



CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space...Grow at your pace.

November 18-19, 2016 ■ 18 Cheshvan, 5777 ■ Shabbos Vayeira
Candlelighting: 5:05P ■ Shabbos Ends 6:13P

KIDDUSH this Shabbos is sponsored by the members of the Guarantee Kiddush Club: Wes & Tricia Sutkin, Yaakov & Susan Rich, Ben & Lauren Nise, Jeff & Suzanne Luftig, Chana Esther Day, Ari & Naomi Goldberg, Eli Goldberg and Ibriy & Amy Martin. **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, November 18th

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv – 5:05P
- » Candlelighting – 5:05P

Shabbos Day, November 19th

- » Shacharis followed by Kiddush–8:30A
- » **NEW:** Mommy & Me with Tricia Sutkin–10:15A-End of Service
- » Chumash/Pirkei Avos Shiur (M&W)–3:55P
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- » Shalosh Seudos for women & young children at the Rich home – 4:55P
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- » Avos U'Banim–Cancelled this week due to overnight

■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

- » Weekday Shacharis–6:40A
- » Mincha–5:05P
- » Gemara Shiur (Kesuvos)–8P
- » Maariv followed by 5-min halacha shiur–9P

■ 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

» Mommy & Me at CTC:

- Teacher/Group Leader: Tricia Sutkin
- When: Every Shabbos morning (Starting Shabbos, Nov 5), 10:15-10:45 AM (or until the end of davening, whichever is later)
- Where: Congregation Toras Chaim, 7103 Mumford Ct., Dallas, TX 75252
- What: Davening and Parsha Stories & Discussion
- For: Young Boys & Girls
- Cost: None

» Rebbi Michoel Bodenheimer

Sometimes sitting quietly in shul for an extended period of time can be challenging for our younger members.

We, at CTC, are introducing a new program to address this critical issue. Rabbi Michoel Bodenheimer, a Talmid Chacham and mechanech (educator), will engage your sons in stimulating learning, enlightening discussion and enjoyable activities. Friday night between Kabbalos Shabbos and Ma'ariv, Shabbos morning during the Rabbi's sermon, and Shabbos afternoon during Shalosh Seudos, your sons will have a break from adult centered learning. They will have the opportunity to participate in programs designed just for them, giving them the recharge to return to davening.

Of course, should your son decide to remain with the adults for any or all of the above times, he is more than welcome.

» Avos U'Banim 5777

Avos U'Banim, or Father/Son Learning takes place on on Motzei Shabbos 60 minutes after Shabbos ends. The children are rewarded with Pizza, Cocoa and Prizes for their efforts. All boys are invited to attend with their father or another adult. We are asking for a contribution of \$5 per attending family per session, to help allay the costs to the shul. A small cost for infinite rewards!

Those who would like to dedicate a learning session for just \$54, for any special purpose (in memory of a loved one, a refuah shleima, or in honor of a simcha) can do so as well. For details contact Rabbi Yaakov Rich at 972-835-6016.

■ OUR AKEIDAS YITZCHOK: RABBI LABEL LAM

And it came to pass after these things, that G-d tested Avraham, and He said to him, "Avraham," and he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Please take your son, your only one, whom you love, Yitzchok, and go away to the land of Moriah and bring him up there for a burnt offering on one of the mountains, of which I will tell you." (Breishis 22:1-2)

Is it too irreverent to ask about the current and daily relevance of Akeidas Yitzchok? There it is in our Siddur to be read every day. What is it telling the "you" and "me" of the world? Sure Avraham Avinu, without question, passed the supreme test of history. That was the height of the heights and yet we find ourselves now as amateur climbers at the base of a tall mountain, gazing with awe in search of a peak at the peak which is shrouded in mysterious cloud cover. How does that loftiest of all accomplishments translate to our ordinary struggles?

A fellow I was learning with, Larry, once told me that he feared that if he didn't do something dramatic his boys, Jonathan and David, would graduate in a few years from his house without his having ever known them. Until now when he would try to ask them about school they would answer in the shortest way "OK" or "AHA" and he felt he had only the smallest window into their world. What happened to him at work was even less important to them. They would only speak to him sincerely if they were asking for \$5 or a ride. He felt more like a banker or a cabby than a parent.

I strongly suggested he turn Friday night into Shabbos, even though he was not yet a complete Shomer Shabbos- a keeper of the Shabbos. Buy the boys' favorite foods. Get some grape juice and some fluffy raisin Challos. Arrange your schedule to be home from work on time and have your wife light a couple of candles. Bless the boys in a formal way and require that everyone attend.

Prepare with your wife some stories or lessons that deal with issues or ideals you wish to address. Read from a book each week and play games with them. The hardest and steepest challenge will be not to answer the holy telephone. Let the message machine do its job.

Within a few months Larry was already glowing with joy. The boys were eating up not just the tasty food but the quality of family time and relationship they were building during this time. A while later one of the boys asked if he could go on an overnight Friday night to a friend. The mother rightly told him "no" because this is their special family time.

The next week Larry came home excited with hockey tickets for a Stanley Cup play-off final that somebody in the office had given him. It was for Friday night. He wife looked at him and said, "If you go there on our Friday Night then I will never be able to say "no" to the boys when they might make a similar request."

With the courage of Avraham at Akeidas Yitzchok, Larry courageously and wisely obeyed his wife and "sending forth his hand" -forfeited those treasured tickets. He missed the Stanley Cup Play-Off Game that year but he kept his family together over many years. He reports to me how close they have grown as a family unit because of their tenacious loyalty to that sacred appointment.

A 7th grade boy was begging me last week to find out how he could get a custom filter fitted for his Smart Phone. On his own he went to a designated location where some volunteer tech guys

could adjust his phone and remove temptation from his reach. It was heroic and perhaps on his level not less than Avraham Avinu giving up his beloved son.

Taking a bold step in the right direction, curbing a debilitating habit, giving up on what we love for something greater is a not just a mini-replica, it's our Akeidas Yitzchok!

■ PARSHAS VAYEIRA: ABARBANEL ON THE PARSHA

In this week's Torah portion, as in the preceding parsha of Lech Lecha, Sarah is abducted by the ruler of the country, first in Egypt by Pharaoh, and now in Canaan by Avimelech. Although the two episodes differ in certain respects, they both illustrate Avraham and Sarah's sound moral judgment, as well as providing insight into the social and ethical realities of the ancient Near East.

In Egypt Avraham realized that his wife's beauty was in stark contrast to the unattractive Egyptian women. Assuming that she was his wife, the depraved Egyptians would likely kill him in order to take her. However, by telling them that she was his sister, they would offer him gifts in exchange for her. (In reality, Sarah was actually his niece and at that time a niece was often referred to as a sister. As a brother or uncle, he had the right to accept gifts and marry her off in those days, just as a father did.)

Although Avraham knew that she would almost certainly be violated against her will, telling them the truth would have resulted in his death and her violation anyway. Therefore he elected to stall for time and drag out the negotiations, hoping for Divine deliverance.

In Parshat Vayera they are faced with essentially the same dilemma. He again refers to Sarah as his sister, and again G-d intercedes to prevent her defilement. Avimelech, however, is on a higher moral level than Pharaoh, and merits G-d's appearing to him prophetically to reveal Sarah's actual status. Pharaoh, on the other hand, was only prevented from defiling her by the miraculous appearance of a debilitating venereal disease. Since the custom in the ancient Near East dictated that a defiled woman could no longer remain with her husband, Pharaoh sent them away immediately, since people assumed, albeit erroneously, that Pharaoh had defiled her. Pharaoh wanted to make sure that they would not be seen together in Egypt as husband and wife.

Avimelech, however, allowed them to stay in order to dramatically demonstrate that he had not defiled her. Avraham recognized that Avimelech was morally superior to Pharaoh when he says that his main concern was not Avimelech's immorality but rather, "Surely there is no fear of G-d in this place and they will slay me because of my wife." Avraham feared that the degeneracy of Sodom and Gemorrah had spread to Avimelech's subjects as well.

Finally, Avimelech gives Avraham a gift of silver and says to Avraham enigmatically, "Let it be for you an eye-covering to all who are with you; and to all you will be vindicated." Avimelech was giving him advice: Use this money to purchase face-covering clothing worn by the undefiled modest women of that time. This will clearly indicate that she has been completely vindicated. Additionally, Avimelech is telling him that in order not to arouse suspicion in the eyes of everyone in the future, he should refrain from calling her his sister so that she will not be in need of miraculous intervention.

■ PARSHA Q&A: VAYEIRA

1. Why did G-d appear to Avraham after the brit mila? 18:1 - Avraham was sick, so G-d came to "visit" him.

2. Why was Avraham sitting at the entrance to his tent? 18:1 - He was looking for guests.
3. What were the missions of the three angels? 18:2 - To announce Yitzchak's birth, to heal Avraham and to destroy Sodom.
4. Why did Avraham enjoin the guests to wash the dust off their feet? 18:4 - He thought they were among those who worship the dust, and he didn't want any object of idolatry in his home.
5. Why did Avraham ask specifically Yishmael, and not someone else, to prepare food for the guests? 18:7 - To train him in the performance of mitzvot.
6. Why did the angels ask Avraham where Sarah was? 18:9 - To call attention to Sarah's modesty, so as to endear her to her husband.
7. When G-d related Sarah's thoughts to Avraham, He did not relate them precisely. Why? 18:13 - For the sake of peace.
8. What "cry" from Sodom came before G-d? 18:21 - The cry of a girl who was executed for giving food to the poor.
9. How many angels went to Sodom? 19:1 - Two; one to destroy the city and one to save Lot.
10. Why was Lot sitting at the gate of Sodom? 19:1 - He was a judge.
11. Lot served the angels matza. Why? 19:3 - It was Passover.
12. Why did Lot delay when he left Sodom? 19:16 - He wanted to save his property.
13. Why were Lot and his family not permitted to look back at Sodom? 19:17 - As they, too, deserved to be punished, it wasn't fitting for them to witness the destruction of Sodom.
14. Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt. Why was she punished in this particular way? 19:26 - She was stingy, not wanting to give the guests salt.
15. In what merit did G-d save Lot? 19:29 - Lot had protected Avraham by concealing from the Egyptians the fact that Sarah was his wife.
16. Why did Avraham relocate after the destruction of Sodom? 20:1 - Because travel in the region ceased and Avraham could no longer find guests.
17. Why did Avimelech give gifts to Avraham? 20:14 - So that Avraham would pray for him.
18. Why was Avraham told to listen to Sarah? 21:12 - Because she was greater in prophecy.
19. Why did G-d listen to the prayer of Yishmael and not to that of Hagar? 21:17 - Because the prayer of a sick person is more readily accepted than the prayer of others on his behalf.
20. Who accompanied Avraham and Yitzchak to the akeidah (binding)? 22:3 - Yishmael and Eliezer.

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)