

Volume 32 | #24

7 March 2020
11 Adar 5780

Shabbat ends:

London 6:38pm
Sheffield 6.47pm
Edinburgh 6.53pm
Birmingham 6.45pm
Jerusalem 6.17pm

Parashat Zachor

The Fast of Esther
is on Monday,
starting in London
at 4:51am and
ending at 6.35pm

Purim is on
Monday night and
Tuesday

Artscroll p.464
Maftir p. 1066
Haftarah p.1214

Hertz p.339
Maftir p. 856
Haftarah p.995

Soncino p.519
Maftir p. 1114
Haftarah p.1192

Daf Hashavua

*"Now you shall command the Children of Israel that they shall take for you pure olive oil, pressed, for illumination, to kindle a lamp continually"
(Shemot 27:20).*

**INSIDE:****We Are What We Wear**

by Rabbi Meir Shindler

Community of Faith

by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

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Sidra breakdown

תְּצַוֶּה

Tetzaveh

8th Sidra in:

שְׁמוֹת

Shemot

By Numbers:

101 verses

1,412 words

5,430 letters

Headlines:

Instructions for Kohanim and the Mishkan



United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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We Are What We Wear

By Rabbi Meir Shindler, Richmond Synagogue



What we wear matters. Ever since Adam and Eve created the first “designer outfits”

using fig leaves, what we wear and how we wear it has become a major symbol of status, authority or beauty. Like it or not, it is common to judge people based on their sartorial tastes. Scientific studies show that we even behave differently based on what we are wearing. We do not necessarily act the same when wearing a pair of shorts with a T-shirt than the way we do whilst donning a tailor-made designer suit.

Generally speaking, the Torah does not seem too interested in what people wear. When Moshe ascended Mount Sinai, do we know what clothes he wore? When David defeated Goliath, does the Book of Samuel relate which type of shoes he was wearing?

Yet, in this week’s Parasha, the vestments of the *Kohen Gadol* (High Priest) are listed up to the most intricately fine detail. Since when does Judaism promote external

appearances? Are we not more engaged in the more spiritual, internal world?

Rabbi Avraham Shmuel Binyamin Sofer (1815-1871), author of the Ketav Sofer and head of the prestigious Pressburg Yeshiva, highlights a peculiar anomaly as regards the description of the Priestly garments. In the first instance, God instructs Moshe: “You shall make vestments of sanctity for Aharon your brother [as the *Kohen Gadol*], for glory and splendour” (Shemot 28:2). This seems to imply that the function of the clothes is simply to enhance the appearance and stature of Aharon, much the same way that a monarch’s clothing is a visual representation of who he or she is.

However, immediately afterwards, the verse presents a very different perspective: “and they shall make the vestments of Aharon to sanctify him to minister to Me” (ibid 28:3). This indicates that the clothes themselves play an important role in defining the sanctity of the *Kohen Gadol*,

In loving memory of Harav Yisrael ben Eliyahu

Sidra Summary

1st Aliya (Kohen) – Shemot 7:20-28:12

God tells Moshe to instruct the people to bring pure, pressed olive oil for lighting the *Menorah* in the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle). Aharon and his sons will take charge of setting up and lighting the *Menorah*. Moshe will guide “wise-hearted” workers to make the special garments for the Kohanim, “for glory and splendour”. The first four of the **eight garments** listed below were worn exclusively by the *Kohen Gadol*, the first of whom was Aharon. (1) The apron (*ephod*) was worn over Aharon’s tunic and robe.

readying him for his task of service. What then gives the *Kohen Gadol* his lofty status – his personality and character or his holy vestments?

The Ketav Sofer resolves this with a fascinating dualism. The precise form of the garments of the *Kohen Gadol* were created according to the meticulous instructions of God. There is no doubt therefore, that they had inherent kedusha, sanctity. Aharon however, was fitting to hold the ‘office’ of *Kohen Gadol* simply because of his internal greatness of character; the clothes would only serve to glorify his position in the eyes of others, generating a silhouette of dignity, majesty and grandeur.

Nevertheless, it is human nature that when a person wears such regalia they can get carried away with feelings of self-importance and self-aggrandisement, beginning to carry an air of superiority about themselves. Therefore, it was important that Aharon understood that the purpose of these holy vestments was to ‘sanctify him’. This way he could maintain a sense of humility whilst performing the Tabernacle service with the perspective that it is the clothes that make him worthy.

What we wear matters. It is important to feel good about your attire, but to dress in a way that exudes dignity – it will help us to behave in the way that is appropriate for a Godly human being, without making us feel superior to others.

It was woven from coloured wool and linen, with two shoulder straps (*ketefot*) and a belt (*cheshev*) attached. Precious shoham stones (*avnei shoham*) were placed on each shoulder strap. Each stone was engraved with the name of six tribes.

Epilogue Part 1

That which is not dimmed by the passage of years proves its value

Shefford – by Dr Judith Grunfeld z’l

We have but skimmed the skyline of those war years spent in evacuation; we have sketched the life of our Jewish school community against the rural background of an English village, and have tried to recapture something of the original flavour of those days.

The essential ingredients in this story, set against a humble background, are dedication and loyalty. The guiding star which changed years of privation into years of creative force was the vision in education. Former Shefford pupils have long since become settled members of post-war society, hold responsible positions in many parts of the world, are heads of families with children and grandchildren – but it seems that the magic of those years has not entirely evaporated and that the spark that lit up their world in Shefford is still alive.

Some still go there on visits, even those who come here for a short trip from overseas; and they tell me that when they walk through the familiar lanes and streets of Shefford, this valley of their formative years; they still respond to the memories which echo from within and recall the proud loyalty which once had the power to transfigure and illuminate their lives.

Shefford was a temporary educational centre born of necessity. It became a force that has not spent itself yet. Some of the pupils could never go back to their parental homes after the war, because for many there was no parental home left. For them Shefford

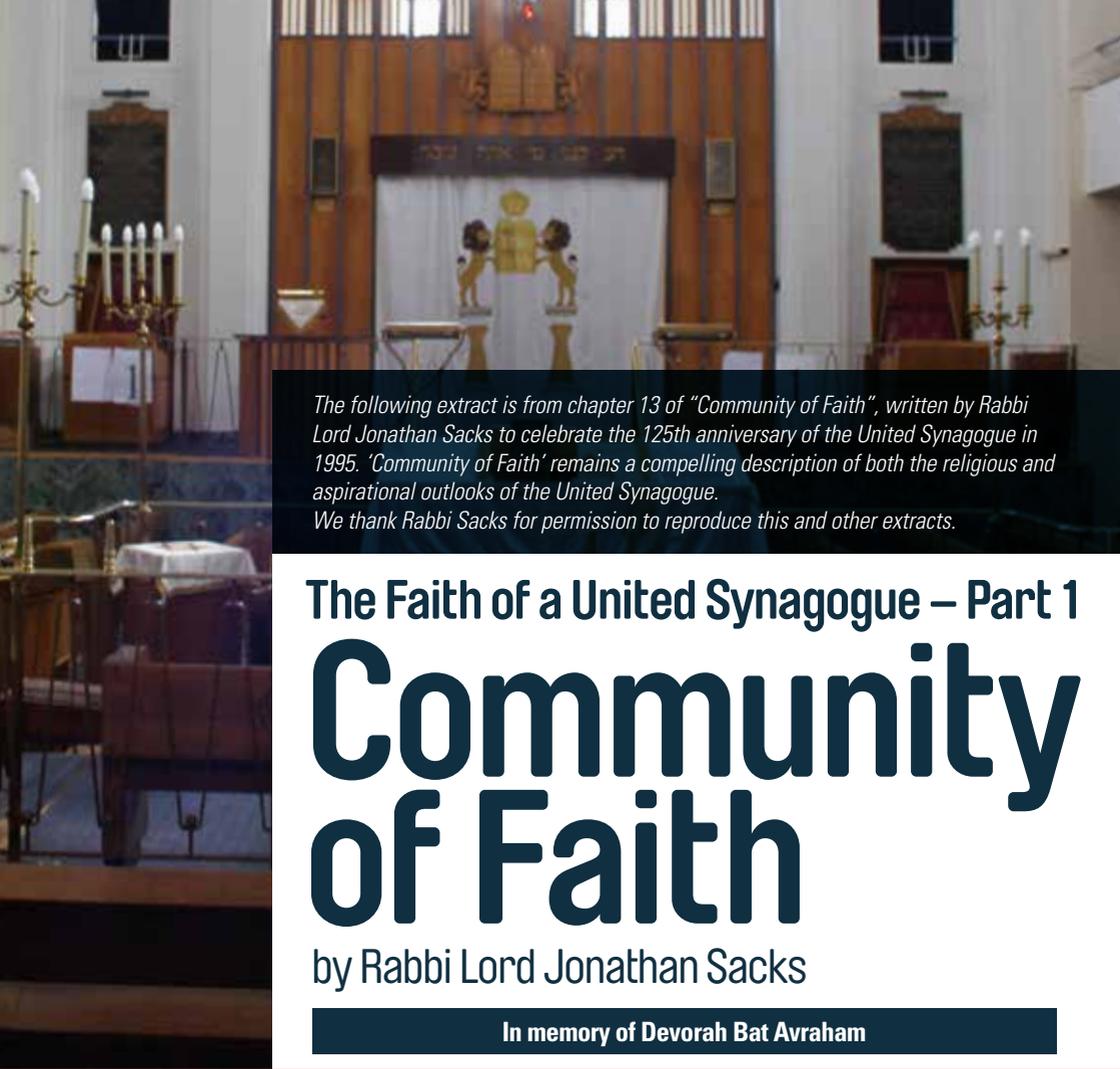
was probably a specially important station on their way to growing up. But I would like to record that many of these youngsters who were forcibly separated from their parents at a tender age, proved nevertheless to be equipped with strong Jewish sentiments and a deep attachment to Jewish tradition, which qualities made them responsive material for our education.

Very often during the six years of Shefford life we were impressed when we saw what an attachment to Jewish life and values the parents must have activated in their young children during the short years that were allotted to them together. In Jewish days of yore we are told of mothers who carried their babes into the Beth Hamidrash, so that they would imbibe, together with the age-old melodies of traditional learning, the atmosphere of holiness. Parents of our own tragic epoch, whose span of time allowed to them with their children was so cruelly cut short, nevertheless succeeded in creating in their homes an atmosphere of a deeply religious life, dotting it with the colourful signs of traditional highlights the year round. They must have captured the children’s innermost selves and, against all satanic attempts at physical and spiritual annihilation, they greatly helped towards joining these young orphan children lastingly to the chain of our eternal heritage.

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Dr Judith Grunfeld was the headmistress of the Jewish Secondary School in Stamford Hill in 1939, whose 450 children and staff were evacuated to Shefford and the neighbouring towns in Bedfordshire for the duration of WW2.

In loving memory of David Yochanan ben Moshe



The following extract is from chapter 13 of “Community of Faith”, written by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the United Synagogue in 1995. ‘Community of Faith’ remains a compelling description of both the religious and aspirational outlooks of the United Synagogue.

We thank Rabbi Sacks for permission to reproduce this and other extracts.

The Faith of a United Synagogue – Part 1

Community of Faith

by Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

In memory of Devorah Bat Avraham

Point to Consider: Why does the sidrah begin briefly with the mitzvah of lighting the Menorah if the rest of it is dedicated to the clothing worn by the Kohanim?

2nd Aliya (Levi) – 28:13-30

(2) The breastplate (*choshen*) was placed above the ephod, with a similar weave. The front of the breastplate contained 12 different types of precious stones (*avnei miluim*), each one engraved with the name of a different tribe. Golden rings on the four corners allowed it to be attached to the ephod. The choshen ‘folded out’ to allow the insertion of a piece of parchment called the *urim ve’tumim*, which had the Ineffable Name of God written on it (see Rashi).

3rd Aliya (Shlishi) – 28:31-43

(3) The robe (*me’il*), made of turquoise wool, was worn under

the first two garments. Golden bells (*rimonim*), placed between multi-coloured woollen ‘pomegranate’ shapes, hung from the bottom hem (see p.4 article).

(4) The headplate (*tzitz*) was made of pure gold and had the words ‘*Kodesh L’Hashem*’ written on it. It was placed on Aharon’s forehead. Every Kohen wore (5) a tunic (*ketonet*) with a grid-like patterned knit, as well as (6) a linen turban (*mitznetet*), (7) an embroidered sash (*avnet*) and (8) linen trousers (*michnasayim*).

4th Aliya (Revi’i) – 29:1-18

The command to consecrate the *Mishkan* is given. Every day for seven days, Moshe is to bring animal and bread offerings, dress Aharon and his sons in their priestly clothing and anoint Aharon’s head with oil. The blood from the offerings is to be placed on the altar to inaugurate it.



There is no 'United Synagogue Judaism'. There is Judaism and there are Jews: one Judaism and an infinite variety of Jews. Indeed it is only the unity of the former that is capable of shaping a single people out of the latter. Without Judaism – one Judaism – there is only a multiplicity of groups, sects and ideologies which divide Jews and render them a set of sub communities with less in common with one another with every passing year. That is why the United Synagogue has never formulated an ideology of its own. As a matter of principle it is open to the whole Torah, not just part of it, and to the whole Jewish people, not just part of it, and it refuses to compromise on either fundamental. It has sought to create not a philosophy but a community, a living community build on the principle of Torah and potentially inclusive of every Jew.

But the very process of maintaining an inclusive Torah community in a divisive age means that the United Synagogue has emphasised certain aspects of Judaism that are not always to the fore today, and these are worth spelling out.

Firstly it is a community of faith, loyal to the principles of Jewish belief as these have been articulated

through the ages. This has not always been easy. Since the beginning of the twentieth century Chief Rabbis – especially Hermann Adler, Joseph Hertz and Israel Brodie – have come under pressure to admit more liberal doctrines, particularly in respect of *Torah min hashamayim*, 'Torah from heaven'. Hertz was eloquent in his refusal, saying to those who denied it:

You have dethroned God; and you have put your own reason in His place. You pick and you choose among His precepts, retaining only those which suit your inclination or expediency. Though you play with words and still speak of divine Revelations, there is no longer a 'Thou shalt' or 'Thou shalt not', no longer a Moral Law that stands eternal and immovable in a fluctuating world of relativity. Man becomes the measure of all things, human and divine. We are back in the Iron Age of the Judges... There is no King in Israel; every man doeth that which is right in his own eyes.

Instinctively they knew – and everything in the biblical and rabbinic literature confirms it – that this was not a but *the* fundamental of Judaism. Alone among the people of the ancient world, Israel did not identify God with the sun or the rain or death or fertility, the great forces of nature. They understood that nature

is often random, brutal and cruel. It has no moral purpose. Instead they discovered God in things not found in nature: righteousness and justice, moral responsibility and care for the weak and underprivileged. These values cannot be seen, they can only be heard; and therefore it is through words that God communicates with humanity. These words, contained in the Torah and forming the constitution of the covenant between Israel and God, are holy, which is to say something other than the words of man. For if the Torah were a merely human document it could be overridden by other human beings and we would have lost the greatest protection God has bestowed on mankind against our capacity, never more evident than in the present century, for error and ultimately evil.

As a matter of principle it is open to the whole Torah, not just part of it, and to the whole Jewish people, not just part of it...

5th Aliya (Chamishi) – 29:19-37

Moshe is to place the blood of the second ram-offering on the ears, thumbs and toes of Aharon and his sons. Blood and oil are to be sprinkled on their garments. Moshe is to assist the Kohanim in waving their inauguration offering.

6th Aliya (Shishi) – 29:38-46

Once the *Mishkan* is functional, the twice-daily *Tamid* (continual) offering is to be brought, one sheep in the morning and one in the afternoon, together with a flour offering and a wine libation.

7th Aliya (Shevi'i) – 30:1-10

The *Mishkan* also housed a gold-plated wooden *mizbeach* (altar), upon which the twice-daily incense offering was brought.

Maftir (Devarim 25:17-19)

The special reading for Parashat Zachor is from the end of Parashat Ki Tetze, commanding us to remember how the Amalekite nation started a war against the Israelites after they left Egypt, as well as the imperative to eradicate Amalek.

Haftarah for Parashat Zachor

The prophet Shmuel (Samuel) relates how King Shaul (Saul) defeated Amalek, but took pity on their king, Agag. In defiance of a Divine command, Shaul refrained from killing Agag, as well as sparing his cattle. Shmuel rebuked Shaul and told him that he would lose the monarchy because of this misplaced mercy. Shmuel himself then killed Agag.

Parashat Zachor

Remembering the past to build the future

By Pnina Savery, US Jewish Living Educator



In the spring of 1945, the British government agreed to allow entry to 1,000 orphaned Holocaust survivors

under the age of 16. The horrors of this period meant that they could find only 732. The story of "the Boys" (as they came to be known) was recently dramatised in the BBC film "The Windermere Children".

One of the most striking things about this story is just how successful the Boys became. When researching my Masters dissertation on this topic, I interviewed a number of the Boys. One such interviewee was Sir Ben Helfgott, a long-time member of the Wembley US community, who had gone on to represent Britain at the Olympics. He told me that he always desired to rebuild his life, but not to forget the past. This is evident in his tireless work campaigning for Holocaust education.

However, the Boys sometimes sadly found that their stories fell on deaf ears. Accounts of local non-Jewish residents in Windermere (where many of the children were initially housed on arrival in Britain) show that many of them were not aware of what had happened. One interview from the Lake District Holocaust Project archive states that "we knew they had been somewhere or other held in prison...

[we] weren't quite sure why".

Modern psychology, however, believes that open discussion of the past creates a path to healing, as discussed in the book *The Choice* by Holocaust survivor and psychologist Edith Eger. It describes how her own journey overcoming the emotional scars of Auschwitz helped her to treat patients' psychological traumas. She states that "expression is the opposite of depression. When we force our truths and stories into hiding, secrets become their own trauma, their own prison."

In this vein, there is no Hebrew word for history, except for the modern word "historia". The closest we come to it in biblical Hebrew is *lizchor*, to remember. History is not – his story, but rather it is memory, *zikaron* – my story. The memory of our past becomes part of our new communal narrative.

This is the essence of the mitzvah to remember Amalek. Parashat Zachor focuses on the evil that was Amalek, the first ever attempt to wipe out the Jewish people. The name of this special Shabbat comes from the word *lizkor*, to remember. Remembrance becomes more important as time goes on and our enemies' attempts to destroy us continue. .

King Saul fails to internalise this message in this week's haftarah, always read on Shabbat Zachor.

“When we force our truths and stories into hiding, secrets become their own trauma, their own prison.”

By allowing the King of Amalek to live, King Saul showed that he did not truly understand what Amalek represented and how important it is to remember the evil that has been done to us in the past. This is what sealed his fate: once Saul fell in this matter, he no longer had a future as the king of Israel.

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, the former Chief Rabbi of Israel who was liberated from Buchenwald aged 8, explains that he sees the act of writing his memoir as part of the mitzvah of remembering what Amalek did to us. According to Rabbi Lau, there are two aspects to this mitzvah: firstly, do not forget, and secondly, remember. He states: "'Don't forget' is in the heart; 'remember' is an action". When we read Parashat Zachor on Shabbat morning, we are actively remembering what happened to us in order that we do not forget the past.

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AND DID ANYONE TELL YOU IT'S CALLED FOOTBALL FOR A REASON? HANDS OFF!



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