

# HIGHLight

Bromley Reform Synagogue newsletter



The Cheder celebrated Tu B'Shevat on Sunday, 28 January with a range of activities. During Assembly pupils from Kittah Aleph, with teacher Lili, showed what they had been doing all morning.

**The Synagogue AGM** will be held at the Synagogue on **Tuesday, 13 March**, starting at 8 pm

*Come and have your say.*

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You are invited to join  
**Rabbi Jason Holtz**

in conversation with  
**Dr Omar Taha**

Director of Al-Emaan Centre Mosque in  
Keston.

The topic of conversation will be:  
**“Abraham, Patriarch and Prophet in  
Judaism and Islam”**

Join us as we look at stories and teachings from a prophet that both Muslims and Jews look to for inspiration and guidance.

**When:** Sunday, 11 March

Refreshments at 3:00 pm, followed by discussion at 3:30 pm

**Where:** at the Synagogue

**Further details from Rabbi Holtz or Barbara Kurtz**



Chag sameach Pesach to all our readers. The Communal Seder will be on Saturday, 31 March at 6 pm

**March 2018 - Purim 5778**

## Corruption, Jews should know better - View from the Chair

We all know that ‘power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely’. These words were written by a Roman Catholic, John Dalberg-Acton, in a letter to an Anglican bishop in the 19th century. Acton was a historian, writer and one-time Liberal politician and he was opposing the doctrine of papal infallibility. In fact he considered popes and kings, having absolute power, were the most likely to be corrupt. As it says in the book of Ecclesiastes, “there is nothing new under the sun”. So in the 21st century, we look at totalitarian regimes and we know they are corrupt.

On the other hand we expect that democratic governments and organisations, dependent on the will of the electorate, with independent judiciaries and media free of government control, will be less liable to become corrupted. Sadly that does not seem to be true in Israel. Ehud Olmert who was a cabinet minister for many years, served as mayor of Jerusalem and as prime minister of Israel from 2006-9, has served time in jail for multiple convictions of bribery and fraud. Now the police have recommended to the attorney general that prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu be indicted for bribery, fraud and breach-of-trust. I find it terribly upsetting that our Jewish state founded on idealistic principles just 70 years ago, should find itself with leaders who are guilty or strongly suspected of corruption.

Well, that’s Israel, British Jews wouldn’t behave like that, would they? I’m afraid the answer is that they would. As the Jewish Chronicle has revealed, an internal audit has reported that the former Chief Executive of the Jewish Leadership Council (JLC), Jeremy Newark, deceived the organisation out of tens of thousands of pounds and misled charities about the cost of the projects he worked on i.e. stole from them, over a period of some 7 years between 2006 and 2013. Unlike the Board of Deputies, the JLC is not a democratically elected body; it is headed by some prominent, key players in the Jewish community of this country, who are essentially self-appointed. Is that relevant? I’m afraid it is, because, when they found out what the Chief Executive was up to, they

colluded, deciding to hush it up rather than call in the police; they told nobody, buried the evidence and rewarded

him. So, if this audit report is correct, and it sounds as though it is, there is widespread and deep corruption among the leadership of our own Jewish community. Meanwhile, Jeremy Newark has moved on, with reputation intact until now and is currently Chairman of the Jewish Labour Movement. It doesn’t exactly inspire confidence in that organisation, does it?

Don’t our Jewish teachings mean anything to these people? Some of them are great philanthropists but their generosity does not excuse theft and cover-up. Justice, honesty and righteous behaviour are at the heart of our religion, the very antithesis of corruption. In the commentary to the week’s sedrah Mishpatim (Judgements), which we read recently in the Book of Exodus, my Chumash states that ‘Torah demands not only that people do not sin, but that they not do anything that can encourage or imply approval of dishonesty in others’.

John Posner, Chairman



### The Communal Seder Saturday, 31 March at the Synagogue Starting at 6.00 pm prompt

Cost: £22.00 for members, £27.00 for non-members and £4 for children up to and including 14 years of age.

*The Seder is intended for everyone, all ages, singles and families.*

Please apply for tickets through the synagogue office (020 8460 5460).

**Numbers are limited and early application is advisable.** Priority will be given to synagogue members and their families. Non-members will only be able to register from 19 March, provided there is still space.

*All applications must be received by Thursday 22 March.*

## CHEDER PURIM CELEBRATION DAY!

**WHERE:** Cheder

**WHEN:** Sunday morning,  
4 March

**WHAT TIME:** Kids at 10am;  
Adults at 11am for Megillah  
reading, then party!

**All are invited** to join the Cheder on 4 March at 11 am for an abridged Megillah reading and **Purim Costume Parade**. (Costumes for both children and adults are encouraged and will be handsomely rewarded). Come help drown out Haman’s name as we hear the Megillah together!

After the reading, all are invited join us for a **Purim Party** downstairs, with hamantaschen, cakes, tea, coffee and squash.

There will also be a **Hamantaschen Bake Off!** Bake your most creative Hamantaschen and bring them in for judging on the day (no nuts or Nutella, please, but who knows – watermelon jelly Hamantaschen could be all the rage...)

On that day, please come with **Matanot Le’evyonim** – food for the poor. Non-perishable food will be collected and given to a local charity to fulfill this important Purim mitzvah.

**Special Purim Youth Club** for kids aged 12+, from 12.30–2.30pm, hosted by RSY!



**Look forward to  
seeing you there!**

## Cheder News

It's raining, it's pouring, and that means it must be half term as I write this. But no matter! February may be a washout but there is plenty to look forward to in March, as the holidays seem to be **very** early this year. Read on to know what's in store for our kids at Cheder...

- 1) Preparations are already under way for our **Purim Celebration Day!** On Sunday, **4 March at 11 am**, parents and synagogue members are invited to join the Cheder for an abridged Megillah reading and Purim Costume Parade. Costumes for both children and adults are encouraged and will be handsomely rewarded. Come help drown out Haman's name as we hear the Megillah together!
- 2) After the reading, you are all invited join us for a **Purim Party** downstairs, with Hamantaschen, cakes, tea, coffee and squash. There will also be a **Hamantaschen Bake Off!** Bake your most creative Hamantaschen and bring them in for judging on the day (no nuts or Nutella, please)
- 3) On that day, please send your children in with **Matanot Le'evyonim** – food for the poor. Non-perishable food will be collected and given to a local charity to fulfil this important Purim mitzvah.
- 4) Speaking of charity, don't forget that Kittah Chet has chosen to support **BLISS** this term - a charity which supports ill and premature babies. Please keep sending in those spare pennies so that we can teach our children the importance giving Tzedakah (charity).
- 5) Plans are under way for our shul's annual **Communal Passover Seder**, and we're working on a **Mock Seder** for the children during the last Cheder day of the Purim term. Keep an eye out for more information.
- 6) Do you know your Horah from your Hoedown?? We are looking for an **Israeli Dance Teacher** to run an Israeli Dance workshop with our Cheder kids to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut! Interested? Know someone who can do the job? Please let me know.
- 7) This year **Sadeh Farm** in Orpington is planning a **Jewish Day Camp** for children aged 5-11. Let's do our best to support this new initiative! Please

## CALLING ALL ISRAELI DANCE TEACHERS!



Cheder is looking for someone to teach the children some Israeli folk dancing in honour of **Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israeli Independence Day** this year!

If you are free on Sunday morning, 22 April and think you can help, please email Vicki: [vickiashmore@icloud.com](mailto:vickiashmore@icloud.com)

contact Talia for more information: [talia.chain@sadehfarm.co.uk](mailto:talia.chain@sadehfarm.co.uk)

- 8) And last but not least, Katia, one of our Cheder parents, will be helping Graham Harris with **Security** (and we're all **really** grateful, thank you Katia!) She will be contacting you shortly with a new rota. If you realise you cannot attend on the day you've been allocated, please contact Graham Harris: [grahamh4@aol.com](mailto:grahamh4@aol.com).

That's all for now! Until next month, *L'Shalom*,  
Vicki, Cheder Head Teacher

### Cheder Security Rota Purim Term, 2018

<i>Sundays</i>	<i>Names</i>
4 March	Katia Pisetzky
11 March	Dan Posner
18 March	Polina Revzina
25 March	Nigel and Elisabeth Megitt

### A FREE trip to Israel?

Find your connection to Israel on a **FREE** trip with Reform Judaism and Liberal Judaism

**28 August - 6 September**

This trip is a gift from **Taglit Birthright** and is open to any Jewish 19-26 year olds

**Closing date for applications: Wednesday, 28 March 2018.**

Email [info@jeneration.org](mailto:info@jeneration.org) on how to apply, or go to:

[www.reformjudaism.org.uk/birthrightisrael](http://www.reformjudaism.org.uk/birthrightisrael)



## Social Centre News

In spite of the cold and miserable weather, I'm pleased to say we've had good attendance at our last two meetings and have celebrated birthdays both times. The Rummikub and Kalooki players seemed to be concentrating hard, although from time to time laughter and chat could be heard. We still have tables and chairs available, so if there are any bridge players who would like to join us, do please come along!

On the 28th of this month, as you will see advertised elsewhere in Highlight, there will be a workshop after lunch, organised by **Deaf Access**. If you know of anyone you think might benefit from this, please invite them to come along. It's open to everybody.

### Social Centre Dates for Your Diary

Wednesdays:

- 14 March Exercises, Cards, Lunch and Socialising
- 28 March Deaf Access Workshop
- 11 April Music with David & Tom
- 25 April Exercises, Cards, Lunch and Socialising

Dianne Mathews

## The Youth Group



### Hayley Preston reports:

On Sunday, 4 February the group did table tennis and made ice cream sundaes - as shown in the picture.

On **Sunday, 4 March** the group will meet after Cheder, from 12.30 - 2.30. **Elinor Knox**, the area manager for Youth Groups for RSY Netzer, will be coming along to run the group and organise fun and games. Elinor has not told me the kind of activities she plans on running, but has said it promises to be a good session.

## Remembering Dr. Kenneth Scott by Pauline Jeffree

**Dr. Kenneth Scott, OBE**, died peacefully on 14 January, 2018 aged 92 in the presence of his loving wife, Anita, after a distressing illness borne with great courage.

Kenneth was born in the heart of the Jewish community in Stamford Hill, North London the youngest child of Sidney Scott, teacher and Rachel (nee Silverman). He had two sisters, Sheila and Phyllis, who both sadly recently died within a week of each other. He attended local schools and did his national service in the RAF.

He went to Guy's Hospital Medical College, qualifying in 1953, and held various junior hospital posts.

In 1955 he joined the practice of David Finer in Beckenham, which he subsequently developed into a leading progressive multi-partner practice with full ancillary staff providing overall care. On call was shared with Dr John Fry. Both practices believed that visiting patients in their own homes was an essential part of general practice. The practice became a first wave fund holding practice. His influence was felt through his presidency of the National Association of Fund Holding Practices

and his chairing of the Bromley Health Authority Primary Care and Mental Health Unit.

Dr Scott was an influential and respected member of the Board of Governors at Cane Hill Psychiatric Hospital in South London. He was held in high regard as a member of the League of Mercy, for whom he spent much time giving medical advice.

Dr Scott was a Fellow of the Royal College of General Practitioners, within which he was a member of their distinguished heritage sub-Committee. Continuing in this role in retirement from general practice he spent many hours cataloguing antique medical equipment for the museums of both the College and Guy's Hospital.

Dr. Scott was a founder member of the Synagogue, along with Mervin Elliott, Ivor Lask, David Barnett and Dr. John Fry, and they used to meet together in each other's homes on Friday nights for Shabbat and spend much time discussing the feasibility of the establishment of a Reform synagogue south of the river. They began searching for suitable accommodation until they found the premises in which we happily find ourselves settled today.

Dr Scott was very moved to see how the synagogue had developed when he and Mrs Scott came to share in the Synagogue's Silver Jubilee celebrations.

In 1994 he was appointed by the Queen to be an Officer of the Order of the British Empire, a distinction he held with much pride. All who knew Dr. Scott found him to be a dedicated and respected medical practitioner for over 45 years in Beckenham.

Both Kenneth and Anita have always been so very kind to me. I spent many happy times around Kenneth and Anita's table with their respective families at Pesach and Rosh Hashanah and breaking fast at Yom Kippur. Anita survives Kenneth after 67 years of happy marriage.

The following was read at Dr. Scott's funeral by his brother in law, Dr. James Carne: The London Hospital Medical School motto reads: *"I am human, I consider nothing human alien to me."* Everyone who knew Dr Scott would agree he lived by this principle in his professional and personal life. He will be justly remembered.

May the memory of his name be a blessing for others.

**Pauline Jeffree**  
Colleague and friend

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## Eco Synagogue launched to encourage good environmental practice

Last Tu BiShvat, the Jewish New Year of the trees, over 150 people from across the Jewish community gathered at New North London Synagogue (NNLS) for the launch of Eco Synagogue, the groundbreaking cross communal initiative to enable synagogues to become more environmentally sustainable. Over 20 synagogues from across all denominations were represented at the launch.

Eco Synagogue, created with the support of the highly successful Eco Church, was founded by Finchley Progressive Synagogue, Finchley Reform Synagogue, New North London Synagogue, Muswell Hill Synagogue and Alyth Synagogue. Eco Synagogue has been endorsed by the Board of Deputies and operates through an online survey which assesses synagogues' activities, such as looking at how energy-efficient their buildings are and how they tend any land they own or care for; whether they consider the environmental impact of

food served at events; the extent to which ecological principles are reinforced in teaching, preaching and other opportunities within the cycle of the Jewish year; and how members can be encouraged to become more environmentally responsible.

Early adopting synagogues have applied for food waste recycling, reviewed their energy sources and switched to renewable energy providers, created green travel plans, become affiliates of energy schemes that raise funding to invest in green projects and established a regular series of farmers' markets to promote organic and sustainable produce.

**Rabbi Jeffrey Newman**, Rabbi Emeritus of Finchley Reform Synagogue, introduced the Eco Synagogue project. **Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg**, Senior Rabbi of Masorti Judaism and Senior Rabbi of NNLS, had a rich and deep discussion with former Archbishop of Canterbury **Dr. Rowan Williams** about the causes of and

solutions to our growing environmental crisis.

**Dr Rowan Williams**, who spoke at the launch of Eco Church in 2016, spoke of the moral challenges of climate change and said: "the impact of climate change weighs most heavily on those who are least able to meet it" and that we must respect the land with the "world being a habitat for the human family".

**Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg** was thrilled that the founding members of Eco Synagogue represented the breadth of the Jewish community and said: "The environment affects all of us. Sacrifice is needed and we as a community need to change our ways".

**Rabbi Mark Goldsmith**, Alyth, gave an overview of Eco Synagogue and said: "We are investing in community building and Eco Synagogue will provide a blueprint for synagogues to meet their environmental responsibilities".

Source: Reform Judaism website

## “Suicide, suicidal thoughts and self-harm in Ancient Israel”

A talk by Dr. George Stein - Sunday 28 January

Suicide is probably close to the bottom of most people’s choices of talks, whether it’s damp and cold January or sunny and warm June. But, as anyone who has attended one of Dr. Stein’s talks will know, he uses his profession – forensic psychiatry – to explore -with us - the least accessible and most difficult aspects of important personalities from our Tanakh. He uses his experience of mental illness to reinterpret ecstasy, as experienced by prophets in the ancient world, which, nowadays, might be interpreted as a prelude to a serious mental disorder.

Consequently, an enthusiastic audience of 40 people enjoyed the latest of Dr. Stein’s explorations of the psychological health – or otherwise – of prophets.

Saul was one example. His repeated episodes of depression were soothed by David’s musical talents.

Saul’s relationship with God was fractured after Saul deliberately disobeyed instructions to wipe the Amalekites from the face of the Earth:

*The Lord your God has given you rest from all your enemies on every hand, in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, you shall blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; do not forget.*

According to the prophet Samuel, who recorded these events, Saul modified God’s instruction – he did not kill King Agag and retained Agag’s livestock, because it was valuable.

There are conflicting contemporary accounts of Saul’s death; he committed suicide<sup>1</sup> rather than fall into the hands of his enemies and suffer torture. After falling on his sword, his armour-bearer killed himself too<sup>2</sup>.

Another version suggests that Saul was fatally wounded in battle and asked an Amalekite to kill him<sup>3</sup>.

Other recorded suicides in Tanakh: Abimelech<sup>4</sup>. was fatally wounded by a stone thrown by a woman, amidst a battle, but asked one of his soldiers



to kill him, so posterity would not remember him as a man slain by a woman. Samson’s<sup>5</sup> life is full of acts of revenge and vengeance towards the Philistines; he kills himself because it enables him to kill 3,000 Philistines at the same time. Ahitophel<sup>6</sup>. betrays David, switching his allegiance, but realizes that he will be executed for his treachery, so he puts his life in order, then kills himself. Possible explanations for these acts? Loss of self-esteem makes life unbearable. Dealing with the consequences of their actions makes life unbearable.

Finally, someone who commits suicide may have “usurped a role that belongs to God”

*Let not your heart convince you that the grave is your escape; for against your will you are formed, against you will you are born, against your will you live, against*

*your will you die, and against your will you are destined to give a judgement and accounting before the king, king of all kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.<sup>7</sup>*

Rabbinical commentary distinguishes between murder and suicide – the former is an offence against God and man, as well as man and man. The latter is specifically between God and man. The Shulchan Aruch assumes that someone will only attempt to commit suicide if (s)he is mentally unbalanced.

Dr. Stein uses modern psychiatry to interpret or clarify prophecy and the role of the prophet.

His professional experience of the darkest aspects of human nature adds conviction and substance to his talks, always reminding us that prophets were people too, with their strengths and weaknesses.

Many thanks to George and Suzanna for supplying us with delicious refreshments, yet again.

*From our Roving Reporter*

### Notes:

- 1,2. 1 Samuel 31: 4-5
3. 2 Samuel 1: 6-10
4. Judges 9: 54
5. Judges 16: 29-31
6. 2 Samuel 17: 23
7. Pirke Avot 4: 21

## Living with Hearing Loss Workshop

Wednesday 28 March

1.30 to 3.30 pm at the Synagogue

The workshop will cover hearing loss and how to live with it once you’ve got it. We’ll talk about resources that can help and support you. Information, advice and lip reading tips. All in a friendly environment where all can share experiences, knowing you’re not alone.

### Interested? Let us know to save your place!

If you would like to join our **FREE** workshop or would like more information

Please contact **Zoe Fudge** below

Email: [zoe.fudge@deafplus.org](mailto:zoe.fudge@deafplus.org), Voice: 020 8315 2550

[www.deafplus.org](http://www.deafplus.org)

deaf+PLUS

LWHL  
Living with Hearing Loss

## Social and Personal

**MARRIAGE** - Mazal tov to Sharon and Richard Barnett on the marriage of their daughter Michal to Gareth on 26 January in South Africa. Michal is the granddaughter of the late David and Desiree Barnett, founder members of our synagogue, and of Constance Hale, who was also a member of our congregation.

**GET WELL SOON** - Pauline Jeffree writes: 'We are thinking of and say get well soon to: Corinne Alexander, Valerie Barnett, Ronnie Goldberg, Hannah Harris and John Koekoek. We also wish get well to others who have asked for their names not to be mentioned and assure them of our thoughts.'

### The Judaica Shop

Shane Lask reports that the Judaica Shop in the synagogue foyer is well stocked with Shabbat and memorial candles and new stock is due to arrive this month. The price of the Shabbat candles is a very good £2.50 and the memorial tins are £1.50. Please take a peek in the cabinets when you are passing by.

Also please contact Shane through the synagogue (020 8460 5460) if you are interested in Judaica. She has a new contact who might be able to help us South London Jews with a range of products.

### SE10 and Beyond ...

On **Tuesday, 6 March** the SE10 and Beyond group will be meeting in Blackheath from 7 pm. Our hostess Barbara has asked that everybody brings a picture in some way connected with a Jewish subject to talk about. There will be conversation, nibbles and drinks as usual and great company, so if you would like to join us or want any more details just contact **Michelle Brooks Evans** through the synagogue (020 8460 5460).

We are a friendly bunch and come together for social and cultural gatherings and events. We have a regular monthly or six-weekly get together. These are hosted in the homes of members around the area. So if you have an idea for a subject or would like to host Michelle would love to hear from you.

### Reform Judaism Beit Din Residential Weekend

**Are you considering conversion, are in the process of converting, or have recently become Jewish?**

**Join us for a residential weekend at the Eastwood Hall Hotel, Nottingham, 16-18 March.**

We will be led by **Rabbi Jackie Tabick**, Convenor of the Beit Din, Reform Judaism's religious court which deals with matters of conversion.

The weekend is open to anyone considering conversion, currently in the process of converting or who has recently converted.

For more information or help with your booking, call **Odelia**: 020 8349 5675

**DEATH** - We are very sad to report the death of our member **Brenda Victor** on 18 February and extend deepest condolences to her husband Bernie and their family. May the memory of Brenda be for a blessing.

### Used postage stamps – an appeal from Pauline Jeffree

Please may I have your used stamps, I collect them and they are used for:

- Guide Dogs for the Blind or vision-impaired people.
- Stroke Rehab Dogs.
- Help from dogs for people with diabetes or other serious or potentially serious medical conditions.
- Some deaf and hearing-impaired people value the help from their dogs.
- Trained dogs can give wonderful support to disabled people and to any person with mental health problems.

**Please leave your stamps in Pauline's pigeon hole at the synagogue. Thank you.**



**Recycle stamps!**

### Remember the Bromley Film Society?

Sunday afternoon films with tea? You might remember those times and the films are still available for free rental.

These are films mainly of Jewish interest, some quite traditional and some more modern films by Israeli producers – why not watch in the comfort of your own home? You will have to make your own tea, it's true, but you can always make a party of it and invite your friends and family.

I can send them to you (free postage) and you can either return them to the synagogue or I can supply stamps for posting back to me.

For a list please contact me through the synagogue (020 8460 5460).

**Ann Fried**



### English Tuition

available from Birmingham University graduate (BA Hons) and P.G.C.E. (distinction)

**Tuition given to children and adults of all ages, including 11 plus, G.C.S.E. and "A" level.**

**Contact:** rebekahlucking@gmail.com

### Jewish Renaissance tour to Cambridge

Bank Holiday Monday 28 May  
In the morning a 2-hour tour led by the highly entertaining guide, **Rachel Kolsky**, also taking in the Jewish history of the city. In the afternoon a visit to the University Library's Taylor-Schechter Collection, which houses the extraordinary finds of the medieval Cairo Genizah.

**Total cost** of the two tours: £45.

**To book** go to: janet@jewishrenaissance.org.uk

## Miles ... beyond what I had imagined ... for MS

by Emma Alexander

When I first signed up to trek the Great Wall of China for the MS Society, little did I realise the gravity of the challenge I was to undertake; the somewhat naively imagined stepped wall was far from the reality of the vast expanse of walls - or rather lack of wall in places - that I was to physically and mentally overcome.

After arriving in Beijing, it took six days to trek, or rather more aptly described as 'climb' 80 km over the various walls - some renovated, many unrestored (and camouflaged in vegetation), all unbelievably high and some without even a step in sight - not to mention the mountain terrain that had to initially be overcome in order to reach the wall itself and the weather, which wasn't always on our side!

There were moments when the daunting height of the wall coupled with the sheer cliff faces falling on either side was so overwhelming that all I could muster was an outstretched hand in the hope that someone would rescue me!

Thankfully there was always someone to come to my aid. There were 18 of us in total, including our local guide Sam - who seemed to climb the wall effortlessly as if it were a walk in the park - Tim, our fearless Team Leader from Discover Adventure, our MS Society UK mentor, Charlie and Doctor Catherine, whose skills she thankfully didn't have to put into practice! There was an overwhelming sense of support before, during and even after the experience, as all had been touched in some way by MS and were therefore striving to achieve a common goal. We raised over £80,000 in total.

The evenings were spent recovering in mountain guest houses and farmer's lodges and, as you would imagine, rice was plentiful - I vowed not to eat any for several weeks after I returned, not to mention taking any lift or escalator that I could find!



*Intrepid Emma standing on the Great Wall*

Having now hung up my hiking boots (just for the time being) I would like to say a personal thank you to everyone who donated and supported me throughout the eight months of training to completing the Great Wall of China challenge; not only in helping me raise £3,398, but also in raising awareness of MS to support future research and treatments.

Thank you

**Emma Alexander**

<http://www.justgiving.com/Emma-Alexander4>

## Jewish Book Week

in partnership with  
World Jewish Relief

**3-11 March**

at **Kings Place**

90 York Way,  
London N1 9AG

Lunchtime events at JW3  
341-351 Finchley Road,  
London NW3 6ET

**Guests include** Melanie Phillips and Maureen Lipman, Nicholas Hytner, Afua Hirsch, Anthony Sher, Simon Schama, Jonathan Freeland, John Tusa, Clemency Burton-Hill

**Book tickets online:**

[kingsplace.co.uk/jbw](http://kingsplace.co.uk/jbw)

[jw3.org.uk/jewishbookweek](http://jw3.org.uk/jewishbookweek)

**or by phone:**

020 7520 1490

020 7433 8988



**JEWISH CARE**

*It's gifts in Wills that mean many people like Lewis aren't lonely during the week*

**#PeopleOfJewishCare** Lewis, community centre member

Jewish Legacy

*Thanks to gifts in Wills, our community centres give Lewis and many other people like him the chance to get out from within the same four walls, make new friends and do the things that really make them feel alive – like talking, singing and painting.*

**We depend on gifts in Wills for £1 in every £4 we need to raise. To find out more about our free Will Writing Service, please call Alison Rubenstein on 020 8922 2833 or email [legacyteam@jcare.org](mailto:legacyteam@jcare.org)**

Charity Reg No. 802559

## Defining Moments

Many stories talk about defining moments, a time when something happened that changed everything. These defining moments could be the time partners met for the first time, the birth of a child, the start of a career, the highlight of a career, an election, a national event or maybe something tragic.

For the Jewish people, the Exodus from Egypt is such a defining moment. So much of Jewish teaching and understanding is on the basis that “we were slaves in the land of Egypt”. Why treat strangers as we would want to be treated? Because we were slaves. Why keep the Shabbat and not only seek time to rest, but also not ask others to work for us on Shabbat? Because we were slaves. The ancient sages once said that a single, powerful righteous act, a defining moment, could earn a place for a person in the world to come.

Defining moments, extraordinary as they are, though, have context. Winning an Olympic Gold Medal is a defining moment, but athletes that accomplish that have likely spent most of their lives training and preparing. For Moses especially, telling Pharaoh to “Let my people go” was a defining moment for him. Those words are easily and readily attributed to him by most people thousands of years later. Yet, Moses was already 80 years old when he led the slaves out of Egypt. Moses took decades to develop into the person who stood before Pharaoh. If anything, it wasn’t so much that moment that defined him, it was all the years he spent beforehand that made him who he was.

As a young man, Moses was adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter and likely lived a privileged life. Nevertheless, we are told twice that “he grew up.” The first time it simply says he grew up and was weaned. This likely just meant that he became older. The second time it says he grew up though is when he noticed the problems with slavery for the first time. When he saw an Egyptian taskmaster hitting an Israelite slave, the Torah says that he looked around and saw no one and then killed the taskmaster. Maybe this means he looked around to see if anyone would catch him in the act. But maybe, as some Jewish commentators suggest, he looked around to see if

## SERVICES

**March 2017 – Adar/Nisan 5778**

*Fridays at 7 pm, unless otherwise stated.*

*Saturdays at 10.30 am, unless otherwise stated*

<b>Wednesday 28 February</b>	<b>Erev Purim</b> - Evening service with Megillah reading, fancy dress and Hamantaschen to share
<b>Thursday 1 March</b>	<b>Purim</b>
<b>Friday 2 March</b>	
<b>Saturday 3 March</b>	<i>Ki Tisa (16 Adar)</i>
<b>Sunday 4 March</b>	<b>Purim Celebration</b> with the Cheder from 10 am
<b>Friday 9 March</b>	
<b>Saturday 10 March</b>	<i>Parah (Vayakhel-Pekudei - 23 Adar)</i>
<b>Friday 16 March</b>	<b>Rosh Chodesh Nisan</b>
<b>Saturday 17 March</b>	<i>Hachodesh (1 Nisan)</i>
<b>Friday 23 March</b>	
<b>Saturday 24 March</b>	<i>Hagadol (Tetzaveh - 8 Nisan)</i>
<b>Friday 30 March</b>	Erev Pesach (First Seder Night)
<b>Saturday 31 March</b>	<b>PESACH</b> - Festival service at 10.30 am Second Seder Night - <b>Communal Seder</b> at 6 pm in the Garden Room

anyone would stand up to the taskmaster. Surely what he was doing was wrong and surely someone would stop the taskmaster. Moses, however, couldn’t find anyone to intervene, so he did. As the rabbinic sage Hillel taught thousands of years afterwards, “If not you, then who?” Perhaps killing a taskmaster went too far. Rabbinic tradition certainly thinks so. Yet, it is completely clear that Moses did so to defend an innocent victim.

As time went on, Moses had many other experiences that shaped who he eventually became. He saw a group of bandits accosting women at a well, so he intervened. He went on to become a shepherd, something frowned upon in Egypt, and in that way, learned to take care of his flock. All of this was part of the recipe that made Moses who he was at his defining moment of confronting Pharaoh.

While Jewish tradition acknowledges defining moments, much of what we do as Jews is aimed at the preparatory work. Passover *sederim* are about remembering the Exodus, but they’re also about sensitising people to the suffering of others, so that when our defining

moments arrive, we are ready for them.

Passover is as much about looking at the past as it is about looking at the present, and the future. Who are the modern-day Pharaohs, and who are the modern-day Israelite slaves? What must we do to help? If, like Moses, we feel that we do not have the ability to help, then how, like Moses, can we find the resolve to do so anyway?

May Passover this year, which begins at the end of the month, be a time of remembering, joyful celebrating and inspiration.

**Rabbi Jason Holtz**

### Sadeh Sensory Club

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# Dates for Your Diary

March

Th	1	<b>PURIM</b>
F	2	
S	3	<b>Ki Tisa</b> <b>Jewish Book Week</b> begins at Kings Place and JW3
S	4	<b>Cheder Purim Celebration Day</b> from 10 am - Megillah reading at 11 am <b>Youth Group</b> 12.30 to 2.30 pm
M	5	
T	6	<b>SE10 and Beyond</b> meeting at 7 pm at Barbara's in Blackheath
W	7	
Th	8	
F	9	
S	10	<b>Parah</b> (Vayakhel-Pekudei)
S	11	<b>Inter-Faith Conversation on Abraham</b> 3.30 pm at the Shul (refreshments at 3 pm)
M	12	
T	13	Synagogue <b>AGM</b> , 8 pm
W	14	<b>Social Centre</b> , 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul
Th	15	
F	16	<b>Reform Judaism Beit Din Weekend</b> at Nottingham
S	17	<b>Rosh Chodesh Nisan</b> <b>Hachodesh</b> (Vayikra)
S	18	
M	19	
T	20	
W	21	
Th	22	<b>Combatting Loneliness</b> conference - 10 am - 4.30 pm at West London Synagogue
F	23	
S	24	<b>Hagadol</b> (Tsav)
S	25	<b>Last day of Cheder Purim term</b>
M	26	
T	27	
W	28	<b>Social Centre</b> , 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul - <b>Deaf Access Workshop</b>
Th	29	
F	30	<b>Erev Pesach</b> (First Seder Night)
S	31	First Day of <b>PESACH</b> <b>Communal Seder</b> at 6 pm in the Garden Room

April

S	1	
M	2	
T	3	
W	4	
Th	5	
F	6	<b>Seventh Day of Pesach</b> - Festival service at 10.30 am
S	7	<b>Shemini</b>
S	8	
M	9	
T	10	
W	11	<b>Social Centre</b> , 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul - <b>Music</b> with David and Tom
Th	12	<b>Yom Hashoah</b>
F	13	
S	14	<b>Atzmaut</b> (Tazria-Metzora) <b>Bar Mitzvah</b> of Lloyd Evans
S	15	<b>New Cheder term begins</b>
M	16	<b>Rosh Chodesh Iyar</b>
T	17	
W	18	
Th	19	<b>Yom Ha'Atzmaut</b> <b>CCJ 75th Anniversary Concert</b> , 7.30 pm at Nightingale House
F	20	
S	21	<b>Acharei Mot-Kedoshim</b> (Adult) <b>Bar Mitzvah</b> of Jon Woolf
S	22	<b>Cheder Yom Ha'Atzmaut celebration</b>
M	23	
T	24	
W	25	<b>Social Centre</b> , 10.30 am to 2.30 pm at the Shul
Th	26	
F	27	
S	28	<b>Emor</b>
S	29	
M	30	

## Combatting Loneliness and Isolation Conference

Thursday 22 March – 10 am - 4.30 pm

Kindly hosted by West London Synagogue

Confirmed keynote speakers:

**Rabbi Baroness Julia Neuberger**, **Caroline Abrahams**, **Dame Esther Rantzen** DBE, Founder, The Silver Line

For further information and assistance in building a care team please contact **Jo Michaels** at jo@rjuk.org

Special Celebration for the 75th Anniversary of CCJ

**Concert of Christian and Jewish Music**

Organised by CCJ SW London and SE London

**Thursday 19 April at 7:30 pm**

at: **Nightingale House**, 105 Nightingale Lane, London SW12

**Concert programme** includes music by

- *Arvo Pärt (Spiegel im Spiegel), J.S. Bach (solo violin sonata movements), and Max Bruch (Kol Nidre)*
- *and Jewish Songs performed by Wimbledon Synagogue Choir*

Refreshments will be served in the interval

**Please book in advance if you intend to come:**

- No charge for members & 1 guest each, or for Nightingale residents.
- Non-members (other than members' guests) will be invited to put their names on a waiting list.
- Donations to CCJ very much appreciated.

**For reservations and donations, please contact:**

**Stephen Weil**

Tel: 020 8693 2051 / Mobile: 07764 475209 /

E: [stephen.weil@talk21.com](mailto:stephen.weil@talk21.com)



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