

SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos	→	5:40 PM
Friday Night Learning		7:30 PM
Daf Yomi		7:30 AM
Shacharis-Followed by Kiddush		8:30 AM
-Sof Zman K"ס-	9:28 א"ג <	8:48 א"ג >
Mincha—Early		2:15 PM
Mincha - Followed by Shalosh Seudos		5:40 PM
Maariv -		6:50 PM

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Sunday

Shacharis I	6:50 AM
Daf Yomi— By R' Teichman	7:30 AM
Shacharis II	8:30 AM
Mincha / Maariv	5:50 PM

Monday - Friday

Daf Yomi— By R' Teichman	5:45 AM
Shacharis	
Monday, Thursday	6:40 AM
Tues., Wed., Friday	6:45 AM
Mincha (Mon –Thur)	1:45 PM
Daf Yomi (Take II)	9:00 PM
Maariv (Mon-Thur)	9:45 PM

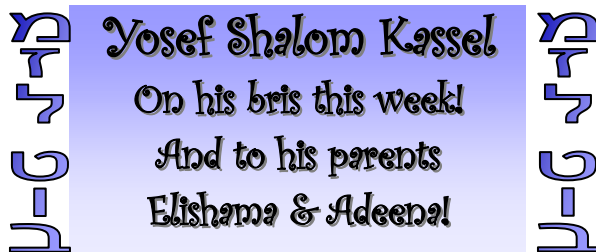
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Shul Contacts

@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

Rabbi Teichman

410-570-3333 or ravzt@hotmail.com

Gaboim:

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

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Rabbi Zvi Teichman

CONGREGATION OHEL MOSHE
2808 SMITH AVE
BALTIMORE, MD 21209
WWW.OHELMOSHEBALTIMORE.COM
DAVEN@OHELMOSHEBALTIMORE.COM
(410) 878-7521

Issue#274

RABBI'S MESSAGE

You Da Man!

(במדבר יט טז) זאת התורה אדם כי ימות באהל (במדבר יט טז) *This is the teaching regarding a man who would die in a tent...*

Although the Torah goes on to describe the detailed laws of impurity as generated from a corpse, nevertheless the Talmud deviates from the simple reading to interpret this verse as referring to devotion to Torah study in general.

Reish Lakish teaches that the phrase ...זאת התורה, should be translated as: *This is the very essence of Torah*; אדם כי ימות באהל, *a man shall "kill" himself (over it) in the tents of study.*

(רש"י ד"ה זאת) Only when one is ready to dedicate himself totally by investing all his energies to the point of exhaustion, will the Torah be upheld and be preserved. (ברכות סג.)

Of all places to transmit this vital lesson, why here? In what way does this relate to the subject being discussed?

Is there anyone who embodied this level of devotion that the Torah calls for?

Rashi in Pirkei Avos, in explaining why the very first Mishna reports that Moshe transmitted the Torah for all of posterity through Yehoshua specifically, as opposed to his other illustrious students, i.e. Eliezer, Pinchas, refers us to a verse in this week's portion.

...ומשרתו יהושע בן נון ער לא ימיש מתוך האהל (שמות לג יא) *His servant Yehoshua the son of Nun, a lad, would not depart from the tent.* Rashi adds, *he didn't desire to transmit it only to one who "killed" himself from a young age in the tents of wisdom... and this was Yehoshua.*

Where is there any evidence of his "killing" himself over the study of Torah other than a reference to his extraordinary diligence from a young age?

Additionally, the Ibn Ezra points out that Yehoshua was 56 years old at this juncture, yet the Torah still refers to him as a "lad" seemingly in the present. If the Torah merely meant, as Rashi states, to emphasize his having started his career as the studious disciple of Moshe at a young age, why then is he still a "נער"?

What does it mean "ממית עצמו", to "kill" oneself? Why the harsh language? Is the exerting of all our effort and strength meant to bring about our death? Doesn't the Torah teach us, *רחם אתכם, כי אתם חיים*, *you shall live by them?*

The brilliantly incisive Ohr Gedalyahu makes a remarkable observation.

All of טומאה, impurity, is related to the process of death that was the consequence of Adam partaking from the Tree of Knowledge. A dead human, animal or rodent transmits impurity. The menstruant woman who sheds the "dying" tissue of the uterine lining becomes impure, until such time as the uterus revives to health once again. The Leper and his decaying flesh, defiles.

Even the level of susceptibility of an entity to absorb טומאה is contingent on how bereft of "life" it is. An earthenware vessel that became defiled can never become pure, it is totally "dead". A fruit can only receive impurity if it is detached from its source of "life", the tree. An animal or gentile who thrives with "life" is impervious to טומאה, defilement, at all.

Yet a Jew, the highest "life form", that comes in contact with טומאה, is the most liable to becoming impure and all of its consequences. This seems to contradict the whole notion behind the concept of טומאה.

אדם כי ימות באהל, *a man who would die in a tent.* The verse discusses the idea of "impurity in a tent", that a corpse spreads its impurity throughout the entire tent.

The Talmud (בבבא מציעא) teaches that only a "אדם", a Jewish corpse, has the power to convey טומאה to the entire tent's contents that it occupies. The corpse of a gentile, although it defiles those who come in physical contact with it, does not spread טומאה through the vehicle of a אהל, a tent. This is based on a teaching of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, that only Jews are entitled "אדם".

Rabbeinu Tam points out several verses throughout the Torah where gentiles are indeed referred to as "humans", אדם, as well. He therefore distinguishes between where it states "האדם", the definite article; "The" Man, and simply, אדם, Man. The former refers to all of

humanity, including gentile, whereas the latter only to Jews.

"The" Man, seems to be the more honorable appellation than simply "Man". Yet the latter is unique to our great nation and the former to all of mankind.

The great Tiferes Yisroel in his commentary to Mishna (בבבא מציעא) reveals the depth in this distinction.

"האדם" can not refer to a specific person, since we never use the definite article in describing an individual. Rather אדם is used here to emphasize a person's "humanity", thus an accomplished individual who selects to seek perfection in a noble way may indeed be referred to as "The" Man, intimating his great humanity. This certainly can reflect on any human being, Jew or gentile.

However, the proper noun, Adam, refers to Adam HaRishon, the first "Man" who was endowed with special qualities naturally. His descendants who are identified with him, by their sharing a similar fate by their having been invested by G-d, with advantages that elevated them towards a higher purpose and mission, are therefore labeled "Adam", because of our common experience and identity.

Adam HaRishon was destined to live for eternity. The moment he sealed his fate by eating of the Tree of Knowledge he began to die. It wasn't an immediate death but the process that determined that each physical day he would live was now finite and a march toward death.

General humanity would now "live" within the limited time they were each allotted. During the course of their full "life" they would ward off the effects of "impurity" that represents death.

The Jewish nation would continue to be part of that quality of "eternity" inherent within Adam, by virtue of their living outside of the realm of a physical world, planting themselves in the אהל of Torah, a sphere of eternity.

We as a nation, embody collectively Adam HaRishon, and are not effected by death when we cling to eternity. The physical realm however, to a nation that grasps eternity, is merely a march towards death. No wonder our physical bodies can absorb impurity, because the corporeal container we reside in is indeed finite. Until such time when we will restore the eternal bond between our soul and its vessel, the body, it will be exposed and vulnerable to the forces of impurity.

The exact definition of the force called "life", is what differentiates us from the gentile.

Perhaps the notion of "killing" oneself, simply means the acceptance that our physical side faces death from the moment it enters this world. To the soul however, each day exists independently on the continuum of eternity that we cleave to. To one who lives with a perspective of eternity, there is no aging, only youthful endeavor, as we discover new opportunities for growth each day, never growing stale.

Yehoshua was eternally "young", since he viewed his life as limitless. He never submitted to the limitation of physicality, always maintaining his connection to eternal Adam and his quest for the infinite.

We often think that we are given a limited amount of time by which we must accomplish our unique goal. This is a misconception. We are given morsels of eternity every day. Each day that is empty is forever lost. But the flip side of this idea is that despite yesterday's loss, today is just the beginning of eternity again.

May we never get "old" in our Avodas Hashem. May we never get discouraged by our failures. One who lives with an eye towards eternity can always pick up where one left off!

We precede פרשת החודש, the heralding of the new month of Nissan, with the reading of פרשת פרה, the laws of purification from the defilement of death. If we understand how inherently pure we are, merely encrusted with a finite outer layer, we will be able to discover the strength to regenerate towards greatness!

באהבה, צבי טייכמן

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Elliot Einbinder on the Yartzheit of his mother Susan Einbinder

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FRIDAY NIGHT LEARNING

After 7:30 PM

