



# CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space...Grow at your pace.

August 18-19, 2017 ■ 27 Av, 5777 ■ Shabbos Re'eh  
Mincha: 7P / Candlelighting: 7:50P ■ Shabbos Ends 8:57P

**KIDDUSH** this Shabbos is sponsored by Chana Esther Day in memory of her husband, Bob Day (Chaim Yaakov ben Avrohom), whose Yahrtzeit will be 4 Elul. **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, Aug 18<sup>th</sup>

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv – 7P
- » Candlelighting – 7:50P

### Shabbos Day, Aug 19<sup>th</sup>

- » Shacharis followed by Kiddush – 8:30A
- » Mommy & Me with Tricia Sutkin – 10:15A
- » Chumash Shiur for men & women – 6:35P
- » Mincha/Shalosh Seudos for men (shul) – 7:35P
- » Shalosh Seudos for women & young children (Rich home) – 7:35P
- » Maariv/Shabbos Ends–8:57P

## ■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

- » Sunday Shacharis–8A
- » Weekday Shacharis–6:40A
- » Weekday Mincha/Maariv–7:45P

## ■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

### Men

- » Dovid Chaim ben Tzippora (Brother-In-Law to Tami Ellis)
- » Aryeh Yisroel ben Chantza Rochel (Rabbi Aryeh Feigenbaum)
- » Menachem Mendel ben Sorah (Travis Katz)
- » Zoosav ben Lipke (Father of Suzanne Luftig)
- » Itai ben Shoshana (Son of Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson)

### Women

- » Shoshana Elka bas Ettel Dina (Shoshana Strassman)
- » Fanna Leah bas Shulamis (Mother of Wes Sutkin)
- » Leah Esther bas Yenta Leah (Lori Jarmel)
- » Yenta Leah bas Shayna (Mother of Lori Jarmel)

## ■ WHAT'S NU

- » **Mazel Tov to Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson**, who are in Seattle for Shabbos, celebrating the Siyum HaShas of Akiva O'Connor, their Son-in-Law, married to their daughter, Ela.
- » **Amud Cover Dedication Opportunity:** Dear CTC Members & Friends: We have two beautiful Amudim (wooden podiums) in front of the shul (one for the Shaliach Tzibbur and one for the Rabbi) which remain uncovered. Here is an opportunity for someone to memorialize the names of loved ones on the two new velvet covers we will order for the Amudim, in time for the High Holidays. The cost is just \$3000 each. Pennies really considering the amount of merit received for supporting the shul. There is no more fitting and honorable way to give the neshama an aliyah than by embroidering their names on the Amud cover to be seen and read by all. Please contact Rabbi Yaakov Rich [rbbi@toraschaimdallas.org](mailto:rbbi@toraschaimdallas.org) if interested.

## ■ THE BIGGEST POSSIBLE PRESENT: RABBI LABEL LAM

See I give to you today a blessing and a curse... (Devarim 11:26)

Of course the simple meaning is that there was a historical episode where a visual demonstration was displayed before the eyes of Israel and the images of blessing and curse were etched into the psyche of a nation. This was scripted as a teachable moment. Not only was it meant as a lesson then but it is equally applicable today. We say daily in our prayers, “Ki Hem Chayeinu”- “because they are our life” in reference to the words of Torah. Every word of Torah is therefore extemporaneous and aimed at us today, whenever today is.

The Sefas Emes writes in his quasi cryptic-poetic fashion, “See I give to you today...The explanation is that freedom of choosing is in the hands of man to opt for either good or bad. (Quoting his grandfather the Chidushei HaRim) “About this we make the blessing daily, ‘who gives the rooster (man) the intelligence to discern between night and day.’ The meaning of “today” is that

man is granted renewed free choice every day. Because after Adam sinned free will was removed from the man as our sages stated, “the wicked are controlled by their heart”. Even still the Holy One bless is He “renews the creation every day constantly” and He gives renewed -fresh free choice to man so that he can have the opportunity to express goodness again.”

What does all this mean translated into useful English? The option to exercise free will is the greatest gift and the most uniquely Divine quality we humans possess. Unfortunately too much of what we do is relegated to inertia the forces of habit and our real power of free will is frustrated.

I observed a wondrous thing by a friend of mine who used to smoke three packs of cigarettes a day for almost two decades. One day, for some mystical reason, he decided and quit. Since then he never touched a cigarette. The next day and forever more he would have to find something else to do with his hands and mouth. I wondered how a person can pivot on a dime like that and make such a dramatic change.

I discovered where the Nefesh HaChaim quotes a Zohar explaining that accompanying a sincere decision is a holy power pack that gives the person the ability begin and drive into action. The volume of energy is in proportion to the size of the decision.” When I began to contemplate the power of this dynamic I started to appreciate why we make such a big deal about weddings. Why is everyone so willing to cross the ocean or the George Washington Bridge? What justifies spending so much money on such a brief celebration? What is so compelling?

Simply put it's not just one person making a decision about one area of his life. It is two people making a commitment regarding everything. They are choosing to remain bound together forever. At that moment a huge fuel tank is granted that will enable them to remain constant and loyal for many decades in the face of millions of unforeseen variables: The economy, health, the in-laws, society around them, and the roller coaster ride called kids, testing “whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated may long endure.” The enormity of the energy available at that moment is staggering. People intuitively come to bask in the afterglow of that event like the launching of a rocket ship.

Now even the grandest of weddings is merely a faint echo of an original event from 3329 years ago. We cannot fathom the enormous superhuman energy that was endowed when the entire Jewish Nation declared “in a singular voice saying; ‘everything Hashem says we will do!’” (Shemos 24:3) That commitment unleashed and made available an enduring force that has allowed us to navigate the gauntlet of persecution “till the last syllable of recorded history”.

Now, “See I give to you today a blessing and a curse”. When we see clearly and appreciate the power of a pedestrian decision and that today-right now is a fresh opportunity to choose a new direction then we can become free immediately. That itself is the blessing. Not seeing that is the curse of remaining moored to past non-decisions and situations, to be stuck with the old. See I - “ANOCHI HASHEM” that we all heard thundering at Mount Sinai is giving you the biggest possible present.

## ■ INSIGHTS INTO KASHRUS: ABARBANEL ON THE PARSHA

One of the topics of this Parsha is the Laws of Kashrut. Although this was already discussed in Parshat Shemini in Sefer Vayikra, Abarbanel explains some of the dimensions of these laws which he did not discuss previously.

The Torah introduces this section by saying, “You shall not

eat anything abominable” (Devarim 14:3). The Torah does not mean that forbidden foods are inherently disgusting and repulsive to human nature. The Sifra on Vayikra makes it clear that a person should not say, “I don’t want to eat pork; rather, it is something I desire, but My Father in Heaven has decreed against it” (Vayikra 20:26).

Abarbanel explains that the prevailing opinion that the main reason for the Kashrut laws is that the various animals, combinations of foods and methods of slaughter are inherently unhealthy — is incorrect. If this were true the Kashrut section of the Torah would be reduced to a medical text and would take away from the lofty messages of the Divine Torah. If the Torah’s concern was only in regard to health, then cures and countermeasures could be found to obviate the necessity for these laws in the first place. Furthermore it is obvious that the world’s non-Jews, who are free to eat these forbidden foods, are no less healthy than their Jewish counterparts, and in many cases are physically stronger.

Rather, these prohibitions are designed to protect the individual’s pure spiritual and intellectual dimension — his neshama soul. Man’s physical nature and desires have a tendency to overcome his pure spirituality. Eating these foods contributes to this spiritual blockage. This is expressed clearly at the end of the Kashrut discussion in Parshat Shemini, “Do not contaminate your souls with creeping things of the ground and do not become ritually impure through them, because I am the L-rd your G-d who sanctified you and made you holy, and you should be holy because I am holy” (Vayikra 11:43-44). The prohibited foods are never referred to as ‘harmful’ or ‘unhealthy’. Rather, they are always referred to as ‘ritually impure’ or ‘spiritually abominable’.

The concept of refraining from giving in to one’s physical desires and eating whatever one wishes is also alluded to in the phrase, “You are children to the L-rd your G-d” (Devarim 14:1). This indicates that we are members of an important royal family and must conduct ourselves accordingly. The commandment to refrain from eating any abomination immediately follows the prohibitions against the barbaric practice of the Amorite mourners who mutilated their bodies by cutting their flesh or tearing out the hair between their eyes: “For you are a holy people to the L-rd your G-d, and G-d has chosen you for Himself to be a treasured people from among all the peoples on the face of the earth” (Devarim 14:1-2). Refraining from eating certain foods, even when they are not injurious and may even be beneficial to our physical health, keeps us constantly aware of our lofty status and unique responsibility to serve G-d.

■ PARSHA Q&A: RE’EH

- 1. What were the sites designated for the “blessings and the curses” to be pronounced by the people? 11:26 - Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Eval, respectively.
- 2. On what condition will Bnei Yisrael receive the blessings from Hashem? 11:27 - On condition that they listen to Hashem’s commandments.
- 3. Why does the Torah use idolatry as an example when describing one who strays from the path that Hashem commanded? 11:28 - Because those who worship idols are considered as if they have strayed from the entire Torah.
- 4. What was to be the sign for the Jewish People that they would

- inherit the Land? 11:31 - The miracles that would occur while crossing the Jordan River.
- 5. During the 14 years of the conquest and division of the Land, what types of offerings were permitted on private altars? 12:8 - Vow offerings or free-will offerings.
- 6. What must one do with consecrated animals that develop a blemish? 12:15 - They must be redeemed and may then be eaten.
- 7. In what ways does a consecrated animal that develops a blemish retain a degree of kedusha (holiness) even after it has been redeemed? 12:15 - Eating it is permitted, but use of its milk or fleece is forbidden.
- 8. Why was the tribe of Yehuda not permitted to conquer Jerusalem? 12:17 - When Avraham bought ma’arat hamachpelah, he made a covenant of peace with the Hittites who sold it. His descendants honored this pact regarding the Hittite descendants in Jerusalem.
- 9. In consecutive verses, the Torah repeats the prohibition against eating blood. What two types of blood are referred to? 12:24-25 - Blood that seeps slowly from the incision as soon as the cut is made and again after it no longer gushes. Blood absorbed into the limbs of the animal.
- 10. Why were the Jewish People allowed to see the extermination of the Canaanites? 12:30 - To learn not to follow in their depraved ways.
- 11. What forms of idol worship are punishable by death? 12:30 - Slaughtering or burning a sacrifice on an altar, pouring libations, prostrating oneself, and any normal manner of worshipping that idol.
- 12. If a person performs miracles in the name of Hashem and then says that the laws of the Torah have been revised, what is done to this person? 13:2-6 - He is put to death.
- 13. The Torah says, “to Him (Hashem) you shall cleave.” How does one fulfill this command? 13:5 - One should emulate Hashem’s actions by performing good deeds, assisting in burying the dead and visiting the sick.
- 14. The trial of a person accused of encouraging others to worship idols differs from the trial of other capital cases. How? 13:10 - If he was acquitted and new information of a condemning nature arises, he is retried. If he was judged guilty, he is not returned to court to plead in his favor.
- 15. Who has the primary responsibility of inflicting the punishment on one who tried to entice others to worship idols? 13:10 - The person whom the guilty one attempted to entice.
- 16. What is the “source” of the Jewish People being an am kadosh (holy nation)? 14:2 - The kedusha is inherited from the avot.
- 17. How should the Jewish People maintain themselves as an am kadosh? 14:21 - By avoiding excesses even in permitted matters.
- 18. What is the order of priority regarding to whom one should give charity? 15:7 - The most needy, a brother from one’s father, a brother from one’s mother, the poor of one’s city, the poor of another city.
- 19. What mitzvah recalls the Exodus from Egypt? 16:3 - Eating the korban pesach and the matzah on the night of Pesach.
- 20. Which four individuals are under Hashem’s “special protection”? 16:10 - A levi, convert, orphan, and widow.

# Good Shabbos

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■CLASSES

- » Hilchos Niddah for men (Sunday 7-8A)
- » Parenting Chaburah for women (Sunday, June 25, 7-7:45 PM)
- » Before Shacharis Gemara Yevamos for men (M-Fr, 6-6:40A)
- » Sefer Zos Brisi for men (Mondays, 30 mins before mincha)
- » NQ Daf HaYomi Kesuvos for men (Sunday-Thursday following Maariv)
- » Learn to Learn Gemara (Tue & Thur, One hour before Mincha)
- » Rabbi Heller on the Parsha (Wed, 45 minutes before Mincha)
- » Chumash for men & women (Shabbos 60 mins before mincha)