



CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space... Grow at your pace.

Sept 19-20, 2014 ■ 25 Elul, 5774 ■ Shabbos Nitzavim/Vayeilech
Candlelighting: 7:09P ■ Shabbos Ends 8:17P

Kiddush this Shabbos are sponsored by the members of the Guarantee Kiddush Club: Shimshon Cook, Wes & Tricia Sutkin, Yaakov & Susan Rich, Ben & Lauren Nise, Charlotte Day, David Fisher, Joe & Eliana Higginbotham, Ari & Naomi Goldberg, Eli Goldberg, & Rebecca Bodoff. Shalosh Seudos this Shabbos is sponsored by Kalman & Rivka Raizel Russ in honor Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson. Please contact Rabbi Yaakov Rich at 972-835-6016 if you are interested in sponsoring kiddush or shalosh seudos in the future.

■ SHABBOS SCHEDULE

Friday Night, Sept 19th

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv-7:00P
- » Candlelighting-7:09P

Shabbos Day, Sept 20th

- » Shacharis-8:30A
- » Junior Congregation for boys-9:30A at shul
- » Mommy & Me at Sutkin Home (BYOS)-9:45A
- » Chumash Shiur (for men & women)-5:55P
- » Mincha-6:55P
- » Shabbos Ends-8:17P
- » Selichos Night
 - Inspiring Tisha B'Av Video Presentation with Rabbi Zev Leff and Charlie Harary on controlling our speech and learning how to make real changes in our lives-12:00A
 - Selichos Begins-1:20A (led by Rabbi Shlomo Abrams)
- » Shacharis Sunday (Regular Time)-8:00A

■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

» Mincha-6:00P / Maariv-9:00P (Sunday-Thursday)

- » Mesilas Yesharim (Path of the Just)-every night at 9:15P

■ ROSH HASHANA SCHEDULE (Will be published Sunday. Watch your email for details.)

■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

MEN

- » Yitzchok ben Klara (Mechutan to Sandy Kadish)
- » Yoseif Yitzchok ben Yehudis Chaya (Brother in Law of Yoseif Meir Rich)
- » Mattisyahu Chaim ben Ettel (HaRav Mattisyahu Solomon)

WOMEN

- » Yenta Leah bas Shayna (Mother of Lori Jarmel)
- » Chava Fruma bas Bryna (Mother in Law of Sandy Kadish)
- » Ella bas Naomi (Cousin of Naomi Goldberg)

■ WHAT'S NU AT CTC

- » **Purchase Your Arba Minim (Lulav & Esrog Sets) for Succos:** Congregation Toras Chaim is proud to offer the finest quality Arba Minim (Lulav & Esrog Sets) at steeply discounted prices. All qualities listed in the PDF Order Form are 100% kosher for use for all ages, including the Chinuch/Basic set. Every set is checked by a leading American poseik. Unfortunately orders cannot be accepted without full payment. Please make checks payable to Congregation Toras Chaim. **Prices: Chinuch/Basic \$45; Standard \$60; Premium \$75; Deluxe \$90; Special Deluxe \$100; Upgrades: Deri Lulav \$15; Extra Haddasim \$10; Extra Aravos \$10.** << Deadline to order is Sunday, September 28, 2014. This is a hard deadline. Drop off completed forms to Rabbi Yaakov Rich, 7119 Bremerton Ct., Dallas, Texas 75252. Pickup will be Sunday, October 5, 2014, 11-1 PM at Congregation Toras Chaim, 7103 Mumford Ct., Dallas, Texas 75252. >>

■ THE EVER-PRESENT: RABBI LABEL LAM

Rosh HaShana is the birthday of humanity. It coincides with the creation of man. The blowing of the Shofar may well be a reenactment of the blowing of the "breath of life" into the nostrils of the first man, endowing him and his descendants with a G-dly soul. It is the reception of that and development of that deeply seeded greatness that we quest for each year at this time. What does it mean to have a Divine Soul embedded within our beings?

The Gesher HaChaim lists a number of major differences between a human being and an animal. Amongst the items spoken about there is man's unique ability to perceive past, present, and future, and to see himself as a creature of history.

At a Bris in Jerusalem a great Rabbi stood up to speak and wish well to the grandfather, an accomplished Talmud scholar, on the occasion of the Bris of his first grand-child, "Mazel Tov" he said, "today you are a human being!" Everyone was stunned. Maybe there is some hidden insult implied here. Until now he wasn't human? Then he went on to explain that in the animal kingdom it is common to find creatures that have an instinct to protect its young cub, kitten, fledgling you name it. However,

only by humans does a grandparent demonstrate love and care for his or her grandchild and grandchildren have fealty for grandparents. This is symptomatic of real soulfulness, to see one's self in a grander historical or familial context. The greater one's spiritual development the broader is his grasp of the importance of the historical relevance of his life, and its mission.

In the liturgy of Rosh HaShana. We say over and over again, "HASHEM Melech, HASHEM Malach, HASHEM Yimloch, l'olam va'ed". HASHEM is King, HASHEM, was King, and HASHEM will be King forever! While we are reciting this, I am thinking from my lowly place that HASHEM is the King in the past, present, and future! That's all! Now it dawns on me something more and beyond all - more.

What we are saying is "to HASHEM, Who is the King, there is no time." Time is a created illusion. The animal lives in the second and for the second. The animal soul has no sense of history or destiny, only brute survival. The G-dly Soul, however, is rooted in a sublimely transcendent source.

On Rosh HaShana, which is called Yom Zikaron" a Day of Remembering, we are choosing to connect to the Memory of the Universe, where nothing and no one is lost or forgotten. From that perspective, there is no future or past. Everything is alive and real in the ever present. HASHEM is King of everything, all history and destiny, and at once.

Animals are, in that sense, forgetful. Their entire psychology and consciousness is anchored in separated segments of the instinctual present. That's not life, as we speak of wishing to be written into the Book of Life on Rosh HaShana.

"RealLife" is a world of remembrance, a meaningful connectedness of the dots of time. Every second, is wedded to whole a minute, an hour to a day, a week to a year, a decade to a century and a millennium. That historical snapshot is viewed by HASHEM Who rules over all time. We want to contribute valuable golden threads to the tapestry of HASHEM's grand plan, from the beginning of creation until the end of times.

From that lofty place the Shofar calls us to broaden our vision, as our G-dly Souls are awakened. Simultaneously it calls for us to reconcile the seconds of our lives, which is essentially an invitation to Teshuvah.

The phrase says, "Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why it's called the present." Sure we are meant to cherish the present but not as a beast licks the bowl. There are 86, 400 seconds in a day and each one is a ray of eternity to be lived with an eye of awareness open, for something more life affirming than the present: The Ever-Present.

■ (NOT) TO EAT MEAT ON ROSH HASHANA: RABBI YEHUDA SPITZ

There is a well-known halacha that one is not allowed to fast on Rosh Hashana (barring certain specific circumstances). Although it is a Day of Judgment, and there are shittos of the Gaonim that do permit one to fast, nevertheless the halacha is that Rosh Hashana is also a festive Yom Tov and we must honor it properly. In fact, the Yerushalmi mentions that we must eat, drink, and be mesamayach on Rosh Hashana. This includes partaking of fine delicacies, as it is written in the Book of Nechemia regarding Rosh Hashana, that everyone should "Eat fatty foods and drink sweet drinks... for this day is holy".

Interestingly, there are various customs related to the permissibility of partaking of meat on Rosh Hashana, although it is considered to be the most distinguished of foods, and therefore seemingly the most appropriate with which to honor the holiday.

Many readers are probably puzzled by the last paragraph, and might exclaim after rereading it: "What? How is that possible? Everyone eats meat on Rosh Hashana! In fact it is even widely used as one of the Simanim! How can something meant to properly usher in the New Year possibly be prohibited?"

Simana Milsa The Gemara recounts that Abaye exhorted us to eat certain specific foods on Rosh Hashana as symbolic omens for the upcoming year. This practice is even codified as halacha in the Shulchan Aruch! According to the famed Maharal M'Prague and based on the Ramban, the purpose of doing these Simanim is that a physical action, small as it may be, serves as a conduit to actualize and channel a Divine decree.

And one of the foods that is commonly eaten as one of these Simanim is a Rosh Keveess, the head of a ram, which is definitely a type of meat! So why would anyone not partake of meat on Rosh Hashana?

Where's the Beef? The famed Magen Avraham cites an interesting minhag based on a sefer called "Maggid Meisharim" that says not to eat meat or drink wine on Rosh Hashana. While that alone does not seem too noteworthy, as everyone can say "to each his own, he'll follow his custom and I will follow mine", it's the author of the sefer that demands our attention. The author of the "Maggid Meisharim" is none other than Rav Yosef Karo, codifier extraordinaire and author of the Shulchan Aruch! Moreover, this sefer is a compilation of the halachos that he personally learned from a Malach from Shamayim; in other words, from an angel! This means, that according to the Heavenly spheres, one should refrain from eating meat on Rosh Hashana!

But if so, how do we reconcile the words of Ezra (cited in the book of Nechemia) about "eating fatty foods"? This surely refers to eating meat. Furthermore, there are several Mishnayos referencing that one should eat meat on Rosh Hashana! Additionally, as mentioned previously, the Shulchan Aruch himself cites the minhag to eat a Rosh Keveess (a lamb's head) on Rosh Hashana night as a Siman. What is the proper ruling?

There seem to be several different views on how to resolve this glaring contradiction. One answer is that the "Maggid" was only referring to refraining from eating meat on Rosh Hashana day. On Rosh Hashana night, when most people do the "Yehi Ratzons", the good omens beneficial for starting the year off on the right foot, meat is permitted. Therefore, one may still have his lamb's head (as one of the simanim) and eat it too.

Another possible solution is that the Maggid's proscription was only meant for certain specific individuals who attained a high degree of spirituality (Yechidei Segulah), and was never meant for the general populace.

Heaven on Earth?! However, the most widely accepted resolution is similar to that of the Gemara Bava Metzia 59b - in an analogous debate regarding the great Rabi Eliezer who brought proof for his minority opinion from open miracles he performed. The Gemara nevertheless concludes "Torah Lo BaShamayim Hee", meaning we do not base our halachic rulings on how the relevant issue is viewed in the Heavenly realms. Likewise, many authorities categorically reject this prohibitive view with nary a mention of it, and allow eating meat on Rosh Hashana, with some claiming it is an outright obligation to do so in order to properly commemorate Rosh Hashana. Several authorities point out that had the Shulchan Aruch meant for his Maggid's words to be authoritative psak, he would have codified the Maggid's rulings as part of his Shulchan Aruch and not in a separate sefer.

Eating meat on Rosh Hashana has since become the common minhag, as many Rishonim including Rashi, Rabbeinu Gershom, the Meiri, R' Yehuda HaChassid and Rabbeinu Efraim, as well as the vast majority of Acharonim from across the Jewish spectrum, including the Rema, Levush, Noda B'Yehuda, Ya'avetz, Chayei Adam, Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Matteh Efraim, Ben Ish Chai, Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, Aruch Hashulchan, and Kaf Hachaim, all write that the proper minhag is that one should eat bassar shamein on Rosh Hashana. The Kaf Hachaim actually concludes that even "Yechidei Segulah" do not have to follow the Maggid's words, and accordingly should eat meat on Rosh Hashana.

In the final analysis, we mere mortals, apparently unlike angels, can and should properly celebrate the holiday of Rosh Hashana in style, including by eating meat delicacies. Enjoy your Yom Tov roast!

Postscript: Many later authorities, including the Chacham Tzvi (cited by his son the Ya'avetz, Toras Hakinaos 8), Rav Chaim Volozhiner (ibid.), and the Chazon Ish (cited in Ma'aseh Ish vol. 1 pg. 119), among others, share an interesting and different viewpoint regarding the Shulchan Aruch's "Maggid". [This author has also heard this view b'sheim noted mekubal Rav Yaakov Hillel shlit"a]. They understand that a "Maggid" does not actually rule with Heavenly authority; rather it uses the individual's

own merit and koach to present rulings. Meaning, although Rav Karo cites psakim from the "Maggid", it is essentially utilizing his own personal hidden strengths to bring out these rulings. Therefore, concludes Rav Chaim Volozhiner, that in this instance it must be that notwithstanding how great he was, Rav Karo must have somehow personally made a mistake, and the outcome of that resulted in an erroneous conclusion being "taught by the Maggid".

■ PARSHA Q&A: NITZAVIM/VAYEILECH

1. What is the connection between the verse "atem nitzavim" and the curses in the previous parsha? 29:12 - The Jewish People asked, "Who can survive such curses?" Moshe responded, "You've done a lot to anger Hashem, and yet "atem nitzavim" you're still standing before Him."
2. Who were the wood-choppers and water-carriers? 29:10 - Canaanites who joined the Jewish People under false pretenses.
3. Why can Hashem never "swap" the Jewish people for another nation? 29:12 - Because Hashem swore to their ancestors that He would never do so.
4. What is the connection between the verse "atem nitzavim" and the curses in the previous parsha? 29:12 - The Jewish People asked, "Who can survive such curses?" Moshe responded, "You've done a lot to anger Hashem, and yet "atem nitzavim" you're still standing before Him."
5. One who ignores the Torah's warnings "adds drunkenness to thirst." What does this mean? 29:18 - He causes Hashem to reckon his unintentional sins alongside his intentional ones, punishing him for all.
6. What two cities were destroyed along with Sedom and Amorah? 29:22 - Admah and Tsevoyim.
7. "The hidden things are for Hashem, our G-d, and the revealed things are for us..." What does this mean? 29:28 - There is collective culpability only for "open" sins, but not for "hidden" ones.
8. According to Rashi, how will the day of the ingathering of the exiles be "great and difficult?" 30: 3 - It will be as if Hashem needs to take each individual by the hand and lead him out of exile.
9. Where is the Torah not to be found? Where is it to be found? 30:12-15 - The Torah is not found in heaven nor across the ocean. Rather, it is "very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart."
10. When and where did the Jewish People become culpable for each other's sins? 30:28 - When they crossed the Jordan and accepted the oath on Mt. Eval and Mt. Grizim.
11. How do the earth and sky remind us to keep the mitzvot? 30:19 - The earth and heavenly bodies, although receiving neither reward nor punishment, always obey Hashem's will. How much more should we, who stand to receive reward or punishment, obey Hashem.
12. Moshe said, "I am 120 years old today. I am no longer able to go out and come in..." How do we know this does not refer to physical inability? 31:2 - Because verse 34:7 says "His (Moshe's) eye never dimmed, and his (youthful) moisture never departed."
13. Which of Moshe's statements to Yehoshua was later contradicted by Hashem's command? 31:7 - Moshe told Yehoshua to share his leadership with the Elders. Hashem later commanded Yehoshua to rule alone.
14. Why does the Torah refer to Succot of the eighth year as though it occurred during the shemita year? 31:10 - Because the laws of the seventh year still apply to the harvest.
15. Why does the Torah command that babies be brought to the Torah reading? 31:12 - To give reward to those who bring them.
16. What does it mean that Hashem "hides His face?" 31:17 - He ignores their distress.
17. What function does the song Ha'azinu serve? 31:21 - It warns what will befall the Jewish People if they abandon Torah.
18. Which verse promises that the Torah will never be totally forgotten? 31:21 - "For (the Torah) will not be forgotten from the mouth of their offspring."

Good Shabbos

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- » Mesilas Yesharim (Path of the Just)-every night at 9:15P
- **WEEKLY CLASSES** (see website for more detail)
- » Morning Gemara Megillah for men (M-Fr, 6-6:35A)
- » Not Quite Daf HaYomi for men (Sunday-Thursday 8-9P)
- » Chumash for men & women (Shabbos one hr before mincha)
- » Hilchos Taaruvos for men (Sunday 6:30-8:00A)
- » Marriage Made in Heaven for men (Monday 7:15-8:00P)
- » Marriage Made in Heaven for women (Tuesday 7:15-8:00P)

All classes at 7103 Mumford Ct., except where indicated