



# Carnegie Shul Chatter

September 8, 2022



Shabbat  
Shalom

Light candles 7:20pm

Shabbat Services 9:30am

## Shabbat Services

The Carnegie Shul continues to offer hybrid Shabbat services. If you want to attend services in the sanctuary, please join us, providing you have been vaccinated for Covid 19. Masks are optional, and there is plenty of room for social distancing. Or participate via Zoom. Rosalyn Hoffman will send a Zoom link. If you don't receive it, contact her at [rjlynman@yahoo.com](mailto:rjlynman@yahoo.com). Either way, please help us make a minyan this week.

## Showing Honor

On September 18 we will be having an unveiling for Ellen's mother, who passed away last December. There is actually nothing in Torah requiring an unveiling. According to the *Jewish Book of Why*, "The unveiling, a service of commemoration, has become the formal way of dedicating the monument that has been erected. The practice was instituted toward the end of the nineteenth century both in England and the United States... There is no religious obligation to hold an unveiling."

Even though the unveiling is not a Halachic requirement, it is still a wonderful way to pay respect to the departed.

Likewise, visiting the graves of our loved ones before the High Holidays is a special way to remember them. And attending Yizkor services, lighting a memorial candle, and making a charitable donation in a loved one's memory are things we can do to honor our departed.

As we enter the Jewish year 5783, may we all treasure the blessings of our pasts and go forward with great optimism and hope for a New Year of peace, prosperity, good health and happiness.

# Ki Teitzei in a Nutshell

## Deuteronomy 21:10–25:19

From Chabad.org

Seventy-four of the Torah's 613 commandments (mitzvot) are in the Parshah of Ki Teitzei. These include the laws of the beautiful captive, the inheritance rights of the firstborn, the wayward and rebellious son, burial and dignity of the dead, returning a lost object, sending away the mother bird before taking her young, the duty to erect a safety fence around the roof of one's home, and the various forms of kilayim (forbidden plant and animal hybrids).



Also recounted are the judicial procedures and penalties for adultery, for the rape or seduction of an unmarried girl, and for a husband who falsely accuses his wife of infidelity. The following cannot marry a person of Jewish lineage: a mamzer (someone born from an adulterous or incestuous relationship); a male of Moabite or Ammonite descent; a first- or second-generation Edomite or Egyptian.

Our Parshah also includes laws governing the purity of the military camp; the prohibition against turning in an escaped slave; the duty to pay a worker on time, and to allow anyone working for you—man or animal—to “eat on the job”; the proper treatment of a debtor, and the prohibition against charging interest on a loan; the laws of divorce (from which are also derived many of the laws of marriage); the penalty of thirty-nine lashes for transgression of a Torah prohibition; and the procedures for yibbum (“levirate marriage”) of the wife of a deceased childless brother, or chalitzah (“removing of the shoe”) in the case that the brother-in-law does not wish to marry her.

Ki Teitzei concludes with the obligation to remember “what Amalek did to you on the road, on your way out of Egypt.”

## Ki Teitzei and the Internet

This week's parsha, Ki Teitzei, is full of mitzvot. In fact, 74 of the 613 mitzvot can be found in this one parshah. And so, there are many subjects for commentary I could have chosen. The one I picked is *lashon hara*, malicious gossip, even though we have previously explored it here in the Chatter.

The following commentary, from the New Orleans *Crescent City Jewish News*, talks about the harm *lashon hora* can do, but it further points out how easy it is to spread such evil gossip in modern times: with the click of a mouse, *lashon hora* can be spread to hundreds or even thousands of users at once via email or social media sites like Facebook.

Even the news media, which in years past would separate and identify editorial comment from hard news, now frequently passes off such comment as factual reporting — spreading opinion, and often questionable opinion, to millions all at once. Below is what Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb has to say about the subject.

# Person in the Parsha: Ki Teitzei

By Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb

“Words Can Never Harm Me?”

For many of us, the first pieces of wisdom which we learned were from nursery rhymes and schoolyard jingles. Sometimes these childish lessons had value, but more often they were off the mark and had the effect of distorting a truer perspective on life.

Take, for example, this ditty: “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never harm me.” The implicit message, which had some utility on the playground, is that we can safely ignore insults to our emotions and feelings, and need to only be concerned about physical injury. The truth, however, is quite different.



Obviously, we want to protect ourselves from physical harm. The trauma of bodily injury is something which none of us wishes to bear. But we cannot minimize the harmful effects of psychological trauma, whether it comes in the form of insults, embarrassment, or shame.

During the years I spent as a psychotherapist, I dealt with quite a few victims of domestic violence. I saw the effects that abuse could have upon people, but I noticed that those who suffered emotional abuse were less amenable to successful treatment than those who were physically battered.

Let’s face it. Words hurt.

The power that words have to do damage is something which is recognized by our Torah. That emotions can be grievously wounded, reputations ruined, and relationships damaged beyond repair through “mere words,” is illustrated in biblical narratives, Talmudic tales, and Hassidic stories.

In this week’s Torah portion, Parshat Ki Teitzei, we are instructed to “remember what the Lord your God did unto Miriam, on the road out of Egypt.” The Torah is referring to the fact that Miriam was punished by a leprous infection.

The full episode of Miriam’s sin and its consequences appears in an earlier portion of the Torah, at the very end of Parshat Beha’alotcha, Numbers 12:1-16. There we learn that Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of his Cushite wife. They went on to belittle Moses’ importance, and spoke condescendingly about him.

It seems from the context of the story that Miriam, as the instigator of this critique, did so privately. Nevertheless, the Almighty was angry with her and she was healed, ironically, only because of Moses’ prayerful intervention.

Thus, our sages understand this command to remember Miriam as an injunction against speaking lashon hara, malicious gossip.

Much closer to our time, at the beginning of the last century, the sage and saint Rabbi Israel Meir Kagan of Radin, became convinced that the central evil of modern times was the abuse of words. So confident was he of the certainty of his diagnosis of the social ills of our time that he devoted a major work to the subject of lashon hara. The name of that work is Chafetz Chaim, "Desirous of Life," after the verse in Psalms, which reads, "Who is the person who desires life? Let him guard his tongue against speaking evil."



Recalling Miriam's misdeeds, and taking seriously the comprehensive teachings of the author of Chafetz Chaim, is especially valuable today. Because, you see, words have become even more powerful and potentially destructive than a rabbi living a hundred years ago could possibly imagine.

Nowadays, through the power of electronic instant communication, words can be sent to millions of people in microseconds of time. If these words are negative, they can harm individuals instantly, without even the possibility of recourse or recall. The power of words has exponentially increased in scope and effect in our day and age.

Our tradition teaches that using words to offend another human being is akin to a snake and its venom. The snake's venom kills, yet the snake has no benefit from its fiendish action. So too, human beings usually benefit from every other sin imaginable, but gain nothing by harming others verbally. Because of this, lashon hara is the least justifiable of sins.

Not a day goes by when we do not receive e-mails or read Internet reports which damage reputations of individuals, without due process and without the remotest possibility of defending themselves. This goes against both our Jewish heritage and our democratic ideals in a very fundamental way.

It is already the first week of Elul, the last month of the Jewish year. At this time, it behooves us to introspectively examine our faults. It is the season of teshuvah, repentance, which precedes and heralds the imminent High Holidays. We must give thought to how we have offended others with words and with deeds.

Although the unimaginable spread of verbal abuse that postmodern technology has instigated is beyond the capacity for any one of us to correct, we have no option but to try individually to control the way we use words and the words which we use. None of us is innocent of lashon hara, and none of us is exempt from sincerely addressing this weakness.

In conclusion, I call to your attention the rabbinic dictum that the power of Good exceeds the force of Evil manifold. Thus, if words have the ability to harm, they have the infinitely greater ability to soothe and to heal. The way to undo our sins of the negative use of language is to resolve to use language positively.

Imagine if e-mails were limited to complimentary statements and words of praise. Imagine if the blogs and websites were replete with stories of human accomplishment, altruism, and heroism. It would be a happier world for sure.

And it would be a world closer to that which the Almighty intended. Now, less than a month before Rosh Hashanah, is the ideal time for each of us to commit, in a deeply personal way, to bring about that better world.

## High Holiday Protocols for 2022



Yes, we are not yet completely free from Covid 19, so this year the Carnegie Shul will once again be offering hybrid services on the High Holidays, but because conditions are somewhat better than last year, we have relaxed some of our protocols.

This year, advanced reservations will not be required, nor will seats be assigned. Although we require Covid vaccinations, we do not require that you bring proof of vaccination.

Wearing of masks is optional. If you are not wearing a mask, please respect those who are by not sitting in close proximity to them. There is plenty of room in our sanctuary to sit with your own family and friends while still social distancing from others.

Although the services will be streamed on Zoom, we hope that if you are not experiencing any Covid symptoms you will elect to attend in person. Those who are attending via Zoom will not be given aliyahs, which will be reserved for those attending in person.

The Zoom link for services will be emailed to members the week before Rosh Hashanah.

**Please see last page for the tentative High Holiday schedule.**

## Donations

The Carnegie Shul is most grateful for the following recent donations:

**Lou Ann Brunwasser May**

*General Donation*

**David L Shifrin M.D**

*With fond memories of my cheder days and my bar mitzvah in the 1950s*

## Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

**Saul Spivak**

**Herman Weiss**

**Samuel Levine**

**Helen Spivak**

**Helen Kreisberg Feld**

**Isreal Miller**

May their memories be for a blessing.

# Tentative Holiday Schedule 5783/2022

## Rosh Hashanah

### Sunday, September 25

Maariv ..... 7:15 pm

### Monday, September 26

Preliminary Service..... 8:30 am

Shacharis ..... 9:00 am

Torah Reading..... 10:00 am

Sermon ..... 10:45 am

Musaf ..... 11:15 am

Recess..... 1:15 pm

Taschlich ..... 6:15 pm

Minchah ..... 7:00 pm

Maariv ..... 7:15 pm

### Tuesday, September 27

Preliminary Service..... 8:30 am

Shacharis ..... 9:00 am

Torah Reading..... 10:00 am

Sermon ..... 10:45 am

Musaf ..... 11:15 am

Recess..... 1:15 pm

Mincha..... 7:00 pm

Maariv ..... 7:15 pm



## Yom Kippur

### Tuesday, October 4

Kol Nidre..... 6:50 pm

Maariv ..... 7:05 pm

### Wednesday, October 5

Preliminary Service..... 9:00 am

Shacharis ..... 9:30 am

Torah Reading..... 10:30 am

Sermon ..... 11:15 am

Yizkor ..... 11:45 am

Musaf ..... 12:15 pm

Recess..... 2:30 pm

Minchah ..... 5:30 pm

Neila ..... 6:45 pm

Shofar ..... 7:45 pm

Reservations are not required. There is no charge for tickets, and you do not have to be a member. Masks options, social distancing recommended.

Services will also be streamed on Zoom; in-person attendance required to receive an aliyah.

EMAIL [rjlynman@yahoo.com](mailto:rjlynman@yahoo.com) to obtain a link.