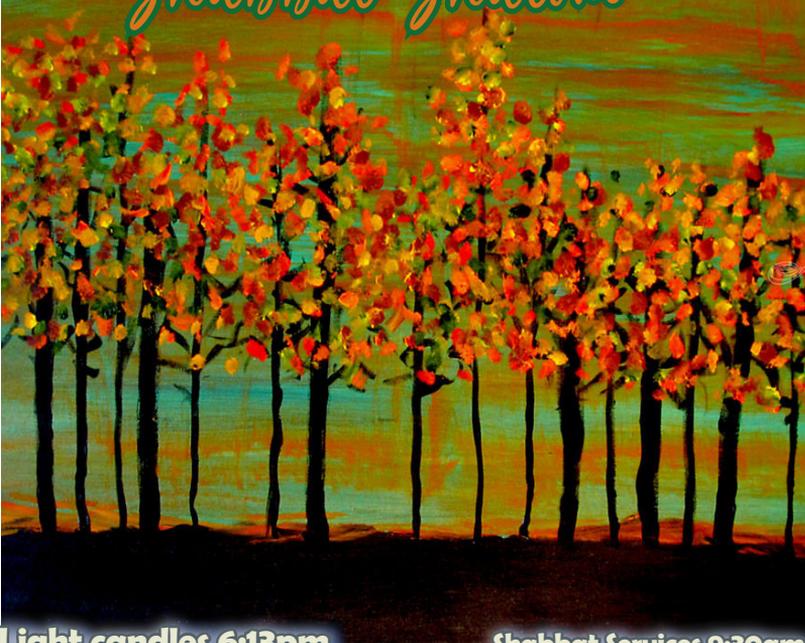




Carnegie Shul Chatter

October 21, 2022

Shabbat Shalom



Light candles 6:13pm

Shabbat Services 9:30am

Shabbat Services

The Carnegie Shul continues to offer hybrid Shabbat services. Please join us in the sanctuary, providing you have been vaccinated for Covid 19. Masks are optional, and there is plenty of room for social distancing. Those wishing to attend virtually should watch for a Zoom link in their email later in the week. If you don't receive it, contact Rosalyn Hoffman at rjlynman@yahoo.com.

Be the Light

The Pirates' dreadful season is over, the Steelers are not looking like Super Bowl contenders and it is too soon to make any judgments about the Penguins. Duquesne and Pitt are not expected to have great basketball seasons. And we even saw some snowflakes in Pittsburgh this week. Ouch.

The High Holidays are over, the joyous celebrations of Sukkos and Simchas Torah have been concluded. And Chanukah is still a couple of months away. Not much fun there.

The stock market is down. Inflation is up. Negative campaign ads run non-stop on TV. Sounds pretty bleak, doesn't it?

But it doesn't have to be. This week's Haftorah talks about God reminding the prophet Isaiah to arouse the Jewish people to return to being a light unto the nations. Each of us can take part in being a light by performing mitzvot and by doing Tikun Olam. Volunteer. Help someone in need. Do something positive.

Why let your world be bleak when you can help bring light into the world? It is what we, as Jews, are supposed to do.

Bereishit in a Nutshell

Genesis 1:1–6:8

From Chabad.org

G-d creates the world in six days. On the first day He makes darkness and light. On the second day He forms the heavens, dividing the “upper waters” from the “lower waters.” On the third day He sets the boundaries of land and sea, and calls forth trees and greenery from the earth. On the fourth day He fixes the position of the sun, moon and stars as timekeepers and illuminators of the earth. Fish, birds and reptiles are created on the fifth day; land animals, and then the human being, on the sixth. G-d ceases work on the seventh day, and sanctifies it as a day of rest.



G-d forms the human body from the dust of the earth, and blows into his nostrils a “living soul.” Originally Man is a single person, but deciding that “it is not good that man be alone,” G-d takes a “side” from the man, forms it into a woman, and marries them to each other.

Adam and Eve are placed in the Garden of Eden, and commanded not to eat from the “Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.” The serpent persuades Eve to violate the command, and she shares the forbidden fruit with her husband. Because of their sin, it is decreed that man will experience death, returning to the soil from which he was formed, and that all gain will come only through struggle and hardship. Man is banished from the Garden.

Eve gives birth to two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain quarrels with Abel and murders him, and becomes a rootless wanderer. A third son, Seth, is born to Adam; Seth’s eighth-generation descendant, Noah, is the only righteous man in a corrupt world.

Haftorahs

Way, way back when, when I was a kid, the emphasis of our Bar Mitzvah service was not so much the Torah portion but the chanting by the Bar Mitzvah boy of the Haftorah. And at our services every Shabbos, after the reading of the Torah, the maftir chants the Hafotrah. But we rarely discuss it. We talk about the Torah portion, but rarely do we discuss the Haftorah. And, I wonder, how many of us even read the English translation of the Haftorah?

How many of us know what a Haftorah is and why we read them? According to torah.org, “The reading of the Haftorah dates back to the Second Jewish Commonwealth, during the era of the Greek empire. Our enemies recognized the vitality of the Torah and banned us

from reading the weekly Torah portion. In response, the Rabbis of those days substituted the reading of a segment from the Prophets, commonly known as the Haftorah. They carefully chose specific sections of the Prophets which correspond to the sedra and intended through this to capture the lessons of the weekly Torah portion. Although the Torah reading has been restored, the Haftorah remains an integral part of the Shabbos and Yom Tov experience.

Over the years I have published many commentaries about the Torah portion, but never a commentary about the Haftorah. So today, here is something different, the Haftorah in a nutshell and a commentary about the Haftorah from torah.org.

Bereishit Haftorah in a Nutshell

Isaiah 42:5-21



The haftorah of this week's reading opens with a statement by "the Almighty G-d, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who laid out the earth and made grow from it." This echoes the Torah portion's recounting of the creation of the world in six days.

G-d speaks to the prophet Isaiah, reminding him of his life's purpose and duty, namely that of arousing the Jewish people to return to being a light unto the nations, "To open blind eyes, to bring prisoners out of a dungeon; those who sit in darkness out of a prison."

The prophecy continues with a discussion regarding the Final Redemption, and the song that all of creation will sing to G-d on that day. G-d promises to punish all the nations that have persecuted Israel while they were exiled. The prophet also rebukes Israel for their errant ways, but assures them that they will return to the correct path and will be redeemed.

Parshas Bereishis

By Rabbi Dovid Siegel | Series: Haftorah Commentary | Level: Beginner

Yeshaya 42:5 – 43:10

We introduce the year's Haftora reading with a penetrating message defining our awesome role in this world. Rashi quotes the Sages' Aggadic interpretation of the Torah's opening word, "Breishis" to mean, "For the sake of the choice". Based on references from the books of Yirmiyahu and Mishle, the Sages explain the Torah's first verse in the following manner, "Hashem created the world for the sake of His sacred people and His sacred Torah." (comment of Rashi to Breishis 1:1) Hashem revealed at the outset that His master plan called for standards of elevation. Although the world would develop into seventy nations Hashem created His world with one nation in mind, the Jewish people. Similarly, although the world's

moral fiber would consist of seven human principles Hashem created His world with a greater moral standard in mind – the adherence to six hundred and thirteen principles.

Concurring with the Torah's opening thought the prophet Yeshaya develops this and translates it into our levels of responsibility. In order to appreciate this we refer to Rashi's opening comment to the entire Torah. The Sages question the Torah's need to begin with the historical account of over two thousand years of world existence. They reason since the Torah is essentially a book of Mitzvos it should most appropriately begin with Hashem's first Mitzva to His people. They answer that Hashem wished to substantiate our claim to Eretz Yisroel. He therefore began the Torah with the unequivocal fact that He created the world and apportioned His land to whomever He deemed worthy of residing therein.



These words are cryptic and perplexing but their underlying message is that the Torah's lessons go far beyond the scope of Mitzvos. Hashem declared through His opening words that His all encompassing purpose for creation is to be recognized as the source of existence. Nachmanides crystalizes with these classic words, "For Hashem has no interest in all below other than for mankind to know and acknowledge Him as their creator." (comment of Nachmanides to Sh'mos 12:16) This explains why Hashem began the Torah with an elaborate history lesson. The opening chapter describes in detail every step of creation. This first statement declares for all time the direction of the world and its primary purpose—to recognize and acknowledge Hashem as the source of all. The world's foremost obligation is to preserve this truth thereby fulfilling Hashem's sole interest in all of mankind.

Nachmanides develops this and shows how the book of Breishis is one long display of Hashem's sovereignty over His world. Although the world seems to run on its own Hashem truly controls it and responds to all human conduct. Breishis teaches us that Hashem rewards those who follow His program and acknowledge His existence and punishes those who ignore and deny His existence. Hashem is extremely harsh on those who rebel against Him attempting to eradicate His name from this world. Conversely, Hashem is also extremely kind and compassionate to those who dedicate themselves to His program and publicize His existence. Adam's short lived privilege in Gan Eden and his subsequent rejection begin the lesson. The devastating flood and disastrous tower of Babel continue the lesson. Canaan's corrupt behavior and Shem's commendable concern complete this segment of things. (Nachmanides to Breishis 1:1)

Following this pattern of creation Hashem designated a specific area of His world wherein His Divine presence could be recognized and intensified. The said purpose for this elevated land was to increase His recognition amongst those who sought to further their relationship with Him. The seven Canaanite nations residing therein had no such goal in mind and were immersed in the most repulsive pagan culture ever to exist. They were, by definition, the

Following this pattern of creation Hashem designated a specific area of His world wherein His Divine presence could be recognized and intensified. The said purpose for this elevated land was to increase His recognition amongst those who sought to further their relationship with Him. The seven Canaanite nations residing therein had no such goal in mind and were immersed in the most repulsive pagan culture ever to exist. They were, by definition, the



antithesis of Eretz Yisroel and defied the entire world's purpose for existence. The Jewish nation, on the other hand, served as the focal point of existence and undoubtedly deserved to further their relationship with their Creator in His chosen land.

Maimonides explains that the world at large was on a decline since the early generation of Enosh who created the platform for idolatry. By the time Avrohom Avinu discovered Hashem the world's population totally forgot Hashem's truth of creation. Avrohom Avinu painstakingly nurtured his family into the only people that

recognized and preserved the truth. These experiences clearly display the need for a chosen people without whom the entire purpose of creation would have been forgotten.

The beginning of the book of Sh'mos provides our second lesson, the need for the elevated standard of Torah. Maimonides explains that the Jewish people's exposure to and association with Egyptian culture threatened to destroy Hashem's truth from the world's sole remnant of pure thinkers. Even Avrohom Avinu's devoted family became influenced by its surroundings and began adopting disgraceful foreign ideologies. One sacred branch of the Jewish nation, the tribe of Levi, remained loyal to Hashem's truth and preserved the family tradition. Maimonides explains that Levi's family was privileged to immerse itself in Torah study throughout the trying period of exile and remained steadfast to Torah principle. (Maimonides Hilchos Avoda Zara 1:3) This experience proves the need for an elevated moral standard without which the basic truths of creation would be lost forever.

We now understand that the basic truth of creation, "Breishis Bara", called for an elevated people and standard of conduct, "For the sake of Yisroel and Torah". Although Hashem allowed for the existence of other nations with basic moral conduct this could not preserve the purpose of creation. The books of Breishis and Shemos historically display the absolute need for an elevated nation with elevated ethical standards. History itself teaches us that without the Jewish people and the Torah the world could never fulfill Hashem's basic interest in creation and would forfeit its right to exist.

These thoughts provide the backdrop for our Haftora which outlines the privileges and responsibilities as the Chosen nation. The prophet Yeshaya begins by saying, "So says Hashem the creator of the heavens and their expanse, He who spreads the land and its sprouts, gives breath of life to the people residing upon it and Heavenly spirit to those who walk there." The Sages interpret this passage to refer specifically to those who reside in Eretz Yisroel and traverse its soil. They deduce that a maid servant from gentile decent who resides in Eretz Yisroel will merit everlasting life. In addition, they deduce that even one who traverses Eretz Yisroel's soil will merit an elevated spirit in Olam Habba. (Mesichta K'subos 111a) As stated, Hashem's sole interest in creating His world is to be recognized by His creatures and establish an ongoing relationship with them. Whoever resides in Eretz Yisroel is privileged to an intense relationship with Hashem that matures into an everlasting one. Even traversing Eretz Yisroel produces intense feelings of closeness to Hashem that translate into eternity. Yeshaya



therefore says all who merit to enter Eretz Yisroel epitomize Hashem's sole interest in creation, to be acknowledged as the creator of the world thereby yielding an ongoing relationship with Him.

Yeshaya continues, "I established you a covenant of people to enlighten the nations." Radak explains that the Jewish people's merit gives reason for the existence of the entire world. All nations owe their existence to the Jewish people who single-handedly continue

and further the world's purpose. As we have learned the world was created for the sake of those who acknowledge their creator and continues to exist solely for that purpose. Yeshaya, however, adds a significant dimension to this and reminds us that we were chosen to enlighten the nations. Radak explains that Hashem demands from His people to serve as a shining example to the rest of the world. Hashem's purpose for creation was for all nations to recognize Him and acknowledge Him through their ethical conduct maintaining basic human behavior. We, the Chosen nation, must conduct ourselves with such perfection that the entire world will appreciate the truth of creation. We must effectively impress them with this truth that everything belongs to Hashem, the creator and master of the universe. (comment of Radak ad loc)

Yeshaya continues and prophesies that the time will come when the nations of the world will question Hashem's favoritism to his chosen people. Hashem will respond, "Let the earlier ones inform us by giving their testimony and proving our righteousness." (Yeshaya 43:9) The Sages explain that at the end of time Hashem will call upon Nimrod, Lavan, Potiphar's wife, Nebbuchadnetzar and Daryovish to attest to the Jewish people's moral conduct. (Mesichta Avoda Zara 3a) The perfect devotion of Avrohom Avinu, Yaakov Avinu, Yosef Hatzadik and the like will unequivocally prove the truth of "Breishis"- that the world was created solely for the sake of His devoted people.

Yeshaya adds another dimension to our lesson and states in Hashem's name, "All that is called by My name was created for My glory." (Yeshaya 43:7) The Sages question, "Who dares call himself by Hashem's name?" They answer that the pasuk refers to our obligation to emulate His ways. We must be identified through our attributes of kindness, compassion and piety in the same way that Hashem is known. (Yalkut Shimoni 452) This completes our lesson of Breishis – for the sake of His people. We, the Jewish nation, are elevated expressions of Hashem's creation. In addition to acknowledging our Creator our responsibility goes beyond. Because we are His Chosen people we carry His stamp of creation, being created in His sacred image. This image demands of us awesome levels of perfection in order that our essence reflects Him as our creator. Our elevated standard of conduct must unequivocally project a resounding message that we are His creatures privileged to be created solely to serve Him.

May we merit in our difficult traumatic era to serve our Creator wholeheartedly thereby bringing Him the true glory He deserves to receive from all.

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The author is Rosh Kollel of Kollel Toras Chaim of Kiryat Sefer, Israel.*

Rabbi Danny Schiff to Speak

Don't forget, the first Legacy Cohorts program of the year is next week: Rabbi Danny Schiff will speak via Zoom on **Thursday, October 26, at 7:00 pm**. (See the flyer on next page of this newsletter for more information about that program and others to be presented in the future.)

The meeting registration link for October 26 with Rabbi Schiff is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvdOusqjosGNDPjXGZ8-S6jkckfD0qD34t>

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

Pearl Lerman

Lisa Arenson Gillespie

Max Drill

Sarah Klee

Isadore Lobliner

Barry Melvin Richman

Sadie Stern

Philip Nord

Sali Stern

Erich B. Wechsler

Freda Weiss

Sadie Ash

Miriam Sax

May their memories be for a blessing.

Donations

High Holiday Donations

Robert D Bodell

Howard K. Scheyer

David and Laura Spivak

Mildred and Marc Bodell

Harold and Sheila Lenchner

ANTI-ZIONISM FROM A TO Z

Presented by: Dr. Danny Schiff, Rabbi

Jewish Community Foundation Scholar

Wednesday, October 26, 2022

at 7:00 pm

Rabbi Schiff will explore the phenomenon of Anti-Zionism in 2022 with a particular focus on its impact within the Jewish community. He will define what Anti-Zionism is, and its links to antisemitism.



Rabbi Dr. Danny Schiff is the Foundation Scholar at the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. He is a noted teacher and researcher in Jewish ethics.

Rabbi Schiff previously served as the Community Scholar for the Agency for Jewish Learning in Pittsburgh, as rabbi of B'nai Israel in White Oak, Pennsylvania, and as rabbi at Temple Beth Israel in Melbourne.

He is the author of *Abortion in Judaism*, published by Cambridge University Press and a forthcoming book on the future of non-Orthodox Judaism. He is a former Board member of the City of Pittsburgh Ethics Board and the Society of Jewish Ethics.

TWO JEWISH FEMALE JUSTICES:

RUTH BADER GINSBURG & ELENA KAGAN

Presented by: Dr. Rose Feinberg

Thursday, January 26, 2023

at 7:00 pm



Discover how each woman's life and Jewish heritage related to steps taken to becoming a Supreme Court Justice. Other Jewish Justices will be mentioned at the end of the program. Pictures and video clips via PowerPoint enhance this presentation.



Dr. Rose Feinberg is a popular presenter and Lifelong Learning Instructor for Florida Atlantic University and Nova University. Rose earned her Doctor of Education degree from Boston University and was a school principal in Massachusetts. She was an

Adjunct Professor at several universities, including Florida Atlantic University. Her prior careers in education, as well as her theater training, have enabled her to research and create twenty-six informative and entertaining programs, using PowerPoint and video clips.

WESTERN PA SMALL CONGREGATION 2022-2023 PROGRAMMING

with assistance from the Jewish Community Legacy Project

B'NAI B'RITH IN WESTERN PA

Presented by: Eric Lidji, Director

Rauh Jewish History Programs & Archives

Thursday, March 16, 2023

at 7:00 pm

The International Order of B'nai B'rith was one of the most important Jewish organizations in the world for much of the 19th and 20th centuries, but it was especially important for small towns in Western Pennsylvania. B'nai B'rith promoted unity within small towns Jewish communities. It also helped these isolated Jewish communities connect to the larger Jewish world. B'nai B'rith started at least 92 lodges throughout Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia, plus dozens of B'nai B'rith Women chapters and BBYO chapters. We'll look at the history of B'nai B'rith in Western Pennsylvania using photographs and documents from numerous small towns throughout the region.



Eric Lidji is the director of the Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, Pa. He curates its website "The Jewish Encyclopedia of Western Pennsylvania" and hosts its local history podcast "The Cornerstone." He is the author of many books and articles on the Jewish history of Western Pennsylvania.

LET ALL VICTIMS GAIN A MEASURE OF JUSTICE AS WE CONTINUE TO HONOR THEIR MEMORIES

Presented by: Dr. Richard H. Weisberg

Beth Samuel Congregation, Ambridge, PA

Thursday, April 27, 2023

at 7:00 pm

Richard Weisberg discusses the place of post WWII trials, beginning with Nuremberg, in the difficult endeavor to add a measure of justice to other ways of honoring victims of the Shoah. His focus will be on civil litigation in US federal courts, in which he has frequently participated as a lawyer for the victims or their heirs, litigation which continues to this day.

Richard Weisberg has been an attorney on behalf of survivors and their heirs before US federal judges in six cases, some successful, over many years in which defendants are Holocaust-era wrongdoers. In part relating to these efforts, he was appointed by Pres. Obama to the US Commission on the Preservation of American Heritage Abroad (2011-16) and he was awarded the French Legion of Honor by Pres Sarkozy (2008).

