

SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos	→	7:00 PM
ON TIME SHABBOS:	NEW	7:58 PM
Daf Yomi— By R' Teichman		7:30 AM
Shacharis— Followed by Kiddush		8:30 AM
—Sof Zman K"Z—	9:26 א"ג <>	8:50 א"מ
Pirkei Avos -		7:00 PM
Mincha - Followed by Shalosh Seudos		8:00 PM
Maariv -		9:08 PM

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Sunday

Daf Yomi— By R' Teichman	7:30 AM
Shacharis	8:30 AM

Mincha / Maariv	8:10 PM
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Monday - Friday

Daf Yomi— By R' Teichman	5:45 AM
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Shacharis

Monday, Thursday	6:40 AM
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Tuesday ראש חודש	6:30 AM
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Wed., Fri.	6:45 AM
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Mincha (Mon—Thur)	1:45 PM
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Mincha/Maariv	8:10 PM
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Maariv (Mon-Thur)	9:45 PM
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**Rabbi Teichman's Thursday Night
Shiur After Maariv**

SPONSORSHIPS

Kiddush

Sponsored by

Brian Silberberg

In honor of the Yartzheit of his mother

לע"נ פנינה בת שמואל

Shalosh Seudos

Sponsored by

Moshe Chervony

In honor of his father visiting & celebrating
their move to a new home after Shavuos.

To Sponsor please contact Daniel Goldman
Kiddush@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

**Shavuos Schedule
To be released soon**

Shul Contacts

@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

Rabbi Teichman

410-570-3333 or ravzt@hotmail.com

Gabaim:

Naftali Miller (Rishon) & Yossi Frydman (Sheni)- Gabbai@

Laining Schedule:

Gavi Cohn- Lain@

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Shul Upkeep and General Repair & Maintenance:

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Seforim & Sidurim Library Manager & Dedication Contact:

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Ethan Berner & Yaakov Berkowitz- Building@

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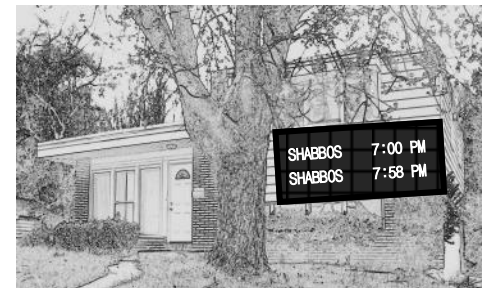
שבת קודש

פרשת בהר- בחוקותי

מברכים חודש סיון

כ"ז אייר

אהל משה



Rabbi Zvi Teichman

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Issue#234

Winning the Real Game

This week we recite a phrase that one could claim represents the Torah's secret for success in life.

אם בחקתי תלכו... (ויקרא כו ג) If you will follow my decrees... Rashi explains in the name of the Sifra to mean, שתהיו עמלים בתורה, that you shall toil in my Torah. The Torah goes on to enumerate that one who does so will be assured miraculous blessings and much prosperity.

A similar phrase is used earlier, when the Torah exhorts us not to emulate the ways of the other nations, when it states, ובחקתיהם לא תלכו (שם יח ג), and do not follow their decrees.

Here Rashi, quoting the Sifra once again, tells us that this prohibition relates specifically to not attending the "theaters" and "stadiums" that are part of their נימוסות, customs and manner, that are deeply ingrained into their nation's culture. The Torah's careful choice in using this phrase exclusively in these two contexts, would seem to be teaching us a lesson, in the contrasting of these two diametrically opposed pursuits.

Is the "toiling in Torah" merely an antidote to the indulgence in foreign entertainment?

Doesn't our commitment to toil in Torah encompass and enhance so many other more noble areas of life?

Is the sum total of our duty to toil merely the avoidance of theaters and stadiums? We assert in our prayers each day:

ברוך הוא אלקינו, שבראנו לכבודו, והבדילנו מן התועים, ונתן לנו תורת אמת, וחיי עולם נטע בתוכנו, Blessed is He our God, Who created us for His glory, separated us from those who stray, gave us the Torah of truth and implanted eternal life within us. הוא יפתח לבנו בתורתו וישם בלבנו אהבתו ויראתו, ולעשות רצונו ולעבדו בלבב שלם, He will open our heart with love and awe of Him and that we may do His will and serve Him wholeheartedly.

למען לא ניגע לריק, ולא נגד לבהלה. So that we do not struggle in vain nor produce in futility.

Without this last sentence, this sentiment expressed would have seemed complete.

We evince gratitude to God for distinguishing us, through His gift of Torah, from the "strayers" and infusing us with a love, fear and absolute dedication to Him.

Apparently that's not enough. We must add a final word of thanks for His granting our struggles purpose and making our produce last.

Is that a goal? It is certainly a healthy byproduct of our relationship that we live with purpose, but is that indeed the objective?

This prayer echoes a sentiment expressed by the Prophet Yeshaya (סה כג) but that verse too is based on one in our portion.

The Torah foretells of the ominous curses that will befall our nation as a result of our becoming loathsome of God's decrees. In consequence God will assign בהלה, anxious panic, dispatching an assortment of unexpected diseases, and we will sow our seeds לריק, in vain. (ויקרא כו ט)

The entire theme of the תוכחה, "Admonition", is a string of exercises in futility. Our investment of efforts to raise crops and bring success to our children will be foiled, with our adversaries diminishing us, leaving us totally bereft.

The בהלה, anxious frustration and fear, and our efforts לריק, in vain, seem to be emphasized as the underlying motif of the curses.

What is being conveyed in the usage of these terms to describe our punishment?

Man was created with an instinct to "toil" and "produce".

From the moment he was placed in the Garden of Eden he was enjoined by God לעבדה ולשמרה (בראשית ב ט) to work it and preserve it.

Man was endowed with a need to labor and be productive.

When our lives are empty of purposeful activity we get bored, because the very nature of man needs to be industrious.

The Torah provides a context for all of our life's activities to be have meaning by imbuing every facet of our lives with an ability to inspire and radiate the glory of God and His values.

When man abandons the call to duty, he must find a substitute for that craving for purpose.

There are those who place financial gain, the pursuit of power or fame as the "purpose" in their lives, enabling them to mimic the innate desire to work and yield results.

But divested of a true sense of Divine mission and purpose, it quickly devolves into an exercise in futility, chasing that elusive goal of happiness. It creates בהלה, panicked anxiety and feelings of לריק, purposelessness.

Theaters and spectator sports artificially feed these needs as well.

Sport events provide a vicarious sense of activity. It has been observed that hormone levels rise within spectators in the same manner it does in athletes.

Plays, movies and comedy in their imaginative portrayal of aspects of reality or beyond, placate the inherent desire to be creative.

The Holy Sefas Emes teaches that the word חוק used in our instances, refers to our essential nature, something חקוק etched into our very being.

Only Torah, and its system, provides the most genuine reflection of our innermost drive.

The חוק referred to in these verses imply the external manifestation of our innate self.

One can, however, replace it synthetically with false ambitions and goals. It too then becomes a חוק part of one's nature that needs to be constantly fed in order to pacify it. But at the end of the day, it never can satisfy fully, for nothing but true value has the "nutrients" to satisfy the soul's cravings. This the Sefas Emes claims is the underlying principle in the injunction not to follow the "decrees" of the nations; do not replace our innate needs with false ones.

(שפי"א ליקוטים אחרי מות)

We affirm every morning that we seek a life that לא ניגע לריק we shall not "toil" in vain, nor לבהלה be "producers" of artificial nutrients. This indeed is the bottom line of our existence on earth.

We beseech in the very next sentence:

יהי רצון מלפניך, ה' אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו, שישמר חשיד בעולם הזה,

May it be Your will, Hashem, our God and the God of our forefathers, that we observe Your decrees in This World

ונזכה ונחיה ונרא, ונירש טובה וברכה, לשני ימות המשיח, ולחיי העולם הבא and merit that we live and see and inherent goodness and blessing in the years of Messianic times and for the life of the World to Come.

We first affirm our inherent nature bequeathed to us by God when He chose us from the other nations.

We then conclude with a prayer that we shall indeed successfully preserve that "חוקי", the very essence of who we are and never replace it with false ambitions and artifice.

בהבה,
צבי טייכמן



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COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT:

This Sunday after Mincha/Maariv everyone is urged to participate in the Maryland Marriage Referendum Initiative by signing the petition.

Please see Naftali Miller who will direct you in how to precisely sign the form.

Hey Members!

ARE YOU COMMITTED?
TO SUPPORTING THE BUILDING FUND

NEW CHABURA!

The Ohel Moshe Mishnayos Chabura!
(OMMC for short)

Beginning after Shavuot, we plan to cover roughly one perek of Mishna per week, starting from maseches Brachos. The chabura will be structured so that participation is welcome but not required.

Anyone who is interested should contact
Pinchas Friedman at pinchas.friedman@gmail.com