



CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space...Grow at your pace.

October 9-10, 2015 ▪ 27 Tishrei, 5775 ▪ Shabbos Bereishis
Candlelighting: 6:43P ▪ Shabbos Ends 7:50P

Kiddush this Shabbos is sponsored by Moshe Bush in honor of receiving the aliyah of Chasson Torah this past Simchas Torah. Shalosh Seudos this Shabbos is sponsored by the shul. 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, October 9th

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv-6:45P
- » Candlelighting-6:43P

Shabbos Day, Sept 19th

- » Shacharis-8:30A
- » Junior Congregation for boys in shul-9:30A
- » Chumas class for men & women -5:30P
- » Pirchei for Boys (ages 8 and up) with Mr. Yehuda Harper in shul-5:30P
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- » Shalosh Seudos for women at the Rich home-6:30P
- » Maariv/Shabbos Ends-7:50P

■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

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

■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

MEN

- » Dovid Aharon ben Devorah (David Wills)
- » Yisroel Michoel ben Shulamis (Father of Chani Tkatch)
- » Yechiel Mordechai ben Devorah (Brother of Ken Jarmel)
- » Itai ben Shoshana (Son of Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson)
- » 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

- » **Mazel Tov to Noach and Hadassah Klug on the birth of a girl.** Mother and baby are doing great. May they merit to raise her to a life of Torah, Marriage and Mitzvos.
- » **Our Shul. Our Children. Our Responsibility.**

Almost universally the parents have said that they love having their children in shul. What a kiddush Hashem! It does make it difficult, however, to keep them there when their friends play outside. I have been asked to remind all of us to be vigilant to keep our children in shul or JC. Communicate with them the very clear expectation that if they want to come it is only to daven or read quietly. If they have trouble staying in shul then only have them come later in the service. They and we will benefit from such a policy.

» Fulfilling Pledges

Fulfilling a pledge made this past High Holiday season, either a commitment to attend minyan, join a shiur, start a chavrusa, or a financial pledge, has never been simpler. For starters we have three daily minyanim with plenty of empty seats. In addition, shiurim are in full swing. Please speak with Rabbi Rich about which might be appropriate for you. If you are looking for a chavrusa, Rabbi Rich is happy to match you with someone. Lastly, if are wondering how to pay your financial commitment, well, **just go to <https://www.fidelipay.com/toraschaim>, fill out the form and hit Process Payment.** Now that was easy!

■ HEAVY HELPING OF RESPONSIBLE-NESS: RABBI LABEL LAM

And Cain spoke with his brother Hevel, and it happened when they were in the field that Cain rose up against his brother Hevel and killed him. And HASHEM said to Cain, "Where is Hevel your brother?" And he said, "I don't know, am I my brother's keeper?" (Breishis 4:8-9)

This is incomprehensible! What is Cain thinking? First he lies that he doesn't know what became of Hevel and then he offers up an epithet that makes no sense. What is Cain thinking? Let me explain what I am thinking.

It was in a store many years ago. It was a book store, but that's an almost tangential point. I had gotten into a bit of a discussion with the salesperson, who was a Jew, about the looming dangers for our brothers and sisters in the land of Israel. He responded to me in the most incredulous fashion. I can never forget! He said with a swagger of confidence, "Am I my brother's keeper!?" He acted as if by quoting from the "Bible" it would have

that ring of unerring and unarguable truth quieting my serious concerns and his not so serious conscience. The discussion between us ended there but the diatribe in my mind continues today!

Everyone knows Cain gave a lame excuse! "Am I my brother's keeper?" he asks! And the answer reverberating through the cosmos is. "YES, you are your brother's keeper!" Sure it's a quote from the Bible but it's the worst quote to hang your hat on, unless you've already lost your head! What was Cain thinking? It didn't work on me. Why would Cain think it could work on The Almighty?

Cain was no fool either. He was a Navi- a Prophet, worthy of being spoken to directly by HASHEM. He was no light minded person! What was he thinking? The Midrash explains that Cain suddenly became a big philosopher. He was now approaching HASHEM like a fatalist! Am I the SHOMER- the guardian of the Universe?

Everything is under the control of HASHEM! I could not have killed him if G-d did not want him dead! Therefore he died because HASHEM wanted him to die! I don't know what became of his soul, am I the keeper of souls?

Cain is a great spiritual thinker, now after the fact. He blames G-d and tries, thereby to shift the burden of responsibility to The Almighty! Now, at least, we can understand his thinking, but in the rejection of his premise is the real lesson embedded. What Cain offered was a philosophical answer to a practical question. What's another example of a philosophical answer to a practical question?

A man comes home one day and opens his closet door! There he finds a fellow, a stranger standing there, hiding! He shouts with alarm at the intruder, "What are you doing here?" The stranger responds, "Everybody's gotta be someplace!" Yes, it's true! Everybody's gotta be someplace, but the follow up question is still, "What are you doing here!"

Reb Dessler ztl writes in the 5th Hebrew volume of Miktav M'Eliahu a tiny piece that explains an important dynamic here! Quoting from a great Chaddidic Master, he says that every human trait has a positive use, even the tendency for heresy- apikorsus! When it comes to doing things for others we have to act like people who are consumed with this world.

One should not say beforehand, when there is yet what to do, "HASHEM will help!" No! You must help! It's a practical responsibility! Only after the fact can we pull out the Beshert card! That does not exempt one from trying. Just the opposite! You must exert yourself. "Don't stand by your brother's blood!" Therefore Cain cannot act so recklessly and then convert to being a philosopher saying I bare no responsibility for this blood! Torah is not teaching philosophy! It's a rich menu of free choice offering a heavy helping of responsible-ness!

■ NEW BEGINNINGS: RABBI YEHUDA SPITZ

It is customary in many shuls and yeshivot around the world to make a special kiddush on Shabbat Bereishit. The question is - Why? Why is making a special kiddush on this particular Shabbat such a widespread custom?

Those readily partaking in the kugel and cholent might just say "Why not?"; but there must be more to it than just indulging in gastronomical pleasures.

Some might posit the reason as a connection to Simchat Torah, or the ending and restarting of the Torah cycle. However, those events were already celebrated on Simchat Torah. If so, what is the deeper meaning of celebrating on Shabbat Bereishit?

I would like to preface the answer with a story I recently heard from Rabbi Yaakov Minkus, a rebbe in Yeshivas Beis Yisrael.

Once during the Simchat Torah hakafot, the Rabbi of a certain shul noticed two congregants just standing in the back schmoozing away the time. Concerned, he approached them and asked them to come join in the traditional dancing. They politely refused. "Rabbi", they told him, "This dancing is not for us. For you, as the Rabbi, to dance with the Torah makes perfect sense. But not for us! You see, to tell you the truth, we didn't learn anything this past year, nor did we set aside any specific time to learn Torah. Any time we had the chance to learn, we spent the time schmoozing

and wasting time. So on Simchat Torah we are doing the same. We have no right to dance with the Torah.”

The Rabbi replied, “You are right and you are wrong. As you know, there are two different honors that are given out on Simchat Torah: that of the Chatan Torah and that of the Chatan Bereishit. The Chatan Torah is the aliyah where we celebrate the concluding of the Torah. This is customarily given to the Rabbi or another Talmid Chacham who has made great strides in his Torah learning over the past year. According to your own admission you are correct, you do not have much to dance for.

But there is another aspect to our dancing on Simchat Torah, and that is of the Chatan Bereishit. This is the aliyah where we celebrate the starting anew of the Torah. Anyone can receive this kabbud honor. So for this aspect of Simchat Torah you should also join in! It’s a new cycle, a new starting point. So even if last year you fell short, now is the time to pick yourselves up and get dancing for all the Torah you will learn over the next year!”

This starting point, this new beginning is now – Shabbat Bereishit. We see it clearly in this week’s parsha – Bereishit. Aside from reading about the actual creation of the world from nothingness, which in itself is an excellent example of a new start, there is also the story of Kayin and Hevel (Cain and Abel).

After Kayin murders Hevel in cold-blood, G-d confronts him about his crime. After first denying any wrongdoing or even knowledge of the murder (“Am I my brother’s keeper?”) G-d then metes out sentencing, and Kayin finally admits to the crime. He says just three words: (Gen. 4:13) “Gadol Avoni Minso” – meaning that “this sin is too great for me to bear”.

We then find something astounding. G-d reduces his sentence in half! In verse 12, Kayin’s sentence is that of “Na v’Ned” – wandering and exile in seclusion. Yet, after his admittance, in verse 16 it states that Kayin settled in the land of Nod – meaning exile and seclusion. What happened to the decree of constant wandering?

Chazal explain that we see that Kayin’s teshuvah — even though it was half-hearted and was done only when confronted, and after he at first denied any wrongdoing, and even though he committed such a despicable act causing the potential for mankind for all time to be halved — nevertheless caused his punishment to be mitigated! Not only that, he merited to see seven generations of his own offspring! (One of whom, Na’ama, was a tzaddeket – the wife of Noach, through whom mankind propagated after the Flood.)

All due to those three words he said.

This is an powerful lesson to take from parshat Bereishit. The power of renewal and new beginnings.

This is the message we can glean, even from a kiddush on Shabbat Bereishit.

Even if last year we didn’t accomplish as much spiritually as we could have or even should have.

Even if Elul didn’t work out as well as we would have wanted.

G-d is giving us now a chance for a new start, potential for renewal. That is the reason Klal Yisrael celebrates on Shabbat Bereishit.

May everyone merit to utilize this message for the upcoming year, and on next Simchat Torah may everyone be able to say that the reason they are dancing is due to their own personal aliyah in learning, and are therefore worthy of being the Chatan Torah!

■ PARSHA Q&A: BEREISHIS

1. Why does the Torah start with the account of Creation? 1:1 - So that when the nations accuse us of stealing Eretz Canaan from the Canaanites, we can respond that Hashem, as Creator, has the right to give the land to whomever He sees fit, and He gave Eretz Canaan to us.
2. What happened to the light that was created on the first day? 1:4 - Hashem saw that the wicked would be unworthy of it so He hid it for

the righteous.

3. Why isn’t the word “good” associated with the second day? 1:7 - Because the work with the water wasn’t completed until the third day. Anything that is incomplete is not “good.”
4. How were the trees supposed to taste? 1:11 - The wood was to have the taste of the fruit.
5. On which day were the sun and moon created? 1:14 - They were created on the first day and suspended in the firmament on the fourth day.
6. Hashem blessed the birds to be fruitful and to multiply. Why did He not do so with the beasts? 1:22 - He did not want the serpent, who was to be cursed, to receive a blessing.
7. In whose likeness was man fashioned? 1:26 - In the likeness of the angels.
8. What kind of food did Adam eat? 1:30 - Vegetation.
9. Why is “the sixth day” written with the definite article? 1:31 “The” in Hebrew is the letter hey, which has a numerical value of five. Hashem created the world on the condition that it will endure only if the Jewish People accept the Five Books of the Torah.
10. At the end of the sixth day what was the world still lacking? 2:2 - Rest.
11. Why was man made from dust gathered from the entire earth? 2:7 - So that wherever he might die, the earth would receive his body.
12. How is man superior to the animals? 2:7 - He was given understanding and speech.
13. Why was it not good that man be alone? 2:18 - If he were alone, he would appear to be a god; The creation of woman emphasized man’s dependence.
14. Where do we learn that one must not add to a commandment from Hashem? 3:3 - From Chava. Hashem commanded not to eat from the tree but she added not to touch it. Because she added to the command she eventually came to transgress it.
15. What does it mean that Adam and Chava “knew that they were naked”? 3:7 - They had been given one commandment and they had stripped themselves of it.
16. Why did Hevel choose to be a shepherd? 4:2 - Since the ground had been cursed he refrained from cultivating it.
17. What was the marital practice of the generation who lived before the flood? 4:19 - They married two wives, one with whom to have children. The other one was given a potion which prevented her from bearing children.
18. What did Tuval-Cain invent? 4:22 - Murder weapons.
19. Why did Chanoch die at a young age? 5:22 - Though he was righteous, he was easily influenced; therefore Hashem took him before his time to protect him from sinning.
20. What was the sign that Shem was born with great propensity for righteousness? 5:32 - He was born already circumcised.

Good Shabbos

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■ WEEKLY CLASSES (see website for more detail)

» Before Shacharis Gemara Taanis for men (M-Fr, 6-6:35A)

» NQ Daf HaYomi Beitzah 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 women (Tuesday 7:15-8:00P)