

SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos	4:30 PM
Shacharis— Followed by Kiddush	8:30 AM
<i>Sof Zman K"ס מ"א 8:49 גר"א 9:25</i>	
Mincha- Followed by Shalosh Seudos	4:25 PM
Maariv	5:36 PM

Sunday

Shacharis	8:30 AM
<i>- Followed by Shiur</i> <i>New Topics from יורה דעה, חולין</i>	
Mincha / Maariv	4:35 PM
TYA Shiur for high school boys	7:30 PM
<i>- Followed by Maariv at 8pm</i>	

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Monday—Friday

Shacharis	Mincha/Maariv
Mon 6:40 / 8:10 AM	12:45 PM
Tues, Wed 6:45 / 8:10 AM	12:45 PM
Thur 8:30 AM Gobble.Gobble.	12:45 / 4:35 / 9:45
Fri 6:30 / 8:10 AM	
Dirshu Halacha Program (M,T,W.F)	7:30AM
Open Beis Hamedrash	7:00 PM
Rabbeinu Yonah Shaar Rishon	9:30 PM
Nightly Maariv (Mon-Thur)	9:45 PM

Thursday Night Shiur by Rabbi Teichman
After Maariv

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Shalosh Seudos

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For more information:

Rabbi Zvi Teichman
ravzt@hotmail.com
410-570-3333

Azi Rosenblum
azirozenblum@gmail.com
443-854-2172

Eitan Schuchman
schuchbalt@yahoo.com
443-929-0755

CONGREGATION OHEL MOSHE

שבת קודש
פרשת חיי שרה
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כ"ד חשוון
אהל משה



Rabbi Zvi Teichman

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

Volume #67

RABBI'S MESSAGE

Patience, Donkey, Patience!

Politic/adj./ characterized by shrewdness in managing, contriving, and dealing. (Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary)

It's very definition portrays for us the essence of the political experience; *managing, contriving, and dealing.*

Is politics truly about values or is it merely about the expediency of victory and the political platforms necessary to win the game? How else can we understand the flip flop of candidates and their positions and the rarity of political entities who steadfastly adhere to their beliefs despite the odds against them?

This week we encounter the world's first "politician", Lavan, or as our Sages more aptly describe him, לבן הרמאי; "Lavan the Deceiver." When Eliezer, the devoted servant of Lavan's great Uncle Avraham, arrives, Lavan "sincerely" offers his assistance upon sighting the vast wealth and riches that has accompanied him. Later on in Parshas VaYeitzei, Lavan portrays himself as the "benevolent" father-in-law of Yaakov Avinu consistently manipulating events in his favor to gain from the obvious blessings of Yaakov. When the circumstances turn against him, despite all his contrivances and manipulations, he pursues Yaakov and his family with a murderous vengeance. When, inevitably, he sees no recourse but to accept the reality of the situation and the hand of providence that favors Yaakov, he quickly assumes the role once again as the "compassionate" patrician, expressing so melodramatically, "the daughters are my daughters, the children are my children...let us make a covenant." Always ready for the deal, never able to maintain any true and lasting values.

The Medrash suggests that the name לבן; "Lavan", is a description of his character, not his actual name. The Medrash explains he was "white" in his wickedness. What does this imply? Perhaps we can offer the following explanation. Color is the product of light and its wavelengths being absorbed and reflected. Black is the resultant effect of the wavelengths of light being totally absorbed. The chemical structure of some objects absorb and subtract some wavelengths, while reflecting others, thus producing the spectrum of colors. An object that reflects most of the light of all wavelengths in equal amounts and absorbing none, appears white.

Is this not the very nature of Lavan? He stands for nothing, he can not absorb fully any ideal. He merely reflects all the colors, utilizing each one when needed to fulfill his contrived goals. He is blank, empty and void of any real and absolute value.

The Medrash says that Lavan's "white" condition is known as "Paradoxus" (Badmidbar Rabba 10). Could this possibly be alluding to his paradoxical nature, manipulating conflicting messages for the goal of merely winning, bereft of any standard of truth in anything he does? Is there more than just it's color in the significance of calling the residence of the chief politician, the "White" House?

We may look askance at the meandering of the politicians that surround us, but in truth we are all politicians. We all have our "political agenda's" that we seek to promote, in Shul, in our social lives, in business dealings and certainly within our own families. How do we measure up in our honesty with ourselves and to those who we treasure the most? Are our beliefs and goals pure and noble or are we simply jockeying for authority and control? Are the high standards we claim to live by absorbed into our souls, or are they superficial popular reflections of convenience and comfort?

The family of Lavan possessed great qualities as evidenced in their wonderful daughter and sister Rivkah. They, however, never benefited fully from this potential greatness because of their inability to distill their ulterior motives from their true essence. The "paradoxes" of their conflicting interests never allowed their good qualities to penetrate and define their character, remembered for posterity as shallow and distant reflections of what they could have become.

May we use our "political" influence to promote actual, honest and real values. May we view ourselves objectively and live consistent with the standards of Toras Emes!

באהבה, באמת!
צבי טייכמן

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FRIDAY NIGHT LEARNING

Beginning at 7:30pm
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at Ohel Moshe? contact Yussi Silberfarb
yoyam3@yahoo.com