



CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space...Grow at your pace.

October 29, 2016 ▪ 26 Tishrei, 5777 ▪ Shabbos Bereishis
Candlelighting: 6:21P ▪ Shabbos Ends 7:28P

KIDDUSH this Shabbos is sponsored by Yehuda & Rivka Harper in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Yonaton.
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 28th

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv – 6:20P
- » Candlelighting – 6:21P

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■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

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

■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

MEN

- » Aryeh Laibel ben Leah (Friend of Suzanne Luftig)
- » Yisroel Michoel ben Shulamis (Father of Chani Tkatch)
- » Zoosav ben Lipke (Father of Suzanne Luftig)
- » Yechiel Mordechai ben Devorah (Brother of Ken Jarmel)
- » Itai ben Shoshana (Son of Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson)

WOMEN

- » Chaya Gittel bas Shandel (Friend of Suzanne Luftig)
- » Leah Esther bas Yenta Leah (Lori Jarmel)
- » Yenta Leah bas Shayna (Mother of Lori Jarmel)

■ WHAT'S NU AT CTC

- » **Mazel Tov to Yehuda & Rivka Harper** on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Yonaton. May they be zoche to have much nachas from Yonaton, and all of their children.

■ A FINAL SOLUTION: RABBI LABEL LAM

If we could go back in time and prevent the first murder of history what a contribution that would be. Even if we could go back and learn the lesson of the first murder of history what a gift that would be for humanity. In this century alone, more people have been killed by governments and in war than the entire population of the world at the time of the Roman conquest of Israel, more than one hundred million people. (That's only one part of the picture, in one century and the century isn't over yet!) How is it that someone could commit such a heinous act? What was Cain's motivation? What was his mistake?

Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin (The Netziv) in his commentary on Torah makes a profound observation. After Hevel's offering was given greater Divine applause than that of his brother Cain, Cain reacted by becoming angry and depressed. Our sages tell us that the question of a wise person is already half the answer. If the A-Imighty asks a question, for sure there's a great insight buried within. The A-Imighty asked Cain two questions, "Why are you angry and why are you depressed?"

The Netziv points out that the word "why" was employed twice in the sentence. It seems that he was not being asked why he was in a bad mood, both angry and depressed, but how can you be both angry and depressed.

The Netziv analyzes that what draws out the energy of anger are situations when the power of our will is thwarted. Let's say that you're hurrying to an appointment and suddenly the traffic backs up, frustration builds to an angry state. We feel that things should be going our way and they are not. This is a bit foolish because we don't have control over the traffic and the truth is that the traffic doesn't really care. If someone in your house violates a serious rule of the house, endangering others, there may be room to express anger because this

is a transgression within the sphere of our influence. Why should Cain be angry with Hevel? Did Hevel violate any known principle by being successful and gaining favor in the eyes of his Maker? Is it Cain's job to control his brother's actions?

"Why are you angry?" The A-Imighty asks. What frustration do you suffer from when your brother performs well? Let him be! He's not your prime business. You are your prime business. On the other hand, the opposite of anger is depression. That comes when we feel no hope of success. When we have no empowerment we are compelled to drop our hands and wait for the grievous result. We are depressed when we have no ball in our court, no court, and no racket even if a ball and court should miraculously appear. Who was Cain depressed about? Himself! Over whom should he have control? Himself! He gave up on himself and the energy of empowerment he focused on Hevel.

The Netziv points out that Cain was told by The A-Imighty that his emotions are normal and correct only his wires are crossed. He should be outraged at his own laziness and foolishness. That's where his power could be effective and should be focused. If his brother's accomplishments cause him to feel inferior, then it's the shadow of his own potential that haunts him.

Therefore, the A-Imighty gave him a pep-talk: "If you want to improve you can also be recognized and if you don't then you should know that there's a force that waits by the door ready to destroy you, but you can rule over him if you want." (Bereishis 4:8) In the very next verse, something important seems to be missing. "And Cain said to his brother Hevel and it happened when they were in the field that Cain rose up and killed his brother Hevel." What did Cain say to Hevel?

The Malbim points out that Cain suffered from terminal superficiality. He says that when the Almighty said that "there's a force by the door that's ready to destroy you but you can rule over him!" Cain said to himself that that was in reference to his brother Hevel.

How was he to eliminate the chronic pain, the constant attack on his self-esteem that his brother represented? There are only three choices; 1) To live with continuous hurt 2) To improve 3) To eliminate the external stimulus.

Instead of lifting himself up, and using his jealous rage as a tool to reach his own potential, he sought to tear his brother down. (This is one of the prime motives for evil gossip-which is also tantamount to murder) Rather than working on improving himself, which was the toughest option, he decided to find for himself and his brother what he thought would be a final solution.

■ 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.

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/Chumash for men & women (Shabbos 60 mins before mincha)
- » Marriage Chaburah for women (Tuesday 7:15-8:00P)
- » In-Depth Hilchos Shabbos for women (TBD)