PARASHAT SHOFETIM

In this week’s parashah, Moses commanded the people to appoint judges in every city of Israel. These judges are instructed to adjudicate fairly. "Justice, justice shall you pursue." If an Israelite is found to engage in idolatry, he is stoned to death. Various idolatrous practices are banned. If a case proved too baffling for the Israelites to decide, they were to appear before the priests or the magistrate and present their problem, and carry out any verdict that was announced there without deviating either to the right or to the left.

Moses instructed that if, after the Israelites had settled the land, they decided to set a king over them, they were free to do so, taking an Israelite chosen by G-d. The king may not amass an excessive amount of horses, wives, or personal wealth. The king was to have a copy of the Torah to remain with him and read all his life, so that he might learn to revere G-d and faithfully observe these laws.

The Levites were chosen by G-d to be His holy servants. They do not receive an inheritance in the land of Israel. Instead, they are the beneficiaries of various priestly gifts; selections of meat from certain sacrifices, as well as tithes from crops and animals.

G-d prohibited the people from engaging in divination, fortunetelling and similar occult practices. Moses foretold that God would raise prophets from among them. The people were commanded to obey these prophets. But any prophet who presumed to speak in G-d's name that G-d had not commanded, or who spoke in the name of other gods, was to die. The punishments for non-compliance with prophets' words, as well as for an individual who falsely claims to speak in G-d's name are described.

The command to establish cities of refuge for the inadvertent murderer is reiterated. Moses commands the Jews to designate six such cities, and when G-d expands the borders of the land to add another three cities of refuge.

Con't on next page

From Rabbi Gabbai

We ask ourselves whether the holiday of Rosh Hashanah should be a day of happiness or a somber one.

We might think that since it is a holiday, we should be happy. On the other hand, since it is the Day of Judgment, we should be fearful of the verdict. Therefore, how do we live with this ambivalence? The answer is in the Shofar blasts.

There are basically two types of Shofar sounds, Tekiah and Teruah. Tekiah is a long blast recalling a happy occasion, such as calling together of a gathering or announcing the beginning of Shabbat. Teruah takes the shape of two sounds-Shebarim which consists of three interrupted sounds, or Teruah which consists of at least nine successive sounds. (The Sephardic tradition has Teruah as a tremolo sound as opposed to a staccato sound.)

Con't on next page
Thank you to the following people who made a contribution this week:

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Mr. Daniel Peretz
Mr. William Vessal
Mr. Ari Waks
Mr. Haim Waks
Mr. Omer Waks
Mr. Mark Vieyra

The Kol Yisrael prayer will be recited by NOAM GABAY.

The Junior Congregation will meet this Shabbat and again on September 28. If you have questions or would like to help out, please contact Mark Vieyra at mark.vieyra@gmail.com

Parashah, Con't.
A minimum of two witnesses are required to secure a conviction in a capital or corporal punishment case. Individuals who testify falsely are liable to receive the punishment which they sought to have imposed upon their innocent victim.

Before a battle, a Kohen addresses the troops, admonishing them not to fear the enemy, and listing the various individuals who are exempt from military duty, such as one who has recently betrothed a woman or built a new home, or a fainthearted and fearful person. Before waging battle against an enemy in battle, the people were commanded to make a peaceful overture. Only if the enemy does not accept the offer does battle ensue. In the battles against the nations, if the enemy does not agree to the peace offer, the people were commanded to completely annihilate them.

G-d told the people that they are forbidden to cut down fruit-bearing trees while laying siege on a city. The procedure to be followed in the event of an unsolved murder is described.

Parashat Shofetim has 97 verses
Haftarah Shofetim has 26 verses
Sefer HaHinukh: Parashat Shofetim contains 41 Mitzvot.
This week's Haftarah is from Isaiah.

From the Rabbi: Con't.
The Teruah (and Shebarim) are supposed to reflect a mourning, weeping sound; the Teruah sound should have Tekiah sound both before and after it.

We therefore see that we should be happy that we have the holiday of Rosh Hashanah in order to expiate our sins and at the same time regret our misdeeds or omissions of our duty during the past year. This will be followed by a happy note that we have a full trust in G-d that the verdict will be in our favor.

Happy Rosh Hashanah!
Have a sweet year.
Thank you to
Mr. Israel Roizman
for the beautiful weekly floral
arrangements in the synagogue.

Our thanks to
Mrs. Fran Levy and
Mrs. Fran Cupersmith
for the lovely weekly flowers
on the Shabbat
(and holiday) tables.

REFUAH SHELEMAH
Mr. Shalom Atias
Ms. Ariella Cohen
Mr. Reginald Young

The KKMI /CHRIST CHURCH
Fellowship Dinner
will be held
Wednesday
September 11, 2019
6:00 P.M.

This year, we are hosting
Christ Church.

The evening will also feature a memorial
ceremony for the victims of 9/11 terrorist
attacks in the presence of the Mayor of the
City of Philadelphia, other dignitaries and the
Military Honor Guard.

This is a special date.
We would like all of you to attend to support
this traditional event between two special
Philadelphia institutions.

Please return your reservation slip with your
check. Your check for a single reservation
pays for one guest from Christ Church; your
payment for a couple pays for two guests
from Christ Church.

When you are paying for meals in
the synagogue, please make
checks payable to

KOSHER IN PHILLY
SHABBAT CLASSES
We have Shabbat and High Holiday morning classes for your children. Children of all ages are welcome: classes are from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

Torah Study, Hebrew Alphabet, KIDDush prayers—all to familiarize the child with our service.

This program is made possible by a grant from the MYER H. GOLDMAN FOUNDATION

We appreciate your donations throughout the year. When you are leaving notes, checks or money, please use the drop box that is located on the wall opposite the office door. This is a secure box for your use.

Mikveh Israel Association is getting ready for the High Holidays.

Come into the Gift Shop and purchase your wine, dates, honey and gifts. Make your holiday table festive with new trays, decanters, candlesticks!

Call 215-922-5446 to let us know when you will be here and we will have someone in the shop to help you.

Everyone is invited to join us for our services and events throughout the year. We are happy to welcome you to Mikveh Israel.

Sunshine Program (Bikur Holim)

We have a support program for the ill and/or infirm.

If you are willing to provide any services for them, such as taking them to medical appointments or tests, doing food shopping, preparing meals, running an errand, making a phone call or home visit, please contact Loretta Tretina, 215-922-5226. A list will be compiled. When someone is ill or needs assistance, he/she can call Loretta and she will put him/her in contact with a volunteer. Your assistance is appreciated.

THE ERUUV

The Eruv in Philadelphia spans the area between both rivers and goes from Washington Avenue to Poplar Street. Unless further notification is received, the Eruv is up on Shabbat. A contribution to help maintain the Eruv may be made online at www.centercityeruv.org