



CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space...Grow at your pace.

December 23-24, 2016 ■ 24 Kislev, 5777 ■ Shabbos Vayeishev, Erev Chanukah
Mincha: 5:10P / Candlelighting: 5:10P ■ Shabbos Ends 6:17P

KIDDUSH this Shabbos is sponsored by Eliana Rochel Edwards. **SHALOSH SHEUDOS** 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, December 23rd

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv – 5:10P
- » Candlelighting – 5:10P

Shabbos Day, December 24th

- » Shacharis followed by Kiddush–8:30A
- » Mommy & Me with Tricia Sutkin–10:15A
- » Chumash/Pirkei Avos Shiur (M&W)–3:55P
- » Mincha/Shalosh Seudos for men in shul – 4:55P
- » Shalosh Seudos for women & young children at the Rich home – 4:55P
- » Maariv/Shabbos Ends–6:17P
- » First Chanukah Candle–6:17P (At home Havdalla then Chanukah)
- » Avos U'Banim–Cancelled
- » Motzei Shabbos Chanukah Melava Malka–8:00P

■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

- » Weekday Shacharis–6:40A
- » Mincha followed by 20-min Chassidus shiur–5:15P
- » Gemara Shiur (Kesuvos)–8P
- » Maariv followed by 5-min halacha shiur–9P

■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

MEN

- » Zoosav ben Lipke (Father of Suzanne Luftig)
- » Yechiel Mordechai ben Devorah (Brother of Ken Jarmel)
- » Itai ben Shoshana (Son of Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson)

WOMEN

- » Leah Esther bas Yenta Leah (Lori Jarmel)
- » Yenta Leah bas Shayna (Mother of Lori Jarmel)

■ WHAT'S NU AT CTC

- » **Thank you to Eliana Rochel Edwards and Chana Esther Day** for decorating the shul so beautifully for Chanukah.
- » **Chanukah Melava Malka for Adults Only:** Motzei Shabbos, December 24, First Night of Chanukah, 8 PM at Congregation Toras Chaim, 7103 Mumford Ct.

CTC will host a Melava Malka including:

- Catered Chinese food and open bar with specialty drinks
- Rabbi Eliyahu Heller as guest speaker
- Dovid Rosenfield playing the violin.

Cost:

- Member Price \$20/person, \$36/couple.
- Non-Member Price \$36/person, \$50/couple.

- » **Learn to Learn the Talmud:** Beginning Tuesday, January 3, 2017 for men. Talmud study is one of the most challenging endeavors for a man without formal yeshiva training. Yet, it is also the most rewarding. Now at Congregation Toras Chaim you too can experience the struggle and inspiration of the Talmudic experience, tracing the thread of Divine knowledge from the Torah verse to the Mishnah (200 CE) to the Gemara (500 CE), through the Rishonim (early commentaries, 1000-1500 CE), Shulchan Aruch (1500 CE) and Achronim (more recent commentaries, 1500 CE – Present). In addition to Talmudic arguments, you will learn grammar and word roots in both Hebrew and Aramaic. Plus, reinforce the lesson with a **חברותא** (study partner) during the hour session. You will even become familiar with Rashi and Tosafos, the primary commentaries to the Talmud. The goal is not to finish an entire tractate, but to get a serious taste for real world Talmud study and Psak Halacha (how to decide a matter of Jewish law) by focusing on a single chapter in the Talmud.

- This class, open for men, will take place Tuesday and

Thursday evenings, 7-8 PM, beginning Tuesday, January 3, 2017, at Congregation Toras Chaim, 7103 Mumford Ct., Dallas, TX 75252.

- Cost: There is a \$15 cost for this class which includes the Talmudic study book and other materials.

» Chassidus shiur for men & women: Chassidus: Peeling back the page to reveal the mystical essence of Torah thought and spirituality.

- Monday-Thursday, for 20 minutes, beginning 15 minutes after start of Mincha at CTC. Please refer to the CTC calendar on the website in the right sidebar for Mincha start times.
- This shiur is for men & women.
- You may attend in person (best way) or on the phone (for convenience).
- Dial-in Number: (515) 739-1030 and the Access Code: 471-997-271. This is a free conference call.

■ A GREAT FIRST MOVE: RABBI LABEL LAM

Yaakov settled in the land of his father's sojourning, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Yaakov; when Yosef was seventeen years old, being a shepherd, he was with his brothers with the flocks, and he was a lad, [and was] with the sons of Bilhah and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Yosef brought evil tales about them to their father. (Breishis 37: 1-2)

These are the generations of Yaakov: When Yaakov sought to dwell in tranquility the troubles of Yosef sprang upon him. The righteous seek to dwell in tranquility. Said the Holy One, blessed be He, "What is prepared for the righteous in the world to come is not sufficient for them, but they seek [also] to dwell in tranquility in this world!" - Rashi

Rashi is telling us that all the many events that unfolded are all a result of a single choice by Yaakov. He felt it was time to settle down and learn in tranquility after decades of tribulation and The Almighty had a different plan. Avraham was promised his children would be strangers in a strange land for 400 years... and therefore, jealousy between the brothers erupted, and because of Yosef's prophetic dreams he was sold to Egypt. With a world famine about to happen Pharaoh had a troubling dream and since Yosef had shown his expertise as a dream interpret... The rest is history. This is all beyond astonishing! King David tells us, "Many thoughts are in the heart of a man but the plan of HASHEM, it will be established!"

Life is like a chess game! How so? Almost nothing looks more orderly than chess pieces before a match starts. The first move, however, begins a spiral into chaos. After both players move, 400 possible board setups exist. After the second pair of turns there are 197,742 possible games, and after three moves, 121 million. At every turn, players chart a progressively more distinctive path, and each game evolves into one that has probably never been played before. According to Jonathan Schaeffer, "The possible number of chess games is so huge that no one will invest the effort to calculate the exact number."

Some have estimated it at around 10 to the power of 100,000. There are only 10 to the power of 15 total hairs on all the human heads in the world, 10 to the power of 23 grains of sand on Earth, and about 10 to the power of 81 atoms in the universe. The number of typical chess games is many times as great as all those numbers multiplied together—this is a wondrous feat for 32 pieces lined up on a board.

If there are so many possibilities with just 64 squares and 32 piece moving one at a time, taking turns alternately at a snail's pace

on a flat two-dimensional board- Then how much more so when you have free willed human beings, hundreds and thousands making millions of simultaneous decisions on various plains of existence. It's staggering how organized and predictable so much of life is when we understand how complex and unique each day really is.

I tell my wife too often, when she asks how my day went, "Every day is like chasing a bouncing football!" Sometimes it's running away from you and then it jumps back into your face unexpectedly. We cannot predict with specificity what will happen, when there are so many moving parts, such unpredictability, and limitless possibilities. No matter what happens one day, the next day the pieces are lined up for another contest with and against the choices of a thousand players.

Thomas Henry Huxley had cleverly noted, "The chess-board is the world; the pieces are the phenomena of the universe; the rules of the game are what we call the laws of Nature. The player on the other side is hidden from us. We know that His play is always fair, and patient. But also we know, to our cost, that He never overlooks a mistake, or makes the smallest allowance for ignorance."

Consider how many myriad pieces had to be moved for HASHEM's plan to come to fruition so that Yaakov chose to go down to Egypt, to fulfill a Divine promise, and now how lighting a Menorah is a great first move!

■ CHANUKAH: LIGHT AND DARKNESS: RABBI YIRMIYAHU ULLMAN

From: Chaim

Dear Rabbi,

We are told that the main miracle of Chanuka was that even though the one vile of pure oil that they found was enough only for one day, it miraculously lasted for eight days until they could produce new, pure oil for use in the Menora. The question is, why was a miracle necessary when the halacha permits using even contaminated oil for the sacred service when pure oil is not available?

Dear Chaim,

Perhaps the answer lies in what took place when G-d first created light. On the very first day of Creation the Torah tells us, "G-d saw the light was good, and G-d separated between the light and the darkness" (Gen. 1:4). The Midrash explains that prior to that Divinely ordered separation, light and darkness jointly served the world. G-d's separation of the two created day and night. Rashi explains (ibid.) that since "G-d saw that the light was good", it was not proper for light to be mixed together with the darkness. He therefore assigned one of them to the day and one to the night. Thus, from the beginning of time, light cannot coexist with darkness.

The Hellenists, whose reign is compared by the Midrash to the primeval darkness mentioned in the account of Creation, attempted to blend light with darkness. They did not destroy the Beit Hamikdash as did the Babylonians before them and the Romans after them; nor did they did perpetrate the genocide planned by Haman. Their sole aim was, as we say in our "Al Hanisim" prayer, to "cause us to forget our Torah and abandon our fulfillment of G-d's commands" in order to accept their pagan, Hellenistic culture.

To accomplish this goal they selectively prohibited those mitzvot that principally set the Jew apart from them – Shabbat, circumcision and the Jewish calendar of months and holidays. They

made breaches in the walls of the Beit Hamikdash and contaminated its contents. All this was done in order to have the darkness of their paganism function alongside the light of Judaism.

Once this darkness was removed with the triumph of the Jewish forces, it was understood that there was no room left for any darkness, even in the form of contaminated oil. It is for this reason that G-d performed the miracle for the pure oil to last until a new supply was available.

The message of this miracle was relevant not only in those days, but in our own times as well. We must be careful to prevent the forces of darkness that are so prevalent in the world – lack of belief in G-d, immorality and violence – from infringing upon the pure light of a Torah lifestyle.

In our kindling of the Chanuka lamps and in our daily lives we must uphold the Divine command "Let there be light", and ensure that it remain unadulterated by darkness!

■ PARSHA Q&A: VAYEISHEV

1. "These are the offspring of Yaakov: Yosef..." Give three reasons why Yosef is considered Yaakov's main offspring. 37:2 - (a) Yosef was the son of Rachel, Yaakov's primary wife. (b) Yosef looked like Yaakov. (c) All that befell Yaakov befell Yosef.
2. What was praiseworthy about the fact that Yosef's brothers did not speak to him in a friendly manner? 37:4 - They did not act hypocritically.
3. How do we see from Yosef's dream about the sun, moon and stars that all dreams contain some untrue element? 37:10 - The moon represented Rachel. Since she had already died, it was impossible for that element of the dream to come true.
4. Who brought Yosef down to Egypt? 37:28 - A caravan of Midianites.
5. Where was Reuven when Yosef was sold? 37:29 - He was attending to Yaakov.
6. In addition to the brothers, who else knew that Yosef was alive? 37:33 - Yitzchak.
7. Why didn't G-d reveal prophetically to Yaakov that Yosef was alive? 37:33 - Because the brothers had issued a ban against revealing the truth to Yaakov, and G-d, so to speak, abided by their ban.
8. For how long did Yaakov mourn the loss of Yosef? 37:34 - Twenty-two years.
9. Verse 37:35 states "his father wept." To whom does this refer? 37:35 - Yitzchak, who wept because of Yaakov's suffering.
10. Who was Tamar's father? 38:24 - Shem.
11. In what merit did Tamar deserve to have kings as her descendants? 38:26 - In the merit of her modesty.
12. Why is the word "hand" mentioned four times in connection to the birth of Zerach? 38:30 - To allude to his descendent, Achan, who sinned with his hand by taking four things from the spoils of Jericho.
13. Why does the Torah relate the incident with Potiphar's wife immediately after the incident of Yehuda and Tamar? 39:1 - To teach us that just as Tamar acted with pure motives, so did Potiphar's wife.

Good Shabbos

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■ CLASSES

» Hilchos Niddah for men (Sunday 7-8A)

» 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)