



CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space...Grow at your pace.

May 22-23, 2015 ▪ 5 Sivan, 5775 ▪ Shabbos Bamidbar, 49th Omer
Candlelighting: 8:06P (Preferably light by 7:25P) ▪ Shabbos Ends 9:15P

Kiddush this Shabbos is sponsored anonymously with Hakaras HaTov to Yehuda & Rivkah Harper and family for all the hard work and time they have invested in the shul, and for being the driving force behind scout troop 620. No Shalosh Seudos in shul this Shabbos.

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, May 22nd

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv-7:00P
- » Candlelighting-8:06P (Preferably light by 7:25P)

Shabbos Day, May 23rd

- » Shacharis-8:30A
- » Junior Congregation for boys-Cancelled
- » Chumash Shiur (for men & women)-6:55P
- » Pirchei for Boys (ages 8 and up) with Mr. Yehuda Harper-6:55P
- » Mincha (No Shalosh Seudos in shul) for men-7:55P at shul

■ SHAVUOS SCHEDULE

» Class for men & women with Dr. Yedidiah Shiermeyer: **Iyov (Job): What can a Jew learn from a non-Jew?-8:25P**

- » Maariv 9:15 PM
- » Candlelighting for Shavuos-9:15 PM
- » All-Night Learning 12:00 AM-5:30 AM

Sunday, May 24, 2015

- » Morning Brachos/Shacharis 5:30 AM
- » Earliest Tallis (MiSheyakir) 5:32 AM
- » Sunrise 6:23 AM
- » Class for men & women with Mrs. Leah Shiermeyer: **A Simple Twist of Faith: How did a Baptist, country girl like me, raised in the Bible Belt, become an observant Jew?-7:00 PM**

» Mincha 8:10 PM

» Class for men & women with Dr. Yedidiah Shiermeyer: **Christianity: How it All Began? (According to R. Yaakov Emden)-8:25P**

- » Maariv 9:15 PM
- » Candlelighting (from pre-existing flame): Not before 9:16 PM

Monday, May 25, 2015

- » Shacharis 8:30 AM
- » Yizkor (Not before 10:15 AM)
- » Class for men & women with Mrs. Leah Shiermeyer: **Living as a Jew, (over 10 years later): The Struggles, the Challenges, and the Triumphs-7 PM.**

» Mincha 8:10 PM followed by Neilas HaChag (special celebration to close-out the festival, including washing for Hamotzi, singing and divrei Torah)

- » Maariv 9:15 PM followed by havdalla
- » Shavuos Ends 9:16 PM

■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

- » Weekday Shacharis-6:40A
- » Mincha-6:00P / Maariv-9:00P (Sunday-Thursday)

■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

MEN

- » Yisroel Michoel ben Shulamis (Father of Chani Tkatch)
- » Yechiel Mordechai ben Devorah (Brother of Ken Jarmel)
- » Itai ben Shoshana (Son of Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson)
- » Michoel ben Shoshana Gittel (Michael Medved)
- » Yoseif Yitzchok ben Yehudis Chaya (Brother in Law of Yoseif Meir Rich)
- » Mattisyahu Chaim ben Ettel (HaRav Mattisyahu Solomon)

WOMEN

- » Brocha bas Sora (Mother of Hadassah Klug)
- » Yenta Leah bas Shayna (Mother of Lori Jarmel)

■ WHAT'S NU AT CTC

- » **Welcome** to Dr. Yedidiah & Leah Shiermeyer from Denver, CO. Mrs. Leah Schiermeyer: Author of A Simple Twist of Faith. In this book Mrs. Schiermeyer recounts her intense journey from Christianity to observant Judaism with honesty, emotion, and humor. She is a regular speaker for Aish HaTorah, and will be addressing the congregation two times over Yom Tov. Dr. Yedidiah Schiermeyer: Emergency Room doctor and public speaker. Thoughtful and philosophical with a passion for history. He will address the congregation two times over Yom Tov.

- » **Superior Meat at Bargain Prices: Pastrami & Ribs:** Congregation Toras Chaim is pleased to offer to the Dallas Jewish community the highest quality meats at the lowest prices. We now have two items for sale, which we will be carrying regularly:

1. **Navel Pastrami \$9.99/lb (normal retail price \$16.99/lb):** Steam and

slice for the most delicious New York deli sandwiches. Sandwiches typically use 1/2 lb of meat. Best served hot, and sliced thin, on rye, with lettuce and tomato.

2. **Baby Chuck Back Ribs \$5/lb:** Amazing for the grill; Superb for the cholent; and incredible finger food for meat lovers. Please contact Rabbi Yaakov Rich at (972) 835-6016 or yrich@toraschaimdallas.org to purchase yours today.

■ 3327 YEARS LATER: RABBI LABEL LAM

And you should know it today and return it to your heart that HASHEM is G-d in the heavens above and on the earth below and the there is no other. (Devarim 4:39)

The Rambam states that "the foundation of foundations and the pillar of all wisdom is to know that there is a prime source of reality- namely G-d". It is not a matter of belief or speculation but rather of knowledge. He continues, "The knowledge of this matter is a positive commandment, as it says, "I am HASHEM your G-d Who took you out of the land of Egypt..." The Kuzari asks, "Why such a small claim?" "I am HASHEM Who created heaven and earth" would be more grandiose.

The answer is that we were not there when the world was created but we did experience the Exodus from Egypt and the pronouncements on Mt. Sinai. This was a historical revelation and not a hysterical revolution. We, as a nation, were there and we witnessed it. That's how we know, but how do we "know today?!"

It was a glorious Sunday morning 25 years ago. My wife and I had just spent a beautiful Shabbos in Boston. We had two little boys in tow. We decided to travel north to visit Newburyport Mass. where my great grandfather lived most of his adult life and where I remember visiting him. Entering the city we found only strip malls. I was sure they had already "paved paradise and put up a parking lot".

Then like out of a time warp, there it was; the cobble stone street, the lake, the old court house, and a civil war cannon. As we stood there surveying the area a gentleman approached us and asked, "Are you people-Chassidim?" I told him, "No! We're just ordinary folk." He persisted, "Is there a convention going on?" I thought to myself, "Four Jews is a convention. Five would be an incursion, and six would already be an occupation."

I told him, "No! My great grandfather lived here after coming from Russia. He built that Synagogue down the block and his house is there across the street. I'm here to show my children where their great-great grandfather lived, worked, and prayed." The man stood at attention. Real tears streamed down his cheeks and with a quivering voice he declared, "When I see how you people keep your traditions from generation to generation you are truly G-d's chosen people." He backed up respectfully into the day and disappeared. My wife and I were stunned. What was that all about?

We reasoned that this fellow just came out from one of those Sunday services where they were reading the Bible which is all about the Jews. However, when they look at the news they are surprised to find out how often those who seem to be the descendants of the ones mentioned in "the book" represent causes that countermand the values of "the book". Something's wrong with this picture! A doubt is aroused about the veracity of "The Book". Behold, onto the Mall in Newburyport, Mass. strides a family looking hauntingly authentic, with Yarmulkas, and Tsitsis, and other overt signs.

I'm not saying that I am the paragon of virtue but something must have struck him. The "People of the Book" suddenly appear with loyalty to "the book" and all is confirmed true. We just walked out of the Bible- stepped down from Mt. Sinai, the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, witnesses to the giving of the Torah. "A matter is established by two witnesses", and here testify; the book and the people of the book. So it is written, "You are my witnesses, says HASHEM" (Isaiah 3:10). It was a glorious Sunday morning!

Our direct contact with Mount Sinai occurred 3327 years ago and here we are still animated by Torah and Mitzvos with its millions of minutiae resonating 3327 years later!

■ THE HALACHIC CHALLENGES OF CHEESCAKE: RABBI YEHUDA SPITZ

The upcoming holiday of Shavuos, aside from its most common name, has several others: Chag HaKatzir (The Holiday of the Harvest), Atzeres (Assembly), Yom HaBikkurim (Day of the offering of the first

fruits), and Zman Mattan Toraseinu (The Time of the Giving of the Torah). Yet, in Israel, it has gained a new moniker: Chag HaGevinah - The Holiday of the Cheese! Amazingly, and only in Israel, will you find a Jewish custom that has become so commercialized. Although no one really minds paying a lot less for all the various cheeses on sale during the weeks leading up to Shavuos, still, the idea that a “holiday” can be commercially sponsored (by the cheese companies, no less), should give us pause.

Interestingly, having cheesecake on Shavuos is one minhag with which many non-practicing Jews are stringent! Have you ever met someone who turned down a piece of cheesecake? But where does this time-honored traditional custom of consuming cheesecake on Shavuos come from?

Korban Cheesecake?! It seems that one of the earliest mentions of such a minhag is by the great Rema, Rav Moshe Isserles, the authoritative decisor for all Ashkenazic Jewry, who cites the ‘prevailing custom’ of eating dairy items specifically on Shavuos (Orach Chaim 494, 3). Although there are many rationales and reasons opined through the ages to explain this custom, the Rema himself provides an enigmatic one, to be a commemoration of the special Korban, the Shte HaLechem (Two Loaves) offered exclusively on Shavuos during the times of the Beis Hamikdash.

However, since the connection between dairy food and a bread offering seems tenuous, the Machatzis HaShekel (Orach Chaim 494, 7 s.v. h”h) offers a remarkable glimpse as to the Rema’s intent. The halacha states (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 89, 4 and relevant commentaries) that one may not use the same loaf of bread at both a dairy meal and a meat meal. The reason for this is that there may be some (possibly unnoticed) residue on the bread, and thus one might come to eat a forbidden mixture of milk and meat.

Therefore, in order to properly commemorate this unique Korban which had two loaves of bread, one should have a separate dairy meal aside from the traditional meat meal one has on Yom Tov. This way, he will be mandated to have separate breads for each of these meals, as the challah meant for the dairy meal cannot be used for the meat meal and vice versa.

It is well known that our tables are compared to the Mizbe’ach and our food to Korbanos. Therefore, serving a food item at a meal is considered an appropriate commemoration for a Korban. Consequently, by having an additional dairy meal, the outcome is a suitable commemoration for this unique Korban, as now on Shavuos, two separate distinct breads are being served. In fact, the venerated Rav Moshe Feinstein (Shu”t Igros Moshe Orach Chaim vol. 1, 160) cites this explanation as the proper one for maintaining two separate types of meals on Shavuos, one milky and one meaty.

Terrific! So now we can appreciate that by eating cheesecake on Shavuos, we are actually commemorating a special Korban! But before we sink our teeth into a luscious calorie-laden (it can’t be sinful - it’s commemorating a Korban!) cheesecake, we should realize that, potentially, there might be another halachic issue involved: the prohibition against baking dairy bread.

Dairy Dilemma Bread has been mankind’s basic staple since time immemorial. Therefore, Chazal worried that an unsuspecting person might mistake dairy bread for plain pareve bread and eat it together with meat. He would thus inadvertently violate the prohibition of eating a forbidden mixture of milk and meat. They thereby decreed (Gemara Pesachim 30a and 36a) that one may not bake dairy bread unless certain criteria are met: either changing the shape of the dough prior to baking (known as making a shinui), thereby making it instantly recognizable to all as milky, or baking dairy bread exclusively in small quantities. The same prohibition and exclusions apply to meaty bread as well, due to bread’s propensity to be eaten with a dairy meal.

Bullseye! The hetter is called by Chazal (Gemara Pesachim 36a) “keyn tura” (like the eye of an ox; possibly the source for the expression ‘bullseye’). Although this expression is debated by the Rishonim, with Rashi (ad loc. s.v. keyn tura) explaining that it means a small amount (seemingly

taking the bull’s-eye idiom literally), while the Rif (Chullin 38a), Rashba (Toras HaBayis HaKatzet Bayis 3, Sha’ar 4, 86a), and Rambam (Hilchos Ma’achlos Asuros Ch. 9, 22) maintain that it is referring to a changed shape that makes it obvious to all that it is dairy or meaty, nonetheless, the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 97, 1) rules that both are acceptable ways to ensure that the dairy bread will not be mixed-up.

Even so, there is a practical difference between Sefardic and Ashkenazic psak. According to the Shulchan Aruch (ibid.) the small amount of milchig bread that is permissible to make is only enough for one meal. This is how Sefardim rule [See Ben Ish Chai (Year 2, Parshas Shelach 17), and Kaf Hachaim (Yoreh Deah 97, 7)]. The Rema (ad loc. & Toras Chatas 36, 9), however, is a bit more lenient, allowing an amount necessary for one day, meaning a 24-hour period. This is the custom that Ashkenazim follow. [See Pri Megadim (ad loc. Sifsei Daas 1, s.v. v’im), Chavas Daas (ad loc. Biurim 3), Yad Yehuda (ad loc. Pirush HaKatzet 6), Aruch Hashulchan (ad loc. 4), Atzei HaOlah (Hilchos Basar BeChalav 12, 1) and Darchei Teshuva (ad loc. 17)].

Let Them Eat (Cheese)Cake! Although several authorities extend this prohibition to include other baked goods, such as cookies and bourekas, which, if baked milky, might be mistakenly eaten with meat, nevertheless, the prevailing ruling is that the prohibition only applies to bread. Even so, aside from the signs in the bakeries proclaiming which items are dairy and which are pareve, it is nonetheless a widespread practice throughout Israel that bakeries form the dairy baked goods (cheese bourekas, anyone?) in a triangular shape and the pareve ones in a rectangular shape as an extra safeguard against mix-ups. Since at busy bakeries the potential for mistakes is quite high, this is done as an added precaution, even though m’ikar hadin it is deemed unnecessary by most authorities.

So...does this ruling affect our beloved cheesecake in any way?

Actually, not much. In a typical cheesecake, since the cheese aspect of it is quite conspicuous, it would be considered as if produced with a changed shape from standard dough. Additionally, cheesecake is universally recognized as... containing cheese (!), and thus known worldwide as being dairy. No one would make a mistake confusing cheesecake with pareve bread. Therefore, even according to the opinions of those authorities who maintain that the prohibition of dairy bread extends to cakes, even so, they all agree it would be permissible to make plenty of cheesecake for Shavuos, even in large quantities.

Thankfully, when it comes time to indulge in a piece of traditional cheesecake on the holiday of Shavuos, we can “have our cake and eat it too”, both in the literal sense as well as in the spiritual sense; knowing we have fulfilled the halachic requirements and are even commemorating a unique Korban.

Postscript: Another common question related to cheesecake concerns the proper bracha to recite, whether Mezonos or Shehakol. This topic is discussed at length in many recent sefarim including V’zos HaBracha, V’sein Bracha, and Rabbi Binyomin Forst’s Pischei Halacha: The Laws of Brachos. It seems that the consensus of contemporary authorities is that the correct bracha is subjective, depending on the makeup of each individual cheesecake and its crust, based on the laws of primary and secondary food (Ikar and Tafel). If the crust is indeed deemed significant and adds necessary taste and crunch, many poskim maintain that two separate brachos be recited. One should ascertain a final ruling on the matter from his or her own local halachic authority.

Good Shabbos

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■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

- » Sunday Shacharis-8A
- » Weekday Shacharis-6:40A
- » Mincha-6:00P / Maariv-9:00P (Sunday-Thursday)

■ WEEKLY CLASSES (see website for more detail)

- » Before Shacharis Gemara Rosh Hashana for men (M-Fr, 6-6:35A)
- » NQ Daf HaYomi Succah for men (Sunday-Thursday 8-9P)
- » Chumash for men & women (Shabbos one hr before mincha)
- » Hilchos Taaruvos for men (Sunday 7:00-8:00A)
- » Supercharge Your Sundays for men (Sunday after Shacharis for 45 mins. with R’ Noach Klug)
- » Marriage Chaburah for men (Monday 7:15-8:00P)
- » Marriage Chaburah for women (Tuesday 7:15-8:00P)