



# CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space...Grow at your pace.

June 4, 2016 ▪ 27 Iyar, 5776 ▪ Shabbos Bechukosai, 42th of Omer  
Candlelighting: 8:14P ▪ Shabbos Ends 9:23P

Kiddush and Shalosh Seudos this Shabbos is sponsored by Doni & Chani Tkatch in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Avi.

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, June 3<sup>rd</sup>

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv-7:00P
- » Candlelighting-8:14P (Preferably light by 7:25P)

### Shabbos Day, June 4<sup>th</sup>

- » Shacharis followed by Kiddush-8:30A
- » Junior Congregation for boys in shul-9:30A
- » Mommy & Me Young Children's Minyan-10:00A
- » Pirkei Avos for M&W-6:35P
- » Chumash Shiur for M&W-7:20P
- » Mincha/Shalosh Seudos for men in shul-8:05P
- » Shalosh Seudos for women & young children at the Rich home - 8:05P
- » Maariv/Shabbos Ends-9:23P

## ■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

- » Weekday Shacharis-6:40A
- » Mincha/Maariv followed by NQ Daf HaYomi (Kesuvos)-8:20P

## ■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

### MEN

- » R' Moshe ben Chana Sara Leah (Rebbi of Ari Goldberg)
- » Yechiel Mordechai ben Devorah (Brother of Ken Jarmel)
- » Itai ben Shoshana (Son of Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson)
- » Mattisyahu Chaim ben Ettel (HaRav Mattisyahu Solomon)

### WOMEN

- » Pesha Chaya bas Sora Feiga (Tricia Sutkin's Aunt)
- » Leah Esther bas Yenta Leah (Lori Jarmel)
- » Yenta Leah bas Shayna (Mother of Lori Jarmel)

## ■ WHAT'S NU AT CTC

» **Mazel Tov to Doni & Chani Tkatch** on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Avi. Avi's Bo B'Yom was Wednesday evening, at which time he made a siyum on Mishnayos Seder Moed. We wish the entire Tkatch & Cohen Mishpacha Mazel Tov, and continued nachas from all their children and grandchildren.

» **Shavuos:** Congregation Toras Chaim is planning a full night of learning. Classes being taught in the shul are open to both men and women. Rabbis Rich and Bodenheimer will be sharing the teaching responsibilities throughout the evening. **We thank Josh and Lisa Rothstein for sponsoring the delicious food for the evening's learning,** giving us the koach to stay up all night studying Torah. The schedule for Shabbos/Shavuos will be published during the upcoming week.

## ■ IT TASTES THAT GREAT: RABBI LABEL LAM

If you will go in My statutes and guard My Mitzvos and do them... (Vayikra 26:3)

If you will go in My statutes: That you should be toiling in Torah in order to guard and to fulfill them! -Rashi

What does it mean to toil in Torah? Admittedly it sounds like a very uncomfortable exercise and not too inviting. Yet we are told this is a primary pursuit! Everything good depends on it! What is it then that is being demanded from us?!

The Mishne in Pirke' Avos (6:4) seems to makes what seems to be a strange statement, "This is the way of Torah: Bread with salt you will eat with a measure of water. On the ground you will sleep. A life of austerity you will live. And in the Torah you will toil. If you are doing do so, happy you will be and it will be good for you. Happy will you be in this world and it will be good for you in the next world!"

Questions! 1) When was a vow of poverty instituted as prior requirement to learning Torah? Since when have we been an ascetic cult? 2) Why does the Mishne promise happiness in this world? We can imagine that somehow through self-denial a person can achieve a degree of good for himself in the next world but how does that match up with a promise of happiness in the here and now?

Reb Simcha Zissel, the Alter from Kelm highlighted a key phrase that may just open this statement to its true intent. The words, "if you are doing so." are critical. The Torah is not advocating poverty as a way of life. The Mishne is saying that the Torah has the ability to promote the most exalted happiness even under the most severe circumstances of life.

This can only be appreciated "if you are the one doing so"! A portrait of the inner life does not lend itself to the superficial gaze of the casual on looker.

Finding it hard to keep my eyes open one very early morning I remarked to a study partner my amazement that the Vilna Gaon slept only two hours in a twenty-four period. How was that humanly possible? My friend corrected me and my misrepresentation of the facts, "It's not true!" I insisted that I had seen it in an authenticated biography that he slept only two hours. My study partner repeated that it wasn't true. I wondered how he dare dispute a known fact. We went back and forth like that a good few times until he clarified his point. It wasn't that he slept only two hours. He learned Torah twenty two hours each day. He wasn't into sleep deprivation. He was involved with learning Torah twenty-two hours in a day! The joy of Torah and Mitzvos filled up and expanded his waking hours."

If one is tired while driving there is good piece of advice to eat or drink something. Almost no one in history has fallen asleep while eating ice cream. The Vilna Gaon was as if eating ice cream all day, and this delight displaced the need for sleep. Now go and explain that to someone that never had that level of experience in learning.

To the one peering in the window of the study hall, toiling in Torah does not seem so enticing. To the spectator at a fancy smorgasbord none of the food has flavor. The challenge of the Mishne is to develop an appetite! Learning Torah can excite the soul to the extent that the external and superficial are exactly that, external and superficial. Toiling in Torah therefore is not about learning 'til it hurts. It's about learning until it tastes that great!

## ■ THE HALACHIC CHALLENGES OF THE CHEESECAKE: 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 Shavuot, 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 Shavuot, one milky and one meaty.

Terrific! So now we can appreciate that by eating cheesecake on Shavuot, 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) "k'eyn 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. k'eyn 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 Shavuot, even in large quantities.

Thankfully, when it comes time to indulge in a piece of traditional cheesecake on the holiday of Shavuot, 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.

#### ■ PARSHA Q&A: BECHUKOSAI

1. To what do the words "bechukotai telechu" (walk in My statutes) refer? 26:3 - Laboring in Torah learning.
2. When is rain "in its season"? 26:4 - At times when people are not outside (e.g. Shabbat nights).
3. What is the blessing of "v'achaltem lachmechem l'sova" (and you shall eat your bread to satisfaction)? 26:5 - You will only require a little bread to be completely satisfied.
4. What is meant by the verse "and a sword will not pass through your land"? 26:6 - No foreign army will travel through your land on their way to a different country.
5. Mathematically, if five Jewish soldiers can defeat 100 enemy soldiers, how many enemy soldiers should 100 Jewish soldiers be able to defeat? 26:4 - Two thousand.
6. How much is "revava"? 26:4 - Ten thousand.
7. Which "progression" of seven transgressions are taught in Chapter 26, and why in that particular order? 26:14,15 - Not studying Torah, not observing mitzvot, rejecting those who observe mitzvot, hating Sages, preventing others from observing mitzvot, denying that G-d gave the mitzvot, denying the existence of G-d. They are listed in this order because each transgression leads to the next.
8. What is one benefit which the Jewish People derive from the Land of Israel's state of ruin? 26:32 - No enemy nation will be able to settle in the Land of Israel.
9. What was the duration of the Babylonian exile and why that particular number? 26:35 - 70 years. Because the Jewish People violated 70 shemita and yovel years.
10. How many years did the Jewish People sin in Israel up till the time the northern tribes were exiled? 26:35 - 390 years.
11. In verse 26:42, the name Yaakov is written with an extra "vav." From whom did Yaakov receive this extra letter and why? 26:42 - In five places in the Torah, Yaakov's name is written with an extra "vav" and in five places the name Eliyahu is missing a "vav." Yaakov "took" these vavs as a pledge that Eliyahu will one day come and announce the redemption of Yaakov's children.
12. What positive element is implied by the words "and I will bring them into the land of their enemies"? 26:41 - G-d Himself, so to speak, will bring them into their enemies' land. This means that even when the Jews are in exile, G-d will supply them with leaders who inspire them to keep the Torah. This guards the Jews from assimilating into the host culture.

# Good Shabbos

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#### ■ CLASSES

- » Before Shacharis Gemara Yevamos for men (M-Fr, 6-6:40A)
- » NQ Daf HaYomi Kesuvos for men (Sunday-Thursday following Maariv)
- » Pirkei Avos for men & women (Shabbos 90 mins before mincha)
- » Chumash for men & women (Shabbos 45 mins 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)
- » In-Depth Hilchos Shabbos for women (Time is Changing)