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Contributions of \$36+ toward the Simchas Torah Kiddush will be listed.

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By Ari Braun and Frank & Beverly Berger

*In honor of Nat turning 12 and  
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### Mezonos Kiddush Sukkos Day II

By Moshe & Chana Dejman

*L'iluy Nishmas Dov ben Zvi, Yonatan Alexander ben Tzvi  
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### Kiddush - שבת חול המועד

By Mark & Shoshana Goldberg

*For the Yahrzeit of Marks mother, Devora Bas Michael*

Continued on next page

## Shul Contacts

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### Rabbi Teichman

410-570-3333 or ravzt@ohelmoshebaltimore.com

#### Gaboin:

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION  
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### SPECIAL SIMCHAS TORAH OPPORTUNITY:

*The Shul has recently been gifted a Torah from the  
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On Simchas Torah Day, we will welcome the Sefer to  
our Aaron Kodesh as we dance it over for an  
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For a donation of \$100 toward the Simchas  
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Email now to grab your spot or see a gabbai at Shul.  
*Opportunity limited to the first 15*

## SCHEDULE

See Posted Full Schedule for Events & More Details Online & in Shul

### Eruv Tavshlin

### Eruv Tavshlin

הושענא רבה - ערב שמיני עצרת ושמחת תורה

Mincha & Candles - Followed by Drasha & Maariv 6:15 PM

### שמיני עצרת ושמחת תורה

Daf Yomi - By Rabbi Teichman (Both Days) 7:30 AM

Shacharis - (Both Days) 8:30 AM

Mincha - Auction follows on Thurs for day & night Kibudim (Both Days) 6:15 PM

Maariv- Thur - After the auction ~ Fri - After Mincha & Kabbalas Shabbos

### שבת בראשית

Daf Yomi - By Rabbi Teichman 7:30 AM

Shacharis - Followed by Kiddush 8:30 AM

Mincha - 2:15 PM & 6:00 PM

Shalosh Seudos Follows Late Mincha

Maariv 7:20 PM

### Week of 10/15 (After Sukkos)

Shacharis Sunday 6:50 AM & 8:30 AM (Daf 7:30)

Shacharis M-F 6:45 AM (6:35M&th/6:30 Fr - R' Chodesh)

Daf Yomi - (Mon - Fr) 5:45 AM

Daf Yomi Be'Halacha - (Mon - Th) 7:25 AM

Shacharis II Monday-Friday 7:50 AM

Mincha (Mon - Fr) 1:45 PM

Mincha/Maariv (Sun - Th) 6:15 PM

Maariv (Sun - Th) 9:45 PM



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### SPECIAL SAFETY REQUESTS FOR SIMCHAS TORAH

Parents: Please keep tabs on children, especially young children, during  
HaKafos. We want to make sure that in all the excitement and joy nobody is  
put at risk with the main road and the crowds moving about. Shul policy is  
that there is to be no underage drinking and we ask that any unsupervised  
alcoholic beverages be reported immediately to a gabbai. Thank you!

### CANDLE LIGHTINGS:

Erev 1st Days - 6:26pm

Thur 1st Days - After 7:33pm

Fri 1st Days - Before 6:23pm

Erev 2nd Days - 6:15pm

Thur 2nd Days - After 7:23pm

Fri 2nd Days - Before 6:12pm

**DON'T FORGET ERUV TAVSHILIN ON EREV YOM TOV BOTH DAYS!**

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שבת חוה"מ סוכות

שמיני עצרת - שמחת תורה

## שבת פרשת בראשית

י - כ"ד תשרי תשע"ח

# אהל משה



Rabbi Zvi Teichman

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Issue #501.2

## RABBI’S MESSAGE: *A Day of Battle*

In the days when the Temple stood, the selection of two he-goats on the Day of Atonement, with one being served up as a ‘Goat to G-d’ while the other, after the High Priest confessed all the sins of the Children of Israel, would be dispatched to the desert and flung off a cliff as the ‘Goat to Azazel’, was symbolic of the purpose of this special day. One goat represented our utter devotion to G-d in service to Him, with the other symbolizing the total casting off of all our sins that were now borne upon the goat.

This process has a historical precedent. When Rivkah gets wind of Yitzchok’s desire to bestow his blessing upon their firstborn son, Esav, she summons Yaakov commanding him to disguise himself as Esav in order to preempt him from receiving the blessings. She tells him to fetch *‘two choice young kids of the goats’* so she may prepare the delicacies his father requested as a prerequisite for the blessing. When Yaakov expresses fear the scheme will be uncovered when his father feels his smooth skin and not the hoary hide of Esav, Rivkah takes the the skins of the he-goats and covers Yaakov’s arms and neck to complete the successful ruse.

We are taught that this designation of Yaakov from Esav, two seemingly identical choices, forebode the ceremony on the Day of Atonement when the High Priest would bring two identical he-goats selecting one for G-d and one to be sent off to Azazel. Esav is described as an שָׂעִיר, *hoary man*, which is the same term to identify a he-goat, due to their hairy hides. The two he-goats and their respective fates parallel the dichotomy of a Yaakov and Esav, one destined for greatness, the other fated for doom.

This struggle between brothers is merely the manifestation of the ultimate battle betwixt the Evil Inclination and the Good Inclination. The Maharal in light of this, points out that the word used to portray Esav as the שָׂעִיר, *Sa’ir*, is numerically equivalent to the word used to depict our greatest adversary, הַיָּצֵר הרע, *‘The Evil Inclination’*. They are indeed one in the same.

The confession of our sins, the culmination of Teshuva, repentance, is what permits us to disengage from sin, casting our lot with Yaakov, and piling our iniquities on the back of Esav, whose hairy pelt is impossibly entangled in ‘chaff’; sin, unable to divest his urges and selfish interests.

The Holy Ohr HaChaim teaches that our greatest שוֹנֵא, enemy, is the evil inclination. The very first use of this term in Torah alludes to Esav. When Lavan wishes his sister Rivkah well as she heads off to marry Yitzchok he blesses her that her progeny should inherit שַׂרְיָא, the *gate of its foes*. This is a prophetic allusion to Yaakov overpowering his enemy, his brother Esav.

The Written Torah never specifically tells us what sins Esav actually committed that earned him the title Esav ‘the’ Wicked. The oral tradition informs us that he was a murderer, an adulterer, an idol worshipper and much more, yet the Torah chose not to enumerate. What can we derive from his behavior that might help us fathom the nature of his inability to shed his negative ways, so we may learn what to avoid?

There are three tales reported in the Torah regarding Esav and his interaction with Yaakov.

Firstly during his vulnerable state of hunger that led him to sell the birthright for some porridge. The second story relates to his attempt to receive the blessings from his father and his subsequent anguish in discovering Yaakov’s deception. Finally when Yaakov prepares to meet up with him and Esav accepts his generous gifts. What did Esav do wrong in any of these episodes?

During the course of my experience in dealing with many disillusioned teens and despairing adults who’ve struggled in their observance of Torah and its demands, I’ve observed some patterns.

The most common excuse is that they simply don’t have the wherewithal to control their urges. They are often convinced that they are beyond ‘free will’ and simply can’t control themselves. Taking it one step further they aver that G-d understands and doesn’t even expect them to restrain themselves.

When Esav finds himself desperately hungry and is offered some cooked lentils in exchange for the birthright he begins to ponder the consequences of that sale. Realizing that the birthright requires of him to serve in the Temple making him liable to the consequences of doing something wrong in the service that may even

warrant his death, he exclaims, *“Look I am going to die, so of what use to me is the birthright?”* (רש"י בראשית כ"ה לב)

Esav’s first fatal flaw was his claim that certain things are simply beyond his ability and clearly never intended for him. In order to repent one’s ways one must first have an abiding faith that indeed there is nothing in the Torah that doesn’t apply to him unless specifically excepted. In the absence of that belief it is easy to slide down the slippery slope of total denial of responsibility.

The next error people make is that even after accepting they are responsible for their actions they feel that they are unworthy of G-d’s assistance in overcoming their challenges. This often leads them to then become depressed and self-deprecating which is inevitably followed by total despondence that can descend to self-affliction and harm.

Esav sees all his hope for a rich and successful future disappear when he learns that Yitzchok already transferred the blessing to Yaakov. He gives out a loud scream, cries and sheds tears. The Midrash teaches that Esav, in a moment of clarity, was truly regretful. Were he to have shed one more tear, we are taught, and we never would have recovered from his complaint. Yet despite that he retreats and can’t concede that perhaps Yaakov is worthier than he and maybe, rather than continue in antagonizing Yaakov, he should show allegiance to Yaakov’s noble mission. He begs his father to nevertheless bless him. Yitzchok grants him his wish, seemingly bestowing upon him a very similar blessing to Yaakov’s. But there is one gaping difference. To Yaakov he says, *“And may G-d give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth...,”* but to Esav he merely states, *“Behold, of the fatness of the earth shall be your dwelling and of the dew of the heavens from above”*. The mention of G-d is omitted in Esav’s blessing. Yaakov’s blessing is contingent on his relationship with G-d, whereas Esav’s is unconditional. Esav simply can’t have a reciprocal relationship with G-d, for despite his acknowledgment of G-d’s existence, he feels himself unworthy of any connection. This second flaw dooms him to a hopeless chase, bereft of a supportive and loving G-d, in seeking the next pleasure that he is convinced will surely bring him happiness, but will ultimately consume him as he self-destructs.

Lastly, a grave miscalculation that people make is thinking, hey, I’m a good guy, I give charity, am decent to people, I do some great deeds; G-d will certainly overlook my shortcomings. Certainly G-d cherishes the good we do, but in a true and honest relationship loyalty is supreme. Simply bringing home flowers cannot condone for neglecting one’s responsibilities to the one most devoted to them. G-d wants a healthy and complete bond, for only with that can we experience the exquisiteness of His love.

Esav finally catches up with his ‘fugitive’ brother. Esav’s initial wrath is calmed by the warmth extended to him by Yaakov and in seeing the beauty of his family. He kindly offers to ‘accompany’ Yaakov and join him in a pact of brotherhood. Yaakov smartly declines and feigns that one day they will meet up again. Unbeknownst to Esav, Yaakov refers to the final accounting in the end of days when Esav and his descendants will be judged for their harsh sins.

Esav typically thinks by ‘being the good and generous brother’ he will be exonerated for all his evil ways. But it doesn’t work that way. Yaakov disengages so that his family will thrive uninfluenced by the corrupt and hate-filled attitudes of Esav.

The emblem of Esav is שוֹנֵא, translated as hatred. Rav Hirsch says that שוֹנֵא is rooted in סנה, a ‘thorn’ bush, representing *distance-keeping and obstructing unfriendly arms against fellowmen whose existence one feels as a hindrance to one’s own progress*. Sinah is the unwillingness to connect, the opposite of אָהַב, love, rooted in דָּב, to give and bond.

This Esav inspired notion of ‘distance’ infiltrated into the home of Yaakov. As a result of Lavan’s deception in replacing Rachel with Leah on the night of Yaakov’s wedding, there was resentment sensed towards Leah. In the naming of her first three children she alludes to her aspiring to rid the family of this dangerous bacterium. Her first son רְאוּבֵן, Reuvain, is so named because G-d רִיבָה, *saw* her humiliation, blessing her with a child, now her husband will love her. The second son שִׁמְעוֹן, Shimon, expresses how G-d שָׁמַע, *heard* how she was unloved, and gave her this child as well. The birth of a third son לֵוִי, Levi, she is convinced, will compel her husband to, לִיבֵה, lovingly *attach* himself to her.

Shimon and Levi in their lifetime exhibited a tinge of the flaw inherited from their Uncle Esav. They decimate the people of Shechem in revenge for the ravishing of their sister Dinah by their leader’s son. Yaakov refuses to bless them on his deathbed because כִּי חָמָס, *their weaponry is a stolen craft*; they utilized the tools that belong to Esav. (תנחומים)

Perhaps it wasn’t simply the violence he was upset about but rather their attitude. When Yaakov confronts them, incredulously taking them to task for besmirching his standing and endangering his family, they respond, *“Should we treat our sister like a harlot?”*

Maybe what Shimon and Levi were really saying was that ‘true it might have been a miscalculation on our part, but how can you fault us and expect us to hold back our instinctive anger, after all it was our sister?’

Yaakov didn’t accept their excuse because in the home of Yaakov there is no such notion of being ‘out of one’s control’. That attitude stems from the influence of Esav. Indeed we find that at least Levi repented when his tribe responded years later to the summons of Moshe to stand up for G-d’s honor in quelling the rebellion at the episode of the Golden Calf where the members of the tribe of Levi proceeded to each *‘...kill his brother, every man his fellow, and every man his near one’*, conquering their natural instinct and response by adhering solely to the ‘will of G-d’.

Reuvain too exhibited a taint of Esav’s attitude. Taking his role as firstborn as a license to uphold the honor of his mother by removing the bed of his father from the tent of Bilhah after Yaakov moved it there upon the death of Rachel, rather than situating it by Leah, relocating it without his father’s consent in Leah’s tent. He too was censured for blindly usurping his father’s authority.

His mother at his birth, however, prophetically named him רְאוּבֵן, Reuvain, a contraction of the words רִאוּ בִן, *see my son*, alluding to the contrast between her son’s behavior and that of the son of her father in law, Yitzchok - Esav. When Esav lost the birthright he rages. When Reuvain loses his birthright to Yosef, for having manipulated his father’s bed, he nevertheless intercedes on Yosef’s behalf in saving him by suggesting to the brothers that rather than kill him they should throw him into a pit.

The Ksav Sofer teaches that there was something more profound about Reuvain than his altruism in rescuing Yosef. The verse states that after convincing the brothers not to kill Yosef, Reuvain returned to sit in sackcloth, continuing his fast to atone for having violated his father’s authority. We are told that Reuvain initiated the concept of repentance. The question begs, isn’t it recorded that Adam and Kayin repented as well? He suggests that the greatness of Reuvain lay in his not permitting himself to ingratiate himself with the great deed he did in saving a life to exonerate himself for having disgraced his father. Reuvain never felt entitled by his deeds, and on the contrary, he continued to forge ahead to absolve the sin of dishonoring his father. No one ever had the circumstance where so admirable of an act was performed that might have seduced the ‘hero’ to believing G-d would now overlook his failures. Reuvain indeed distinguished himself from Esav who lived with the delusion that simply being a ‘good guy’ would convince G-d to ignore his shortcomings.

The sons of Yaakov fall victim to hatred one more time in their jealous reaction to Yosef being favored by their father. They too employ a he-goat using its blood to dip Yosef’s tunic in to dupe their father into believing their claim that Yosef was killed by a wild animal. The he-goat, we are taught, is brought on Yom Kippur to atone for this sin as well.

Yosef is the primary adversary chosen to defeat Esav.

וזהו בית יעקב אש ובית יוסף להבה ובית עשו לקש ודלקו בהם ואכלום... (עובדיה א ח)

*And the house of Yaakov shall be fire and the house of Yosef a flame, and the house of Esav shall become stubble, and they shall ignite them and consume them...*

The Holy Shelah reveals that Esav is likened to קש, stubble, קַשׁ, serving as an acronym for קַנְיָה שוֹנֵא, *jealousy and hatred*. It is the אֵש, *fire* of Yaakov, which serves as well as an acronym for אֱמוּנָה שְׁלוֹם, *truth and peace*, aflame in the soul of Yosef, that will consume Esav.

What quality of Yosef in particular eradicates the influence of Esav?

The Prophet Yeshayahu recalls how Yaakov bemoaned how his *“way has been hidden from the Lord”*. (ישע"י כ"ד) The Midrash explains that Yaakov berated his own lack of of faith in G-d during the many challenges he faced but marveled at the level of trust Yosef had in G-d that must have empowered him to survive so gallantly in the midst of the defilement of Egypt. The Alter of Novardok questions Yaakov’s assumption, perhaps Yosef survived in the merit of his resisting the powerful seduction of the temptress, the wife of Potiphar? He answers that Yaakov understood that the only way one could muster the strength necessary to resist overwhelming temptation is if one is grounded in a consciousness of G-d’s loving presence and assistance at any given moment in life. Without this bond, Yaakov knew, one would inevitably succumb in doubt and inner conflict.

Yosef’s resounding faith and trust in G-d in the most dire of circumstances countered Esav’s pathetic display of despair and sense of defeat that prevented Esav from ever transforming honest regret into positive repentant action.

In order to stave off the evil inclination and repent for having strayed we must reassert our faith in G-d and ourselves. We are all guilty at some level of imitating Esav’s attitude in our daily service of G-d. We refuse to push ourselves beyond our comfort zone believing it is out of our ability. We accept our limitations convincing ourselves we are undeserving of G-d’s special attention. We pacify ourselves by inflating the good we do believing it compensates for our

defects. It all boils down to improving our *emunah*, our beliefs. We must believe we are capable and required of doing the full gamut of *mitzvos* we are obligated in. We must never submit in defeat and must turn to G-d and ask for his assistance and believe no matter how far we have fallen we are worthy of His love. We must never wallow in complacency and be satisfied with what we’ve accomplished for there is so much joy in store for those who seek to grow.

The Holy Zohar refers to the Sukkah as the צֵלָה דמִקְיָמוּתָא, *the shade of belief*.

The Vilna Gaon taught that on Sukkos we celebrate the Clouds of Glory that returned after having departed as a result of the Sin of the Golden Calf, and returned after having achieved full repentance on the Day of Atonement when we received once again the Torah anew. The command to build the Tabernacle, an abode for the Divine Presence in our midst, a sign of G-d accepting our *teshuva* by returning to us, began the day after Yom Kippur. The next few days they collected the requisite materials and then began the construction of the Tabernacle and all its components. The initiation of labor began, he asserts, on the 15th of Tishrei, the first day of Sukkos, with the Clouds of Glory returning then as well.

The *mitzva* of Sukkah is unique among *mitzvos* in that it encompasses our entire body, symbolic of our commitment to the belief that every fiber of our being is a vehicle to fulfill His will without exception. The correspondence of Sukkah to the Tabernacle emphasizes our acknowledgement of His protective presence at all times and circumstances. Even after sinking to new lows by worshipping the golden calf, G-d still accepted them, never waning in His love. The undertaking of the sophisticated task of fashioning the most exquisite objects, by unskilled former slaves was only possible because they possessed that confidence in their relationship with G-d that He would assist them, and indeed they were magnificently successful.

It is indeed a shade of faith and belief, for at the end of the day it is that faith, belief and trust that strengthens us to pull ourselves up time and again knowing He never gives up on our returning to His lovingly protective embrace.

בברכת גמר החימה טובה

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## Building Project - Phase III

*Expanding Our Boundaries & Increasing Our Possibilities!*



**TOTAL PLEDGES: \$197,692.80**

COLLECTED FROM PAYMENT SCHEDULES: \$65,228.04

*Figures reflect new pledges, lump sum gifts and payment plan installments*

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