks intense bidding, and the proceeds go to charity. Not a bad fundraising idea.

Some wonder whether it is Maftir Yonah that gets the wealth, or is it vice versa? Either way, the Maftir Yonah message is rich and rewarding, and the moral of the story is virtually priceless.

On Hakoras Hatov—Gratitude, Yom Kippur, Maftir Yona and being Jewish

It’s been said that gratitude is one of the most quintessentially Jewish traits. What is it about gratitude that makes it so all encompassing Jewish that it could be said, as Rabbi Kreiser often does, that Hakoras Hatov—gratitude, is a defining character trait of the Jewish people? The Torah cites many examples where one of the patriarchs or Moshe Rabeinu acts in a way that conspicuously demonstrates this trait. Most illustrative of this Jewish character is in the very name we came to be known by—in Hebrew—Yehudim. Named after the major ancient Hebrew population that survived the schism of the royal Davidic dynasty from the tribes of Yehuda (and Binyomin) and the break-away tribes of the northern tribes of Israel. Aptly, when her fourth son was born, his mother Leah names him Yehuda. Derived from the words “hapam odeh” meaning, “this time gratefully praise Hashem” because as Rashi explains “she [Leah] has been granted more than her rightful share to be the mother of at least one third of Jacob’s twelve sons. In the *Chiddush HaRim*, written by Itzhak Meir Alter, the first Gerer Rebbe, as the ArtScroll Chumash explains “Jews have come to be called Yehudim

because it is a Jewish characteristic to be grateful to God, with the attitude that He has given [us] more than our rightful share.”

How is gratitude then connected to an ability to do Teshuva, and achieve repentance the main purpose of Yom Kippur?

Sheldon Needle has shared with me some of his thoughts on what it takes to achieve “Peace of Mind.” He provides a number of principles and finally concludes with: “**Be eternally grateful for what you have. Gratitude is the essential ingredient in proper prayer and let’s your creator (yes he is part of you) know that you appreciate everything that has been done for you in this lifetime.**

And guess what? - the universe will continue to shower its blessings upon you to reflect your sense of appreciation! Again, the universe will return to you precisely what you think, So think well of yourself and be at peace with who you are and what you have.

That’s not to say you don’t strive to be more and do more. Of course you should but you should also be satisfied with your present station.

The beauty of this simple concept is that it takes no time at all for it to work. it happens instantly and continues to happen. Just be sincere in what you really want and rightly deserve and know it will happen for you and it will. Now work on internalizing that!”

With this thought we come full circle to what allows Yonah to cease to fight the will of God and be grateful for his survival, yes albeit in the belly of the “great fish.” Yonah finally accedes to the demand that he go to Nineveh by concluding his prayer with (Art Scroll translation) “But as for me, with a voice of gratitude will I bring offerings to You; What I have vowed I will fulfill, for salvation is Hashem’s.”

Herein lies the power of Yom Kippur to achieve atonement. The willful act of being grateful for what we have, as little as that may be, and for what others, especially our parents, have done for us, will open our hearts and minds to sincere teshuva. This empowers Yom Kippur to cleanse us of our transgressions, both before God and our fellow Jews, and truly achieve atonement. The message here may be that sincere gratitude is the path to salvation. That may also explain our feeling of exhilaration and Jewish self-actualization, most of us share, by the time we hear the last shofar blast at the end of Neilah.

Compiled by Rachmil Jacobovits
from a variety of sources

Learning Schedule

- Shabbat mornings, Rabbi's shiur on the weekly **Parsha**, 8:15am at the shul. Open to all.
- Sunday mornings following Shacharis, Rabbi's **Talmud Class** at the Ring House (men only) **Wednesday Learning Nights** on Wednesdays at 9:00 pm at the shul (men only) (contact Rabbi Kreiser to confirm dates)

Baruchim Habaim New Members:
Joey Franco, Dr. Nathan Bluzer, & Roni Charuvi and family

Are you receiving the weekly Ezras Israel e-mail update?
Davening times, upcoming events, and more! To subscribe, visit
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ezrasisrael>



Mazel Tov!

Boaz & Dina Rosen and family on their first son Leor's marriage in Israel.
Sheldon & Roz Needle on the marriage of their daughter Rina to Dr. Robbie Majzner

Gil & Sandra Katz and Hadar on the birth of the daughter and sister Ellya Libbi

Dr. Greta & Emil Hirsch on the birth of their grand daughter in Israel.

Judy Lowitz on becoming a neighborhood homeowner and moving into her first owned home.

Lulov Etrog Sets for Sukkot: Please remember to order your Lulov and Etrog by September 19, 2012. Call Rabbi Kreiser at 301-461-8039 or send an e-mail at EliezerKreiser@aol.com

Yasher Koach!



Mark and Charlene Disler for sponsoring the quarterly dinner in memory of Charlene's mother, father and brother.

Mark Lautman, Dovid Kreiser & Michael Richman for their hard work and extensive preparations to read the Torah beautifully on Shabbat.

Mark and Charlene Disler for sponsoring the refreshments at the Rabbi's two Machzor lectures.

Mark Lautman, Jeremy Jacobson, Jordan Grubic, Nate Druckman, Mordechai & Vahid Yehoudain for setting up and cleaning after kiddush and seudat shlishit.

Judy Lowitz for most kiddush provisioning

For sponsoring a kiddush

Judye Groner in commemoration of Rabbi Oscar Groner's (Osher ben Matisyahu z"l) yahrzeit on 22nd of Av.

Scott Klippel, in honor of Amos Hacoen upon his return to an IDF post at the end of August.

Gil & Sandra Katz along with Hadar to celebrate the birth and naming of their baby daughter and sister, Elyia Libbi.

Selma Slater, niece of Berel Sinnreich, to commemorate her father's (Louis Terner) yahrzeit

Mark and Charlene Disler in honor of his parents Edward and Sarah Disler's 71st

SPONSOR A DINNER!

The past year the shul has sought to extend the great feeling of camaraderie we share at our Chanukah Dinners to quarterly shabbat dinners. We have had at least two Shabbat dinners (and one or two Shababt and Yom Tov lunches) in shul sponsored or co-sponsored by a number of people. (See our current and previous two Yasher Koach lists.) We are looking for sponsors to help extend our welcoming Shabbat hospitality to all shul participants and help foster achdus by sharing oneg shabat with all members of the Ezras Israel community.

Refuah Sheleima

Nancy Zymelman from a broken wrist
Charlotte Klein from spinal problems

Cemetery Spaces Available

Gan Zikaron (Garden of Remembrance) is a Jewish community owned and operated cemetery. Spaces are available in the section previously purchased by Ezras Israel Congregation of Rockville for \$1,900 each. You will have the benefit of a tax deduction. Please contact Morris Altschuler at (301) 770-5591 for further information and a tour of the site.

Sponsor a New Sefer to our growing Torah Library

There are opportunities to sponsor new sformim for the shul - from a \$50 donation to sponsor a regular Stone Edition Chumash, and \$36 for a new Art Scroll Siddur to a set of Mishnayot or a full Shas, for a small premium above costs. Interested in other sformim sponsorship? Ask Rabbi Kreiser or contact Rachmil.301-461-4984

Condolences



Phil Weinberg and Family on the passing of their father Joe Weinberg in Savannah Georgia

Memorialize a loved one with a Memorial Plaque or by Donating a Machzor, Siddur or Chumash
Call Rachmil at 301-770-4342 or 301-461-4984 or e-mail milujaco@gmail.com

Donate to the Ezras Israel Hachnosat Orchim Fund to support the hospitality the Rabbi extends to the community.

For the holidays and all your special occasions, send personalized **Chesed Cards** and Help Ezras Israel at the same time
Call **June Graff 301.770.7129**

Celebrate a special occasion!
Sponsor a Kiddush
Call Judith Lowitz- 240-328-7648 or by e-mail judithlowitz@hotmail.com or reserve online at www.ezrasisrael.org

Kol Ezras Israel

**Congregation Ezras Israel
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Minyan Times

Luach Hazmanim

Date	Day	Parsha - Chag - Event	Candle Lighting	Friday / Erev Yom Tov Mincha	Shabbat / Yom Tov Mincha	Shabbat / Yom Tov Ends
16-17 Sep	Sun-Mon	First Day of Rosh Hashana (Food Prep for Day 2 only after 7:54)	6:56	6:55	6:55	7:54
17-18 Sep	Mon-Tue	Second Day of Rosh Hashana	After 7:54	6:50	6:50	7:50
19 Sep	Wed	Tzom (Fast of) Gedaliah (Fast Begins 5:34—Ends 7:50)	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx
21-22 Sep	Fri-Sat	Vayelech (Shabbat Te Shuva Drasha 5:30 PM)	6:48	6:45	6:30	7:45
25-26 Sep	Tue-Wed	Yom Kippur	6:41	3:00	5:00	7:38
28-29 Sep	Fri-Sat	Hazinu	6:37	6:35	6:15	7:33
30 Sep / Oct 1	Sun-Mon	First Day of Sukkot (Food Prep for Day 2 only after 7:30)	6:33	6:30	6:30	7:30
1-2 Oct	Mon-Tue	Second Day of Sukkot	After 7:30	6:40	6:40	7:29
5-6 Oct	Fri-Sat	Shabbat Chol Hamoed Sukkot—	6:26	6:25	6:10	7:23
7-8 Oct	Sun-Mon	Shemini Atzeret—Yizkor Approx 11AM Monday	6:22	6:20	6:20	7:21
8-9 Oct	Mon-Tue	Simchat Torah (Food Prep for Day 2 only after 7:21)	After 7:21	6:20	6:20	7:18
12-13 Oct	Fri-Sat	Bereshit (Mevorchim Cheshvan - Rosh Chodesh Tu & Wed)	6:16	6:15	6:00	7:12
19-20 Oct	Fri-Sat	Noach	6:05	6:05	5:50	7:03
26-27 Oct	Fri-Sat	Lech Lecha	5:56	5:55	5:40	6:54
2-3 Nov	Fri-Sat	Vayeira	5:48	5:50	5:35	6:47
9-10 Nov	Fri-Sat	Chayei Sarah (Mevorchim Kisle—Rosh Chodesh Th)	4:40	4:40	4:25	5:40
16-17 Nov	Fri-Sat	Toldot	4:35	4:35	4:20	5:35
23-24 Nov	Fri-Sat	Vayezei	4:31	4:40	4:20	5:32
30 Nov/Dec 1	Fri-Sat	Vayislach	4:28	4:30	4:15	5:30
7-8 Dec	Fri-Sat	Vayeshev (Mevorchim Tevet—Fri) First Night of Chanukah Saturday Night	4:27	4:25	4:10	5:30
14-15 Dec	Fri-Sat	Miketz	4:28	4:30	4:15	5:32
21-22 Dec	Fri-Sat	Vayigash	4:31	4:30	4:15	5:35
28-29 Dec	Fri-Sat	Vayechi	4:35	4:35	4:20	5:39

Shabbat at Ezras Israel: Call 240-627-1661 for Eruv status.
 Shacharit 9:00 a.m. Mincha/Ma'ariv
 Sunday - Friday Shacharit at Ring House, Activity Room 3:
 8:30 a.m. Followed by Rabbi's shur (men only)
 8:05 a.m. (Also the time on Rosh Chodes & other weekdays with Torah readings)
 Monday, Thursday
 Sunday
 See above. Followed by Seudah Shlishit and Ma'ariv
 Mincha minyan—same location—4:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday