



# CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

An intimate space...Grow at your pace.

May 17-18, 2019 ▪ 13 Iyar, 5779 ▪ Shabbos Emor  
Mincha: 7:00P / Candlelighting: 8:03P ▪ Shabbos Ends 9:11P

**SHABBATON** this Shabbos is generously sponsored by Ben & Lauren Nise.

**KIDDUSH** this Shabbos is sponsored by Alex & Amanda Machado in honor of Moshe & Ariella Bush, for their hospitality and friendship, and Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson, for opening their home to us. **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, May 17<sup>th</sup>

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv-7:00P
- » **Rabbi Eliyahu Heller: Lag B'Omer: Love in the Night-Between Kabbalos Shabbos and Maariv**
- » Shabbos Candle Lighting-8:03P

### Shabbos Day, May 18<sup>th</sup>

- » Mishnayos shiur with Rabbi Reuven Wortrich-8A
- » Shacharis followed by Kiddush-8:30A
- » **Rabbi Eliyahu Heller: Torah: Who is Truly Free? (Sponsored by John & Dina Taylor) - Immediately following Kiddush**
- » **Rabbi Eliyahu Heller: Shavuos: Why Do We Learn Torah?-7:05P**
- » Mincha-7:50P
- » Shalosh Seudos for men-8:20P
- » **Rabbi Eliyahu Heller: Ben Torah in the Workplace: Fresh Perspective on Navigating the World at Large - During Shalosh Seudos**
- » Maariv/Shabbos Ends-9:11P

## ■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

- » Sunday Shacharis-8:00A
- » Weekday Mincha/Maariv-8:05P
- » Weekday Shacharis-6:40A

## ■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

### Men

- » Refalal Tevya ben Sara (Uncle of Rebekkah Bodoff)
- » Yechezkel Yehuda ben Asnah Shaynah (Howard Denmark)
- » Matan Rafael Nasanel ben Esther (Matan Elfenbein)
- » Itai ben Shoshana (Son of Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson)

### Women

- » Raizel Bina bas Sorah (Raizel Palmer)
- » Tikva bas Salima (Tikva Zbolon)
- » Rivka Basya bas Devorah (Rebekkah Bodoff)
- » Necha bas Leah (see Irwin Harris)
- » Leah Esther bas Yenta Leah (Lori Jarmel)
- » Yenta Leah bas Shayna (Mother of Lori Jarmel)

## ■ WHAT'S NU

- » Congregation Toras Chaim welcomes Rabbi & Mrs. Eliyahu Heller back to Dallas and to our community for Shabbos with the Hellers. Rabbi Heller is known for his erudition, and completely novel interpretations of the teachings of our Sages. **The Shabbaton is generously sponsored by Ben & Lauren Nise.**

### Shabbaton Lectures

- Lag B'Omer: Love in the Night (Between Kabbalos Shabbos and Maariv Friday Night)
- Torah: Who is Truly Free? (Immediately Following Kiddush Shabbos Morning) (Sponsored by John & Dina Taylor)
- Shavuos: Why Do We Learn Torah? (7:05 PM Shabbos Afternoon)
- Ben Torah in the Workplace: A Fresh Perspective on Navigating the World at Large (During Shalosh Seudos Starting 8:20 PM)

All classes are for men and women. Shabbos hospitality is available. Please contact Rabbi Yaakov Rich, [rabbii@toraschaimdallas.org](mailto:rabbii@toraschaimdallas.org) if you would like to stay in our community for Shabbos. There is no charge for attending any of the classes. Sponsorships at \$250/class are available. Please contact Rabbi Yaakov Rich, [rabbii@toraschaimdallas.org](mailto:rabbii@toraschaimdallas.org) if interested.

- » **Congregation Toras Chaim is pleased to offer its 11th Annual All-Night Shavuos Learning for men, 12:00-5:30 AM, Sunday (Late Saturday Night :-), June 9, 2019.** Topics for study (starting at 12 AM and concluding at 5:30 AM with 15 min food and beverage breaks every hour, or so):

(Class One) **The Fire of Division: Brocha on Aish of Havdallah**

(Class Two) **Finding Your Place: Makom Kevuah for Tefillah**

(Class Three) **Birthdays: A Celebration with Torah Value**

(Class Four) **The Wayfarer's Prayer: Journey Through Tefillas HaDerech**  
Sponsorship Opportunities: \$1000 Luchos HaBris Sponsorship / \$250 Per Class Sponsorship

**Luchos HaBris Patrons: Anonymously sponsored in the memory of Irene Linder, a"h, beloved mother of Rebbetzin Susan Rich, may her**

neshama have an aliyah.

**Food and Beverage Station Sponsored by Josh & Lisa Rothstein**

**First Day Shavuos Starting 10:30 AM — Speech by Dassie Goldberg & Ice Cream Kiddush for Women & Children Sponsored by Josh & Lisa Rothstein**

- » **Around the Corner:** Lag B'Omer BBQ. Watch your email.

## ■ JUST FOLLOW THE LEADER: RABBI LABEL LAM

And HASHEM said to Moshe: 'Say to the Kohanim, the sons of Aaron, and you shall say to them: "To a (dead) person he shall not become impure among his people..."' (Vayikra 21:1)

Say to the Kohanim...and you shall say to them: The Torah uses the double expression of "say" followed by "and you shall say" to caution the adults with regard to the minors. (Rashi)

We understand that the Kohanim-The Priestly cast are to play an important role as living examples of holiness and purity for the entire nations. Therefore they are saddled with extra restrictions and responsibilities. Now we also discover here that the Kohanim parents must make it clear to their children and see to it that they maintain their spiritual innocence as well. How are the Kohanim to accomplish this second task? Where is the manual for success in relating the holy work of one generation to the next?

The Gemorah (Yevamos 114A) indicates that the first "say" is directed at the adults to remain pure and be distant from contaminants while the 2nd "say to them" is a directive to the elders to see to it that the young also abide. How is that at all helpful?

Whenever a statement in Pirke' Avos is introduced with the words, "He used to say"- "Hu Haya Omer" the Rav Bartenura, explains it to mean that he said it frequently and repeatedly. It was not a one-time statement, a quotable moment at an inaugural address. Another explanation can be gleaned from the opposite of the following bizarre example:

A young doctor gave an amazingly clear presentation about the dangers associated with cigarette smoking. Everyone left the auditorium so inspired, informed, and impressed that it would be hard to imagine that anyone who witnessed the talk could ever touch one of those tobacco sticks. Yet the very next day that same doctor was spotted in the street dragging shamelessly on a cigarette.

When approached and reproached with both shock and dismay he responded in a cavalier fashion, in much the same way Bertrand Russel the world famous ethics professor did when he was caught in an uncompromising situation with a co-ed, he is reported to have retorted, "If I was a math professor, would you expect me to be a triangle?" So said this doctor, "What do you want from me? That was a lecture!" Whenever the Mishne says, "Hu Haya Omer-He used to say" it may be read more literally, "He was what he spoke!"

In the 1st paragraph of "Shema" we recite twice daily, "and these words that I command you today you shall place on your heart", and then it states, "and you shall teach them to them to your children..." Why in that order? Children read the heart! They know if we are whole or half-hearted in what we preach. How else can they know whether we have first internalized the message we are delivering besides through the tone?

In the 2nd Paragraph of "Shema" which is also on the post of every door in a Jewish home it states, "Educate them to speak in them (words of Torah)", and now comes the "how", "with your sitting in your house and with your going on your way, and with your lying down and rising up." How do we teach them the way? The way we go about our business speaks louder than any lecture.

Children can instruct us more than adults on this subject. When asked, "How do you know whom to marry, 10 year old Alan answered, "You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming." A middle aged man I was learning with decided that to honor his son's Bar Mitzva he would begin to put on Tefillin. His son turned to him with all earnest and said, "Dad, I want to do just like you! When I'm 46 I'm going to start putting on Tefillin too." We are all teaching by what we say and do and they just follow the leader.

## ■ THE UNKNOWN DAYS OF THE JEWISH CALENDAR : RABBI YEHUDA SPITZ

This coming week, an unsuspecting person wishing to catch a minyan, who walks into a random shul in many places around the world, might be in for a surprise. After the Shemoneh Esrei prayer on Sunday there will be no Tachanun. On Monday there will be Selichos; and on Thursday there again won't be Tachanun! Why would this be? No Tachanun generally signifies that it is a festive day; yet, no other observances are readily noticeable. As for the reciting of Selichos on Monday, they are usually reserved for a fast day; yet no one seems to be fasting! What is going on?

The answer is that three separate specific "Unknown Days" happen to fall out on during this apparently chock-full week.

**Pesach Sheini** Sunday, the 14th of Iyar, is dubbed 'Pesach Sheini', which commemorates the day when those who were unable to bring the annual Korban Pesach (special Pesach sacrifice - Pascal lamb) at its proper time (Erev Pesach), were given a second chance to offer this unique Korban. Although technically not considered a true holiday, and despite the fact that it is (astonishingly!) not listed in the traditional halachic sources as one of the days that Tachanun is not recited, nevertheless, the custom for many is not to recite Tachanun on Pesach Sheini, in order to 'tap into' the merit that this particular day had during the times of the Beis HaMikdash. Although the Pri Megadim maintains that Tachanun should be recited on Pesach Sheini - as the original day it is commemorating was only meant for individuals in unique circumstances, and its absence of mention in the traditional halachic sources as one of the days that Tachanun is not recited speaks volumes, nevertheless, most authorities rule that one should not say Tachanun on this day.

There is an interesting common custom associated with Pesach Sheini - eating Matzah; but that is not noticeable in shul. Another interesting fact about Pesach Sheini is that it is commonly considered the Yahrzeit of Rabi Meir Baal HaNeis, and many visit his kever in Teveria on that day.

**BeHa"b** This coming Monday will be the third and final day of a semi-annual period that many do not even realize exists: a series of "Days of Tefilla" colloquially known as BeHa"b. This acronym stands for Monday (Beis - 2nd day of the week), Thursday (Hei - 5th day of the week), and the following Monday (Beis). These days are observed on the first Monday, Thursday, and Monday following the earliest Rosh Chodesh after Pesach (Rosh Chodesh Iyar), and likewise after Sukkos (Rosh Chodesh Marcheshvan).

The custom of utilizing these specific days for prayer and supplication is already mentioned almost 900 years ago by the Baalei Tosafos, its importance reiterated by the Tur, and unbeknownst to many, actually codified in halacha by the Shulchan Aruch as a proper minhag.

**Whose Minhag Is It, Anyway?** Although both the Tur and Rema refer to BeHa"b as a German-French custom, and the Shulchan Gavoa'h (cited Imaaseh by the Kaf Hachaim) writes that this was not the minhag in Spain, implying that Sefardim are not beholden to keep BeHa"b, nevertheless, it must be noted that the Shulchan Aruch himself must have felt strongly about this minhag of BeHa"b, as aside for spending a whole siman on it - Orach Chaim 492, he also refers to it and its importance in at least two other locations - Orach Chaim 429: 2 and 566: 2 - 4. However, in the latter citing he does refer to fasting b'tzibbur for BeHa"b as an Ashkenazic minhag.

Later Sefardic authorities as well, including the Knesses HaGedolah, Pri Chodosh and Chida (ad loc.) also discuss its importance. Therefore, this author finds it interesting that the general Sefardic minhag is not to recite BeHa"b. In fact, the Siman referring to BeHa"b - Orach Chaim 492, is noticeably absent from the Yalkut Yosef Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, implying that it is not relevant to the average Sefardi.

And it is not just the general Sefardi populace who do not recite BeHa"b. Already in his time, the Taz noted that even among Ashkenazic communities BeHa"b observance was not widespread. More recently, Rav Menashe Klein z"l, in a side point to the issue being addressed in a teshuva, maintains that one who does not observe BeHa"b is not considered "Poresh Min HaTzibbur" (separating himself from the general community), as even nowadays its observance is not prevalent. But, among many Yeshiva communities, and especially in Eretz Yisrael, reciting BeHa"b twice annually is de rigueur.

**Why Now?** The reason most commonly mentioned by the Poskim why these days of prayer are following the holidays of Pesach and Sukkos, is that over the extended holidays, when there is a mitzvah of feasting and simcha, it is more likely that people may have stumbled in some area due to improper behavior and inadvertent sin, and BeHa"b is meant to help rectify any possible offense. This idea is based on Ivov (Ch. 1: verse 5) who would bring Korbanos after "Yemei Mishteh", or "Days of Feasting". These sins might be due to a variety of probable offenses including: mingling - at a festive meal or even at a Drasha in the Shul (!), Yom Tov and Chol Hamoed related transgressions, Chillul Hashem, or overabundance of merriment and gastronomical pleasures.

Other explanations offered to explain why BeHa"b was established include: To entreat Hashem to strengthen our bodies especially at the time of changing seasons when many are likely to get ill.

To beseech Hashem that we should have abundant harvests after Pesach and plentiful rains after Sukkos.

To commemorate Queen Esther's original 3-day fast (which actually was Pesach time, and not Purim time). This is pushed off until the first opportunity after Chodesh Nissan. [The Taanis Esther that we fast before Purim is not really due to Esther's actual fast as recorded in the Megillah, but rather to commemorate that when the Jews went to war against the anti-Semites of their day, they fasted].

Yet, interestingly, although BeHa"b is traditionally meant to be a fast day, still, very few actually do fast, as in our generations people are considered weaker. Instead, we make do with Selichos (and perhaps Divrei Mussar), with the majority also reciting Avinu Malkeinu. This rationale is found in many sefarim, including the Chavos Yair, Aruch Hashulchan, Mishnah Berurah, and Kaf Hachaim, who cites this as the Minhag of Prague.

This certainly holds true with BeHa"b, as it is based on a minhag and not an actual Biblical source. That is why our fellow walking in would not likely see any other signs of a traditional fast day.

**Monday, Thursday, Prayer Days...** Monday and Thursday are considered especially potent days for prayer, as Moshe Rabbeinu climbed Har Sinai to receive the Torah on a Thursday and returned with it on a Monday. A mnemonic to showcase this is the first pasuk read on a public fast day Haftara (Yeshaya Ch. 55: verse 6) "Dirshu Hashem B'H imatzo" - "Seek out Hashem when He is to be found". The letters Beis and Hei show that an auspicious time when Hashem may be found is on Monday and Thursday; therefore Mondays and Thursdays are preferable for fasting and prayer. For whichever reason BeHa"b was established, we certainly shouldn't let this golden opportunity for tefilla pass us by.

**Lag B'Omer** The third of these 'Unknown Days' with no other obvious observances during davening except the omission of Tachanun on Thursday, is Lag B'Omer [18th of Iyar]. There are several reasons offered for why Tachanun is not said on Lag B'Omer, including:

It is the day when Rabbi Akiva's 24,000 students stopped dying.

It is the day when the Mann (manna) started to fall, feeding Bnei Yisrael in the Midbar.

It is the day when Rabi Shimon bar Yochai and his son, Rabi Elazar came out of the cave they hid in for 13 years.

It is Rabi Shimon bar Yochai's Yahrzeit; however, it is important to note that this understanding might actually be based on a simple printing mistake, and many authorities, including the Chida and Ben Ish Chai, maintain that Lag B'Omer is not truly his Yahrzeit.

It is the day when Rabi Akiva gave Semicha to his five new students (including Rabi Shimon bar Yochai) after the 24,000 died, allowing the Torah's mesorah to perpetuate.

It is the day when Rabi Shimon bar Yochai's hidden Torah, the Zohar, became revealed to the world.

In Eretz Yisrael, this quasi-holiday is widely celebrated, with over half-a million people converging on, to visit, daven, and dance at the grave of Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai, thus lending an electrified atmosphere to the sleepy mountaintop town of Meron in the Galil. Thousands visit the grave of Shimon HaTzaddik in Yerushalayim as well.

Indeed, due to the tremendous influx of Chutznikim to visit Rabi Shimon on 'his day', some opine that in Eretz Yisrael, Lag B'Omer has recently become the new 'third Regel', far overshadowing the amount of visitors for Shavuos.

With enormous bonfires (mostly built by neighborhood children!) seemingly on almost every street corner, Lag B'Omer in Eretz Yisrael has since also become a pyromaniac's delight and the firefighters' and asthmatics' nightmare.

Other locales have a different sort of custom, such as the one in Krakow, Poland to visit the illustrious Rema's grave on Lag B'Omer, as it is his Yahrzeit as well. Yet, in most of Chu"tz La'aretz, there is no other real commemoration or observances of this special day, unless one counts the "traditional" game of baseball and subsequent barbeque. So, it is quite possible that our clueless colleague might just wonder about the omission of Tachanun on Lag B'Omer.

Hopefully, by showcasing these relatively "Unknown Days", this article should help raise awareness and appreciation of them and their customs. Incredibly, as we are climbing upwards in this unique time period of Sefiras HaOmer, in anticipation of Kabbalas HaTorah, Hashem has given us an opportunity to observe a few special Yemei Tefilla. May we be zocheh to utilize them to their utmost!

# Good Shabbos

## ■ SHABBOS SCHEDULE

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## ■ CLASSES

» Gemara Yevamos for men (M-Fr, 6-6:40A)

» Professional's Kollel-9:00A-11:00A

» Gemara Nazir for men (Sunday-Wednesday 8:30P)

» Menuchah Principle for Men: Thursday nights in shul

» Gates of Prayer for Women: Sunday nights at home of Ariella Bush

» Chumash for men & women (Shabbos: Check Schedule)

» Beis Medrash Learning for men including "Shabbos Malkusa" Chaburah-(Shabbos: Check Schedule)