

## SCHEDULE

ליל שבת קדש

**Early Mincha & Shabbos** @Main Shul **7:00 PM**

**Candle Lighting &**

**On Time Mincha** @ Social Hall **7:27 PM**

יום שבת קדש

Daf Yomi - *By Rabbi Teichman* **7:30 AM**

Shacharis- Followed by Kiddush **8:30 AM**

-Sof Zman K"ס- גר"א 9:03 גר"א 9:46

Mincha - **2:15 PM**

**Pirkei Avos** - *By Rabbi Teichman* **6:50 PM**

Mincha - **7:20 PM**

- Followed by Shalosh Seudos

Maariv - **8:37 PM**

CANDLES NEXT SHABBOS - 7:34PM



### MAZAL TOV! Zvi Friedman

**On your Auf'Ruf this Shabbos!**  
*And your upcoming marriage to Avital Mirsky!*

**Mazal Tov as well to Murray & Lisa  
Friedman and the entire Friedman family!**

### Weekday Minyanim

#### Sunday

Shacharis I **6:50 AM**

Daf Yomi **7:30 AM**

Shacharis II **8:30 AM**

Mincha / Maariv **7:35 PM**

#### Weekdays

Daf Yomi **5:45 AM**

*Shacharis:*

-Monday & Thursday **6:40 AM**

-Tue, Wed, Fri **6:45 AM**

Mincha (Mo -Th) **1:45 PM**

MINCHA/MAARIV **7:35 PM**

Daf Yomi (Take II) **9:00 PM**

Maariv (Mo - Th) **9:45 PM**

## SPONSORSHIPS

### Kiddush

Sponsored by:

**Murray & Lisa Friedman**  
*In honor of the AufRuf of their son Zvi*  
*And his upcoming marriage to Avital Mirsky!*

### Shalosh Seudos

Sponsored by ???

*Oy... When is Rob coming back?*

To Sponsor please contact Donny Adler  
Kiddush@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

## NEW MEMBERS! SAY HI!



### Shul Contacts

@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

#### **Rabbi Teichman**

410-570-3333 or ravzt@ohelmoshebaltimore.com

#### Gaboim:

Naftali Miller (Rishon) & Chaim Meister (Sheni)- Gabbai@

#### Laining Schedule:

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*Rabbi Zvi Teichman*

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Issue #377

# RABBI'S MESSAGE: *Pop Goes the Weasel!*

The great prophet Elisha had a disciple, Gehazi, who is described as a 'giant in Torah'. Despite his great prowess in Torah, Gehazi was a troubled individual. This was evident in the episode where Elisha cures the arrogant gentile commander of the armies of Aram, Naaman, from his leprosy and refuses to accept any remuneration lest it taint the glorification of G-d's name that resulted from this intervention. Despite his teacher's intention to divest himself of any self-interest, Gehazi overcame with avarice, manages to extract from Naaman compensation for his miraculous recovery. Upon discovering Gehazi's duplicity, Elisha condemns Gehazi to the leprosy that previously afflicted Naaman.

The Talmud records how Elisha was engaged at that time in the study of the laws relating to the שמיטה שרצים, the 'eight small creeping animals', who become contaminated when dead and transmit impurity to people and objects.

When Elisha becomes aware of Gehazi's folly, he admonishes him, "Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and men-servants and maid-servants? Elisha then goes on to declare, "Wicked one, it has come the time to receive the reward for the study of the laws of the 'eight small creeping animals', may the leprosy of Naaman cleave to you and your seed forever."

Rashi points out that the enumeration of the eight items Gehazi sought to acquire with his newfound wealth; money, garments, olive yards, vineyards, sheep, oxen, men-servants and maid-servants, clearly corresponds to the eight small creeping animals, the subject matter Elisha was teaching at the time. (סוטה מז.)

Was this merely coincidental or is there some deeper association between Gehazi's moral failure and these creeping critters? What does it mean to 'receive the reward of the eight small creeping animals'?

The great sixteenth century kabbalist of Safed, the Sifsei Cohen, teaches that each one of these specific eight creatures correspond to the different powerful forces the Yetzer HaRa, the Evil Inclination utilizes in his quest to cripple and defeat us.

The very first in this cast of usual suspects is the חֲזִיל, which according to Rashi is the weasel.

The Talmud relates that each of these eight impure land animals, aside from the weasel, have a 'counterpart in the sea' that is of a pure nature. (חולין קכז.)

Reb Tzadok says that the land and its inhabitants which are visible and tangible is a metaphor for 'this world', whereas the sea, which conceals its denizens, symbolizes that which is yet hidden and thus an allegory for 'the world to come'. (קדושת המנוחה אות פ.)

The existence of these dual entities on land and in sea indicates the possibility of transforming the forces of impurity towards purity.

The weasel however, by its very absence from the sea, indicates that this force called חזל, will only be fully conquered in the world to come.

King David in Tehillim, in the chapter that summons man to use his sojourn on earth to enhance his spiritual development for the world to come, calls to mankind: 'האזינו כל יושבי הקל', give ear all you dwellers of decaying earth. (תהלים מז ב.)

Rebbi Zeira points out that the word used here to refer to 'earth' is חזל, a reference to a world where, as opposed to its compatriot creeping animals that also dwell in a sense in the sea, only weasels inhabit exclusively and not in the sea. It is for that reason that this earth we tread upon is called by King David, חזל.

Evidently there is a profound lesson to be derived in understanding the nature of the weasel that defines our greatest challenge here on terra firma, that of conquering the evil inclination.

The Midrash adds one more element: The weasel drags its catches endlessly, placing it in its burrow not knowing even why or for whom it does so. So too, do the inhabitants of this world ceaselessly hoard without any consciousness as to why. (ליקוט תהלים רמז תשנז.)

The word the Torah uses to describe this class of creatures is שרצים, the plural of שרץ. The Ramban alleges that the word שרץ is an expression of their nature to scurry about, rooted in the word, רץ, to run. A שרץ is called such because, שרץ-ש, for it runs. (רמב"ן בראשית א כ.)

The chief of these manic 'runners' is the weasel who has absolutely no awareness of purpose or

plan, simply running mindlessly in an endless pursuit towards nowhere and nothing.

The gravest danger we face in life is living mindlessly. Even while we engage in the spiritual duties we instinctively fulfill, we so often do it without any consciousness of the nobility of the act we are engaged in, nor of our privileged stature to be part of a greater mission.

When one functions without that sense of a higher resolve and self-importance, one is more likely to succumb to the forces of baser instinct and temptation.

The Jerusalem Talmud reports three shortcomings of Gehazi that doomed him.

Firstly he was a עין צר, a stingy person. When the students came to attend the lectures of Elisha they would often find Gehazi sitting at the entrance to the study hall. They concluded that if Gehazi is not inside listening to the lecture then who are they to be worthy of attending. Gehazi thus selfishly hoarded his teacher, fending off others from sharing in his greatness.

Secondly he was פרוץ בערה, promiscuous. When the Shunamite woman threw herself down in grief, grabbing on to the feet of the prophet Elisha, Gehazi appropriately pulled her away. But we are told that he groped at her while doing so.

Finally, we are told, לא היה מודה בתורת המצוי, he didn't assert an absolute belief in the revival of the dead. When Elisha dispatched Gehazi to revive the dead child, on his way someone asked him where he was headed and Gehazi responded cynically, "to revive the dead", implying a disbelief in his ability to successfully perform his mission. (סנהדרין י"ה"ב)

Perhaps Gehazi fell short of his living with that mindfulness of who he actually was and what he represented. Thinking he was just a 'smart weasel', Gehazi lapsed in the consciousness of how his sitting out the lecture would impact others.

Although dutifully protecting the honor of his teacher by peeling away the woman from his feet, he neglected to put his role and stature into the proper context. Were he to have realized his station and his role as primary disciple of the illustrious prophet, he never would have succumbed to his baser instincts.

Lastly, because he lived with a diminished sense of importance, he jokingly questioned his worthiness in carrying out his great teacher's directive. Little did he realize the impact that doubt would have on the perception of others and in his subsequent inability to indeed fulfill his mission.

When we live with a super-consciousness that defines our every act and elevates our sense of purpose, we can overcome the instinct to burrow ourselves into an unconscious state that allows us to indulge in inappropriate behavior, that comes too easily in that mindless state.

One who lives on that low plain, places the value of his actions merely in terms of a material world and its offerings. No wonder then that Gehazi was told that the riches he sought was his due 'reward' of the 'eight small creatures', a currency that has no higher value, merely serving as the stuffing that fills the tunnels of the mindless weasel.

The gematria of the name (38) יצחק plus its number of letters, 5, is numerically equivalent to the (42) חזק, and one for itself, (כולל) 1=43!

In the Song of the Universe, the שרצים, the small creeping animals sing out: ידי כבוד ד', לעולם ישמח ד' במעשיו (תהלים קה לא), May the glory of G-d endure forever, let G-d rejoice in His works.

The חזילה, the weasel sings: כל הנשמה תהלל י-ה הללויה-ה (שם קג ו), Let all souls praise G-d, Halleluyah!

These unseemly creatures challenge our ability to climb out of our underground tunnels we have comfortably ensconced ourselves in, and to discover that even what may seem as the lowliest of beings have purpose and G-d rejoices in them. We simply have to live with that consciousness in order to let our souls burst out with joy in that awesome realization.

בארובה,  
צבי טייכמאן



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!!!HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!!

Yaakov & Essie Berkowitz

This info is provided by YOU through the member database. Please be sure to update so we can celebrate and commemorate important dates with you!



PLEASE NOTE: THE BUILDING IS ALARMED NIGHTLY!

If you are the last one out at any time please lock all windows and doors, and if its after the last Maariv please arm the alarm using the keypad at the side door. Instructions posted. Please do not enter the Shul late at night or before the 1st Shacharis if you don't know the alarm code. See Naftali Miller, Chaim Meister or Rabbi Teichman if you are often first to arrive and need the code.

Visit [www.jewishcaringnetwork.org](http://www.jewishcaringnetwork.org) for details and to register for or support the Ohel Moshe Men's or Women's teams. The teams are dedicated as a Zechus for a refuah Shelaimah for מאיר שאול יצחק בן דבורה יעל.