

hundred and fifty years earlier should be sufficient to renew the faith of every Jew in the veracity of Torah and the tenets of Judaism. How much more so is this relevant to our times and generation living as we do nine hundred years after the time of Ramban. The total accuracy of what Moshe prophesied is itself a proof of that truth as well as the greatness of his character and leadership.

Rabbi Akiva taught us that the fulfillment in every detail, of the prophecies of doom and destruction, is itself a confirmation of the accuracy of the prophetic writings about our redemption and restoration to physical and spiritual greatness and serenity. I had a history teacher who said that Jewish history is really mainly a story of pogroms and books. That is far too somber an assessment. It is much more than that. It is more importantly the history of loyalty and tenacity, creativity and purpose, faith and achievement and an undying belief in a better tomorrow for the Jewish people and all of humankind. *Rabbi Berel Wein and torah.org.*

Haftarah Summary Rabbi Aron Tendler

This week's Haftarah of Consolation refocuses us on the messianic vision of a nation and world united behind a single goal and purpose.

"Lift up your eyes round about... they are all gathered together... (60:4) Your gates will be continually open... so that men may bring to you the wealth of nations, with their kings led in procession. (60:11) Violence will no longer be heard in your land... but you will call your walls Salvation

Minyan Schedule

Erev Shabbat Parashat Ki Tavo
Candle lighting 5.20 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat 05/09/15 5.40 pm

Shabbat Parashat Ki Tavo
Shacharit 05/09/15 9.15 am
Children's Service 10.00 am
Mincha (Mizrachi) 5.16 pm
Shabbat ends 6.16 pm

S'lichot

Erev Shabbat Parashat Nitzavim
Candle lighting 5.25 pm
Kabbalat Shabbat 11/09/15 5.35 pm

Announcements

Kiddush is sponsored by

**Jack and Miriam Stein
commemorating the
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Sima bat Ya'akov**

**Remember to order a Lulav
and Etrog for Sukkot**

**See your email for
complete details**

and your gates Praise". (60:18)

As in the times of Yishayuhu, we too are in need of consolation. "Your people will all be righteous; they will possess the land forever... (60:21) May we soon be comforted! *Rabbi Aron Tendler and torah.org.*

Or Chadash

קהילת אור חדש

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Shabbat Parashat Ki Tavo

21 Elul 5775; 5 September, 2015

Shabbat Torah reading: Stone Chumash page 1068, and Haftarah page 1201.

President Jonathan Erlich

Rabbi-in-residence Rabbi Franklin

Dvrei Torah Rabbi Lobel

The Real Dream of Happiness

Rabbi Marc D. Angel

A criminal justice Professor at the University of Alabama, Dr. Adam Lankford, recently spoke to a group of sociologists. He attempted to understand the all-too frequent mass shootings that take place in the United States. Although the U.S. represents only 5% of the world's population, it accounts for 31% of public mass shooters. Between 1966 and 2012, 62% of all school and workplace shooters were American.

While the prevalence of gun ownership in the United States is a contributing factor to this phenomenon, Professor Lankford suggests that aspects of American culture play a significant role.

As reported in the Washington Post (August 27, 2015), "It's the social strains of American life, the false promise of the American dream, which guarantees a level of success that can't always be achieved through hard work and sheer willpower; the devotion to individualism and the desire for fame or notoriety."

Americans grow up thinking that they can achieve great things. A 2010 survey found that 81% of American high school students believed they would have a "great paying job" by age 25. A similar survey conducted in 2014 found that 26% of high schoolers expected that they would soon be famous. But reality eventually sets in. Most people will never achieve their unrealistic expectations. They settle into a lifestyle that is below that of the "American dream." This leads to feelings of frustration,



dissatisfaction with life. A small percentage of these disillusioned Americans become so alienated that they resort to acts of crime and violence. By going out in a “blaze of glory,” mass shooters attain the power and fame (notoriety) that they could not achieve in their lives.

Dr. Lankford’s analysis is relevant not merely to mass shooters, but to all sorts of people who feel dissatisfaction with their lives. We are bombarded with images of athletes and entertainers, business moguls and con artists, who have amassed great fortunes, who live in huge mansions, who seem to have a monopoly on “success.” They have so much money; their names are frequently in the news; they are invited to fancy meetings with famous politicians. People ask themselves: why do they have so much and why do I have so little in comparison?

While the American Dream prods us to achieve great things and promises us great opportunity, it also creates unrealistic goals and expectations. Very few will fulfill the American Dream; and many who do, are still consumed with feelings of dissatisfaction. They wonder why they didn’t achieve even more. They cast jealous eyes on those who seem to have done better. The American Dream, like the end of the rainbow, seems to be eternally elusive.

In this week’s Torah reading, we read about the mitzvah of “bikkurim,” the bringing of the first fruits. Farmers had worked long and hard; and now they were commanded to bring the first fruits of their labors to the Sanctuary. They were to make a recitation upon handing over the baskets of fruit to the Cohen. “A wandering Aramean was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number. And he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians dealt ill with us and afflicted us and laid upon us hard bondage.” G-d eventually redeemed us from Egypt and brought us to a land of milk and honey. The Torah then states: “And you shall rejoice in all the good which the Lord your G-d has given unto you, and unto your house, you, and the Levite and the stranger who is in your midst” (26:11).

In describing the mitzvah of “bikkurim,” the Torah is presenting us with a powerful framework for understanding our lives. It reminds us to look back at our humble origins; to remember our past hardships and struggles. By doing this, we come to appreciate how far we’ve progressed since then. We become grateful for what we have. We are taught to share what we have with others. We are taught the grandeur of being happy with what we have, of appreciating the blessings we

enjoy. “Success” is not measured by how close we have come to fulfilling an often unrealistic goal, but by how much satisfaction and happiness we enjoy through our work and our ability to share with others.

How much happier life would be if people would internalize the Torah’s message: “And you shall rejoice in all the good which the Lord your G-d has given unto you.” Instead of the illusory and frustrating “American Dream,” we might all be happier with the genuine dream of happiness offered by the Torah. *Rabbi Marc D. Angel and the Institute of Jewish Ideas and Ideals.*

Prophetic Writings Rabbi Berel Wein

The next few parshiyot of the Torah, leading up to the final uplifting and glorious conclusion, portray for us a somber picture of the experiences that the Jewish people will undergo in their march through history. The descriptions of the horrors that will overtake the Jewish people, when their national entity is destroyed and they embark on a long and painful exile of millennia, are graphic, frightening and tragically accurate.

As we read in the Torah, the Jewish people wondered how it was possible for the world to worship with intense loyalty the false g-ds and imperfect faiths. Because of this vexing question, the Jewish people as a whole also succumbed to such worthless worship and falsity. This in turn led the Jewish people to wonder why they suffered such an onerous fate in their history.

The Torah itself will teach us in a later chapter that the nations of the world will also wonder in amazement

Or Chadash is a friendly community. We hold tuneful participatory services, in the nusach Ashkenaz tradition, on Shabbat and Yom Tov. Focusing on personal growth, we welcome all, from small children to older men and women, of all levels of observance.

We have operated since 1995. During the year we arrange special activities including: learning, shiur/lecture series and social events.

as to the extent of the destruction that the Jewish people and their land will suffer at the hands of others. And even though the Torah proposes an answer to this question - that the Jewish people were guilty of forsaking their G-d and faith - they seem to be entitled to complain that the punishments inflicted upon them were unduly harsh and cruel.

The descriptions of these punishments that appear in this week’s Torah reading, in their graphic detail, leave little room for imagination of the disasters that will fall upon the Jewish people individually and nationally. If there is a portion of the Torah that truly rattles our cage, this week’s reading is certainly the one.

There are no easy words of comfort that can be offered to ameliorate the stark accuracy of the parsha or soften its impact. The only slight comfort that I can derive is that all of this, which has transpired literally before Jewish eyes over the last century, was predicted long ago, and that the words of the Torah remain true for all eternity.

Ramban, writing in the thirteenth century, stated then that the accuracy of the words of Moshe uttered seven

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