

CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

Toras Chaim means a Torah of life and a living Torah, a Torah which permeates every part of our existence, and is relevant to all that we do. It is vibrant, exciting and meaningful. The goal of Congregation Toras Chaim is to create a center for Jewish living that is built on these principles.

AUGUST 15-16, 2008 · 15 MENACHEM AV, 5768 · SHABBOS PARSHAS VAESCHANAN, NACHAMU
CANDLELIGHTING 7:52 PM · SHABBOS ENDS 8:54 PM

Kiddush this Shabbos is sponsored by the 2008 SEED Boys: Aharon Yaakov Rand, Meir Tzvi Greenbaum, Yehoshua Saks, Meir Porter, and Yaakov Lichtenstein, in honor of their hosts: Mr. & Mrs. Hillel Lichtenstein, Mr. & Mrs. Yoni Ruttenberg, Mr. & Mrs. Josh Rothstein, Mr. & Mrs. Herschel Krycer, and Rabbi & Mrs. Yaakov Rich, and in addition, is cosponsored by Yitzchok Elchonon Rich. Shalosh Seudos is sponsored by the shul. Please contact Shalom Abrams at 903-918-9650 if you are interested in sponsoring kiddush or shalosh seudos in the future.

■ SHABBOS SCHEDULE:

August 15th

- » Candlelighting—7:52 PM (Preferably with the shul by 7:25)
- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos—7:00 PM

August 16th

- » Shacharis (followed by Kiddush)—8:30 AM
- » Chumash Shiur (for men & women)—6:25 PM
- » Mincha/Shalosh Seudos—7:25 PM
- » Sunset—8:09 PM
- » Shabbos Ends—8:54 PM

■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE:

- » Sunday Shacharis—8:00 AM
- » Weekday Shacharis—6:40 AM
- » Mincha/Maariv—7:50 PM

■ WHAT'S NU AT CTC

» State of the Shul:

Dear Members and Friends of Congregation Toras Chaim:

Each week new people are discovering Congregation Toras Chaim, and the shul is experiencing tremendous growth, but with this growth comes challenges — ones we are determined and prepared to meet head on.

The shul is currently struggling to meet its financial commitments. Exhaustive efforts have been made to ensure that we can continue to meet the needs of all who so dearly rely on it for the daily minyan, classes, and Shabbos and Yom Tov davening. CTC is a fledgling organization, and needs your help. We have an immediate need to raise \$8,000 by the end of August just to pay for the basics. Beyond that, plans are in place to raise much of the needed funds, through High Holiday seats, a membership drive, a shul directory, a shul dinner, etc.

To hear a recording of the shul meeting from Tuesday, August 12, 2008 addressing these issues, go to the website and click on the page titled "shul meetings."

You may click the Donate page on the website to immediately help Congregation Toras Chaim by making a donation online. Any amount you can donate will make a difference and will be greatly appreciated. Airline miles are also needed, as they can be used to help bring the people for an upcoming Shabbaton and the High Holidays.

An Inspiring Story

One shul member was so moved by the events of this past week's meeting, that through great insight, dedication, and Divine assistance, the member was able to trade in an older car for a brand new one, for a payment of \$60 less per month. The difference is being donated to the shul. As well, the member is stretching to increase his/her monthly commitment by \$200 per month.

True, this is one little pearl, but together, a lot of pearls can be strung together to form a necklace. Each person can make a huge difference when we all decide to contribute to the best of our abilities.

Thank you for your generous support.

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■ AHAVAS CHESED (LOVING KINDNESS) BY THE CHOFETZ CHAIM:

Hashem has given the Jewish people three pathways to holiness. One is the study of Torah, the second is "avodah," service, which encompasses prayer, and the third is chesed. The second pathway, prayer, is in reality a detour route, a necessary alternative to the primary "avodah," which is the service in the Beis HaMikdash. With the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, the Jews' access to the earth's most concentrated source of holiness was closed off. The remaining pathways—prayer, study of Torah and acts of kindness—are therefore all the more vital to the neshamah's earthly journey.

The Chofetz Chaim illustrates that acts of kindness possess the power to achieve, at least in part, what the Beis HaMikdash achieved for the Jewish people. He cites the Talmud (Berachos 5b) discussing the verse in Mishlei (16:6), "Through kindness and truth iniquity will be forgiven." Kindness, says the Talmud, refers to one who pursues opportunities to give charity and help others; truth refers to the Torah.

A scene depicted in Midrash Yelamdin strengthens the link between chesed and atonement: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananyah is walking with Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai past the ruined Temple Mount. Rabbi Yehoshua says, "Woe is to us! The Temple, the source of forgiveness for our sins, has been destroyed." Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai replies, "My son, don't despair. We have another source of atonement, and that is acts of kindness." Another verse (Hoshea 6:6) goes even further, declaring that Hashem says, "For I desire kindness, not a sacrifice."

It is clear from these verses that, although the absence of the Beis HaMikdash cuts off a crucial "express route" to holiness, acts of kindness can take a Jew to the same spiritual destination.

One must realize, however, that for kindness to have a power parallel to that of the Beis HaMikdash, one must adhere to standards that are parallel to those of the Beis HaMikdash. There, the fire of the altar burned constantly. The Kohanim brought sacrifices constantly because sin is constant in the world, and the atonement the sacrifices afforded was always needed. For chesed to achieve the same level of power to bring forgiveness, it too must be a constant.

Torah, service to Hashem and acts of kindness are the only three real nutrients for a Jew's neshamah. They provide its nourishment, its energy and its protection from corrupting forces. With one of these three essential elements compromised, the only way to stay in "good health" is to absorb more nourishment from those that remain. Even with the Beis HaMikdash in ruins, forgiveness and kindness still rule Hashem's world

From the Appel Edition: Chofetz Chaim Loving Kindness by ArtScroll

■ RECOLLECTION AND RECOGNITION

For \$18 you can sponsor a greeting in memory of a loved one, in honor of a deserving friend or family member, or in recognition of an outstanding achievement. Please call Rabbi Rich at 972-248-1324 by Thursday afternoon to place your greeting.

■ ONGOING CLASSES

Path of the Just: Wednesday, 8:45-9:30 PM

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato, better known as the RaMCHaL, authored a book on spiritual and character development that is widely considered to be the quintessential book of its kind. In fact, the Vilna Gaon said of himself that he would crawl across Europe to learn in the dust of the RaMCHaL's feet. Spend an hour each week with Rabbi Yaakov Rich, developing a Torah approach to personal growth using the ultimate self-help book. Discover qualities and potential you never knew you had, as you climb the ladder toward spiritual greatness. There is no cost for the class, but participants will need to purchase a copy of Path of the Just, which is available by Feldheim in Hebrew with an English translation. Books are available for purchase from Lone Star Judaica, at the corner of Hillcrest and Frankford. This class is for men and women, from beginner to advanced. The class is taught every Wednesday, 8 PM at Congregation Toras Chaim, 17912 Hillcrest Rd., Dallas, TX 75252.

Women's Chumash: Sunday, 8:45-9:45 PM

There is no cost. All Hebrew is read from the original source and translated. Various commentaries are presented, primarily Rashi's, and a lively discussion ensues, as we try to understand the profundity of the text. For women beginner to advanced. Please bring a chumash that contains at least the text of Shemos (Exodus) preferably with Rashi's commentary.

■ PARSHA Q&A: PARSHAS VAESHCHANAN

QUESTIONS

1. "And I prayed to Hashem at that time." Why "at that time"?
2. What characteristic trait is represented by Hashem's "strong hand"?
3. What is ha'levanon?
4. What did Hashem tell Yehoshua after the battle of Ai?
5. What will happen if the Jewish People fail to keep the mitzvot properly?
6. How did the decree that Moshe not enter the Land affect him even in death?
7. What is hinted by the word v'noshantem?
8. Why were the Jewish People exiled two years earlier than indicated by Moshe's prophecy?
9. "You'll serve man-made gods." Is this literal?
10. Why is east called mizrach?
11. "Keep the Shabbat day as I have commanded you." When had Hashem previously commanded us to keep Shabbat?
12. Where did the Jewish People first receive the command to honor parents?
13. What is meant by "Hashem, our G-d, Hashem is One"?

14. What are two meanings of loving Hashem "with all your might"?
15. How well-versed must one be in Torah?
16. Where does the word totafot come from?
17. Who is fit to swear in Hashem's name?
18. What does it mean that the Jews are the "smallest nation"?
19. When someone serves Hashem with love, how many generations receive reward?
20. Why are evil-doers rewarded in this world?

ANSWERS

1. 3:23 - Defeating Sichon and Og, whose lands were part of Eretz Canaan, Moshe thought perhaps Hashem had annulled the vow against his entering the Land.
2. 3:24 - His willingness to forgive.
3. 3:25 - Ha'levanon means the Beit Hamikdash, which makes "white" (lavan), i.e., atones for, the Jewish People.
4. 3:28 - Yehoshua must lead the army into battle.
5. 4:9 - The non-Jewish world will regard them as foolish.
6. 4:22 - Even his remains weren't buried in the Land.
7. 4:25 - The gematria of v'noshantem, 852, hints at the number of years until the first exile.
8. 4:25 - So that the rest of the prophecy "that you shall utterly perish" would not be fulfilled.
9. 4:28 - No. It means you'll serve others who serve idols.
10. 4:41 - It's the direction from which the sun shines (mizrach means shining).
11. 5:13 - Before Matan Torah, at Marah. (Shmot 15:25)
12. 5:16 - At Marah. (Shmot 15:25).
13. 6:4 - Hashem, who is now our G-d, but not [accepted as] G-d of the other nations, will eventually be [accepted as] the one and only G-d.
14. 6:5 - 1) With everything you own. 2) Whether Hashem treats you with kindness or harshness.
15. 6:7 - If asked a Torah question, one should be able to reply quickly and clearly.
16. 6:8 - Tot means two in Caspi. Fot means two in Afriki. Together they allude to the four sections of tefillin.
17. 6:13 - One who serves Hashem and reveres His name.
18. 7:7 - B'nei Yisrael are the humblest nation.
19. 7:9 - 2,000.
20. 7:10 - So that they get no reward in the next world.

Good Shabbos

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■ WEEKLY CLASSES

» Amud Yomi: Gemara for men with Rabbi Yaakov Rich (M-Fr, 6-6:35 AM)

» Chumash for women with Rabbi Yaakov Rich (Sunday 8:45-9:30 PM)

» Path of the Just for men and women with Rabbi Yaakov Rich (Wednesday 8:45-9:30 PM)

» Chumash for men and women (Shabbos one hour before Mincha)

Unless otherwise noted, all classes are in the shul.