

Chigshul

W E E K L Y



1st January 2022

28th Tevet 5782

Va'era—אָרָא]



This week's Haftarah is being read by

Stuart Kaye



<i>This week's Sedra and Haftarah can be found in your Chumash</i>	Sedra	ArtScroll p318	Hertz p232
	Haftarah	ArtScroll p1149	Hertz p244

This week's Whisky Bar is sponsored by

Bernard & Joel Abramson

in memory of their mother **Beila Mirelle bat ZeligZvi Ha'levi**

Fundraising campaign

30-31 January 2022



Chigwell Champions & Hainault Heroes – If you can send a text you can be a champion, it is really that easy – just message friends and family from your couch on 30th January. We will send you a suggested message for you to use and hold a briefing call before the big day – **PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY – REGISTER ASAP** via the office or email refurb@chigshul.org.uk

Sedra Lite

BY RABBI DAVIS



Va'era 5782—Va'era contains the first seven of the Ten Plagues.

Several questions may be asked about the plagues. We find that Moses warns Pharaoh in advance of some of the plagues, but not all of them. Some of these warnings take place in the early morning by the banks of the Nile, while others take place in Pharaoh's palace. Statements of God's power are mentioned together with the warnings of the 1st, 4th and 7th plagues only. Why the variations?

There is also a strong general question that people ask about Pharaoh's lack of free choice. During the period of the plagues, on a number of occasions, Pharaoh was prepared to let the people go but God "hardened his heart" and prevented him from doing so. If so, how could Pharaoh be held responsible for his wickedness?

Rabbi Ovadiah Seforno (Italy, 16th century) explains that Pharaoh's motivation for setting the people free in the aftermath of some of the plagues was not because he accepted the sovereignty of God but because he was desperate for the plague to end. Therefore God hardened his heart to be able to withstand the plagues and not to free them "for the wrong reasons".

In response to the final plague, however, Pharaoh added two key words: "uveirachtem gamoti", "bless me also" (12:32). Pharaoh asked the Israelites to pray or present an offering on his behalf. He had come to realise that even he required God's blessing. He also recognised that God had a special relationship with the Israelites.

This change in attitude was also important for the Israelites. Steeped in Egyptian culture and worn out by their enslavement, Pharaoh's request would help them to begin the process of their own connection with God.

With this approach, we can answer our earlier questions. The Ten Plagues were a process that transformed Pharaoh from a person who utterly rejected God (see Exodus 5:2) to a person who asked for God's blessing. This can be discerned in the order of the plagues and of Moses' warnings in advance of most of them.

Since the Nile was considered a god in Egypt, Pharaoh was probably involved in some form of worship at the banks of the river early in the morning. Moses' confrontation with Pharaoh in front of his priests and his people was meant as a challenge to the entire Egyptian culture and belief system.

Cont: >

What's going on?

COMMUNITY EVENTS

11th Jan 8pm-9.30pm	We would be delighted if you could join us for Chigwell & Hainault Synagogue's very own version of Desert Island Discs . All our 'Castaways' have made their choices of music, books and luxury items which will make the evening a mix of nostalgia and light-hearted entertainment. A Zoom link will be sent out nearer to the date. Although there is no charge, please make donation to JAMI to support the amazing work they do.
30th—31st Jan	Save the date — our Shul Redevelopment fundraising event when all donations will be doubled. Please support your Shul by asking friends and family to donate on the day. Call or email the office to sign up to help.
27th February 2022	SAVE THE DATE: Remember our event Reflections 02022020? Look out for details coming soon for another exciting all day seminar , featuring the very best guest speakers.

Whenever Moses encounters Pharaoh at the river in the morning, there is a message concerning God's power attached to the warning. Prior to the plague of blood, the message is: "You will know that I am God". Then, before the plague of wild animals, Pharaoh is told: "You will know that I am God in the midst of the land". Finally, before the plague of hail, he is told: "You will know there is none like me in all the land". Each statement is more intense than the one before it. They were clearly designed to 'break' Pharaoh, but why were they made in the early morning, at the river?

These messages about God's power were intended to move Pharaoh towards progressively higher levels of belief in God. Each of these plagues – blood, wild animals and hail – were then followed by a plague with a further warning given inside the palace – frogs, cattle disease and locusts. The third plague in each set – lice, boils and darkness – then occurred without any warnings. Each set was designed to move Pharaoh towards believing in God. Towards the end of this week's portion, he begins to come to the realisation that "Hashem is righteous and my people and I are wicked". But we'll have to wait until next week for him to ask Moses for a blessing!

Shabbat Shalom!

Shul Service Times

	Shacharit	Mincha/ Maariv	
Friday 31st December	7:00am	3:46pm	<i>Shabbat Commences 3:46pm</i>
Shabbat 1st January	9:15am	12:25pm 5:15pm	<i>Shabbat Concludes 4:56pm</i>
Sunday 2nd January	8:30am	3:45pm	
Monday 3rd January	8:30am	3:45pm	
Tuesday 4th January	7:00am	7:30pm	
Wednesday 5th January	7:00am	7:30pm	
Thursday 6th January	7:00am	7:30pm	
Friday 7th January	7:00am	3:54pm	<i>Shabbat Commences 3:54pm</i>
Shabbat 8th January	9:15am	12:30pm 5:25pm	<i>Shabbat Concludes 5:04pm</i>

Stone Settings

9th January 2022	11:30am	Howard Glicksman	Waltham Abbey
6th February 2022	11:30am	Alan Levene	Waltham Abbey

More info online - www.chigshul.org.uk

For details of other events in the local Jewish community see www.ejcc.co.uk

Useful Information

t: 8500 2451 e: office@chigshul.org.uk w: www.chigshul.org.uk

Office Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed, Thurs 9am-3pm | Fri 9am-1pm | Sun: 10-12:30pm