

## SCHEDULE

### ערב פסח:

Mincah & Candles	Followed by shiur	7:16 PM
Maariv		8:16 PM
Chatzos		1:08 AM

### 1st Day - פסח: Thursday

Shacharis	6:45 AM & 8:30 AM
Daf Yomi	7:50 AM
Mincha	2:15 PM
Mincha	Followed by a Shiur 7:25 PM

Guest Speaker: Dr. Shalom Kelman -

Timing the Chametz burning via the להטת תורה: an exploration of the Tosefta as precursor to the Mishna

Maariv & Candles (50min)	8:25 PM
Chatzos	1:08 AM

### 2nd Day - פסח: Friday

Shacharis	6:45 AM & 8:30 AM
Daf Yomi	7:30 AM
Early Shabbos - Mincha	6:00 PM
Candles - Not Before	6:15 PM
Mincha & Candles	7:18 PM

### שבת חול המועד

Shacharis	6:45 AM & 8:30 AM
Daf Yomi	7:30 AM
Mincha	2:15 PM
Mincha	Shalosh Seudos at Home 6:00 PM
Maariv (50 min)	8:25 PM

### חול המועד - Sunday, Monday, & Tuesday

Shacharis (Sun-Tue)	6:30 AM & 8:30 AM
Daf Yomi (Sun-Tue)	7:30 AM
Mincha (Sun & Mon ONLY)	1:45 PM
Mincha/Maariv (Sun & Mon ONLY)	7:25 PM
Maariv (Sun & Mon ONLY)	9:50 PM

### ערב פסח - 2nd Days: Tuesday

Mincha & Candles	7:22 PM
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Followed by Shiur & Maariv

### שבועי של פסח: Wednesday

Shacharis	6:45 AM & 8:30 AM
Daf Yomi	7:30 AM
Shacharis	8:30 AM
Mincha	2:15 PM
Mincha	7:25 PM

Followed by Shiur: By Rabbi Elie Levi

Maariv & Candles (50 min)	8:30 PM
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## Siyum Bechoros

Sponsored by: By Ben Kristall Wiess

In honor of his grandfather's Yahrzeit,  
Bernard "Bennnie" Kristall—Binyamin ben Shmuel

### Shabbos: אחרון של פסח

Shacharis	6:45 AM & 8:30 AM
Daf Yomi	7:30 AM
Shacharis - (Yizkor—Approx 10:00)	8:30 AM
Mincha	2:15 PM
Mincha	Followed by 7:25 PM
	Seudas Ha'Mashiach
Maariv (50 min)	8:31 PM

### ISSRU CHAG

### Friday April 14th

Shacharis	6:45 & 7:50 AM
Mincah & Candles	7:25 PM

### יום שבת קודש - פרשת שמייני

Shacharis	6:50 AM
Daf Yomi	7:30 AM
Shacharis	8:30 AM
Mincha	2:15 PM
Pirkei Avos	6:40 PM
Mincha	7:15 PM
Maariv	8:34 PM

### Week of April 16th

Shacharis (Sun)	6:50 & 8:30 AM
Shacharis	6:35 (M & Th), 6:45 (T, W, F) & 7:50 (M-F)
Mincha (Sun - Thu)	1:45 PM
Mincha/Maariv (Sun-Thu)	7:35 PM
Maariv (Sun - Thu)	9:50 PM
Daf Yomi	7:30AM(Su), 5:45AM(M-F) & 6:50PM(M-Th)

For a full list of shiurim go to: [www.ohelmoshebaltimore.com/shiurim](http://www.ohelmoshebaltimore.com/shiurim)

### Upcoming Yahrzeits:

**Riki Rosenblum**, for her father, Michael Zwebner  
19 Nissan - יחיאל מיכל בן מאיר צבי

**The Simon family**, for their Son & Brother,  
Beni Simon, בנימין בן סימון טוב, 19 Nissan

**Beverly Berger**, for her father, Sander Gusinow  
27 Nissan - סנדר בן מרדכי

## CONGREGATION OHEL MOSHE

# חג הפסח

ט"ו-כ"ב ניסן תשפ"ג

שבת קודש

פרשת שמייני

כ"ד ניסן תשפ"ג

מברכים חודש סיון

# אהל משה



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Issue #776



RABBI’S MESSAGE:

Of the full cast of personalities mentioned in the Torah in the book of *Breishis* — the book where not only did creation begin, but the precedent of a family of fathers and sons who comprised the original nucleus of the genesis of our people — there are but six characters who make an appearance in the Haggadah.

The Haggadah begins in earnest with the *Ha Lachma Anya*, where we refer to the bread our ‘fathers’ ate in Egypt. The child then poses to his ‘father’ the ‘Four Questions’. The father responds by telling a story of our people who were enslaved and if not for our ‘fathers’ being freed we would still be in bondage. After addressing the ‘Four Sons’, we begin a tale that began with the emergence of **Avraham** Avinu from amidst a family entrenched in idolatry, who bequeaths a legacy to **Yitzchok**, who transmits it to **Yaakov**. **Esav**, although a son, directs his destiny towards Se’ir, as Yaakov and his children head down to Egypt. The rest is our history. Yet before we get to the ‘story’ we report how **Lavan** who sought to destroy our ‘father’ was foiled, and we succeeded despite his ardent efforts to escape his grip, in becoming a great, mighty, and abundant nation.

Within this microcosm we have the players — our four forefathers — who overcame the antagonists — Esav and Lavan — who attempted a failed coup of our destined greatness.

After we travel through the journey of the exodus once again, concluding the Seder with praise for G-d and expressing longing for our final redemption, we recite several famous *piyutim*.

There is one that was authored by Rav Elazar HaKalir, who according to Tosafos, was none other than the famed Tanna, Rebbi Elazar Ben Rebbi Shimon (Bar Yochai).

Entitled *Uv’chen V’Amartem Zevach Pesach*, the *piyut* devotes nearly two full stanzas to Avraham and his nephew Lot.

*You knocked on his door in the heat of the day — on Pesach. He gave Your shining messengers unleavened cakes to eat — on Pesach, and he ran to the herd, hinting at the ox in the Torah reading — of Pesach.*

This refers to the episode of the angels who visited Avraham on Pesach to inform him of the birth of Yitzchok a year later. He offered them מצות - ‘cakes’, which tradition teaches were *matzos*, since it was Pesach. The ox was to serve as a Chagigah offering that accompanies the Paschal lamb.

The next stanza focuses on Lot.

*The men of Sodom raged and burned in fire — on Pesach, Lot was saved; he baked matzos at the edge — of Pesach, you swept bare the land of Mof and Nof [Egypt] in Your great rage — on Pesach.*

Lot, as distinguished from the previous section which merely alludes to Avraham, is mentioned here by name. It describes that frightening night when the angels came to destroy Sodom and save Lot and his family. The Torah there — once again in distinction from the report, on possibly the same day earlier, of how Avraham proffered ‘cakes’ — the Torah states by Lot explicitly, that he baked for them מצות - matzos.

Rashi in Chumash already asserts that the incident with Lot was on Pesach.

Why is this significant? What meaning could there be for both Avraham and Lot ingesting matzah, way before the exodus took place? Lot is not even part of the family of the future Jewish nation, why would we then highlight this fact?

Is there a simple understanding of this odd detail or is it couched only in the realm of the mystical?

The Radak suggests that since these guests arrived late at night and there was not ample time on such short notice to procure proper bread, as Lot was eager to provide his hungry visitors with food, he slapped together a dough baking it as matzos, quickly, without having to wait for the dough to rise!

Rav Yehuda Chalava, a 14<sup>th</sup> century Spanish rabbinical figure and scholar, adds that when Rashi says פסח היה - it was *Pesach*, he didn’t intimate that Lot observed the future holiday of Pesach, but merely meant to refer to the word *pesach* which means to ‘skip over’, thus Passover, since here too G-d, so to speak, similarly destroyed all the inhabitants of Sodom and skipped over Lot.

Though these two interpretations offer a ‘rational’ explanation, nevertheless it adds to the intrigue. If one examines the two stories that transpired on this night — Lot being saved and the Jews protected from the plague of the firstborn, with both being freed by the morning — one will discover many parallels.

In both episodes they are secured behind ‘doors’. The mention of מַשְׁחֵתוֹתִים - destroyers’ is made. The exact same expression of קוּמְוּ וְצֵאוּ - get up and leave — is instructed to them. The Torah describes how וַתִּתְּרֵם - they ‘tarrried’ and had to be drawn out of Sodom, in contrast in Egypt it asserts how they could not להתרומם ל- linger. (דבר יזאל בן טו)

*This is my G-d, and I will build him a sanctuary; the G-d of my father, and I will exalt Him (שיר)*

At the culmination of the exodus, at the splitting of the sea, we bring it all back home, to source of our strength from where it all began — the G-d of my ‘father’, whom we are taught is Avraham.

It was betwixt those two events — the angels visiting Avraham, where matzos were prepared, and the angels visiting Lot to extract him from the portended destruction — G-d informs Avrohom of the impending doom of Sodom and prefaces the reason why G-d chose to reveal this information to Avraham.

And G-d said, *“Shall I conceal from Avraham what I do, now that Avraham is surely to become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by him? For I have loved him, because he commands his children and his household after him, to walk in the way of Hashem, doing charity and justice, in order that Hashem might then bring upon Avraham that which he had spoken of him.”* (בראשית יז יז-יט)

Although the verse speaks of ‘the way of Hashem, doing charity and justice’, as if charity and justice is the defined ‘way of Hashem’, the Rambam instructs us otherwise.

The Rambam in several places discusses the ‘middle path’, the healthy balance in choosing between

Can You Keep a Secret?

extremes, whether regarding humility and pride, or generosity and parsimony, in developing a personality that imitates the traits of G-d himself.

*How can one train himself to follow these temperaments to the extent that they become a permanent fixture of his [personality]?*

*He should perform — repeat — and perform a third time — the acts which conform to the standards of the middle road temperaments. He should do this constantly, until these acts are easy for him and do not present any difficulty. Then, these temperaments will become a fixed part of his personality.*

*Since the Creator is called by these terms and they make up the middle path which we are obligated to follow, this path is called “the path of G-d.” This is [the heritage] which our Patriarch Abraham taught his descendants, as it states: “for I have known Him so that he will command his descendants...to keep the path of G-d.”*

*One who follows this path brings benefit and blessing to himself, as [the above verse continues]: “so that G-d will bring about for Abraham all that He promised.” (דברים יא)*

This is not simply an exercise in balancing extremes, but more significantly, the developing of our sophisticated soul that is in the image of G-d. At every juncture of life, both large and small, man must make a choice. Every moment is laden with opportunity, not just whether to help another, but to hone our Torah personality into a creature that weighs every decision, knowing that how one chooses defines who one is, and displays one’s consciousness of G-d’s will being the sole determinant in how we act.

In the end of chapter three after discussing at length the proper balanced דרך - path, one should tread in life, he concludes:

*Thus, whoever walks in such a path all his days will be serving G-d constantly; even in the midst of his business dealings, even during intimacy for his intent in all matters is to fulfill his needs so that his body be whole to serve G-d. Even when he sleeps, if he retires with the intention that his mind and body rest, lest he take ill and be unable to serve G-d because he is sick, then his sleep is service to the Omnipresent, blessed be He. On this matter, our Sages have directed and said: “And all your deeds should be for the sake of Heaven.” This is what Shlomo declared in his wisdom: “Know Him in all your ways and He will straighten your paths.”*

The doing of ‘righteousness and justice’ without a foundation of ‘keeping the path of G-d’, can corrupt one into becoming a judge in a society whose credo is ‘what is mine is mine, what is yours is yours’, precisely what Lot became. Lot engaged in heroic acts of kindness, risking his life protecting his guests from the attacking Sodomites. Kindness that is not prodded by a higher value can come to justify the exclusion of foreigners all in the name of hallowed self-preservation. Only when every action we take is measured by the objective truth of G-d’s character reflected in His visible traits, will one never sink into delusional social principles of survival.

Lot hungered for pleasure. It blinded him from properly assessing each step he took. He kept a checklist of his ‘obligations’ but never pondered the ‘path’ he was going down on.

Perhaps the recording of Lot’s folly was meant to make us aware how each one of us can be part of G-d’s greater plan, if we stay on the דרך - path, but if we lapse in our consciousness permitting ourselves to pursue instinct over destiny, we are in danger of falling off the cliff.

We are told that Lot was saved because of a singular merit he possessed. It wasn’t his magnanimous kindness on behalf of his guests, risking life, and limb. Rashi states that it was due to Lot having many years earlier — when still loyally accompanying his uncle Avraham, in Egypt, having observed how Avraham fearing the Egyptians might kill him to take his beautiful Sarah devised a plan to claim she was his sister — did not reveal their true relationship despite the benefits he would have received by divulging that vital piece of information.

The Maharal teaches that the greatness Lot revealed here was his talent of שומריה סוד — preserve a secret.

So often we exhibit extreme vulnerability when we expose to someone else a secret we have been harboring. People who do not have a healthy core, a confident sense of purpose in life and self-satisfaction, look for validation by connecting to others and gaining their admiration at best, or some material advantage in exchange. One who has an abiding faith in a G-d, who accompanies us in every decision we make, for better or for worse, has no need for validation from others, and is invincible to leaking secrets.

Lot still possessed a deep connection to Avraham that fortified him from succumbing to the temptation for immediate gain. That redeeming quality identified Lot with Avraham and granted him deserved salvation from the denizens of Sodom and their doomed fate.

When one is willing to value expedience over personal comfort, one begins to travel on the path of Hashem. It is that awareness of the preciousness of the moment and acting accordingly that proves man’s mettle as one who chooses G-d’s will over one’s own.

The procuring of matzah to address the pangs of hunger of his guests, reflected on a moment of sanity, untainted by self-interest.

Every time we eat coarse and simple flavored matzah, we are declaring expedience over comfort. This is a שמירת אורח דרך השם - preserving the path of Hashem moment.

Rashi tells us that Lot merited to inherit two of the ten territories that were initially designated for Avraham, in reward for his keeping silent when Avraham said, “She is my sister”. In lieu of that Avraham, (דברים כ ה) - treated Lot as a son bequeathing property for him to inherit. We are taught that in Sodom, Dovid the future progenitor of *Malchus* — Monarchy was discovered. The daughters of Lot, fearing the end of the world, drugged Lot with wine, mating with him to produce future generations and save the world.

From one of those children conceived that night, Moav, descended Rus, the Mother of Royalty, from whom Dovid and all subsequent kings until the coming of the Mashiach would generate.

Until it was clarified otherwise in the days of Shmuel the Prophet, it was claimed that all descendants of Moav may not marry into the Jewish nation, due to their corrupted attitude in not proffering food to the Jewish nation during the exodus from Egypt on their way to the promised land.

Yishai, the father of Dovid, a grandson of Rus, feared that all his children were thus tainted, as descendants of the outcast Moav, and refrained from cohabiting with his wife Nitzeves. He strategized to beget a child who would not be stained by this lineage. He had a slave woman he owned, who he sought to have union with, so that the status of a child born from her would be considered as her son, not her master’s halachic child. He promised he’d free her, making her a full-fledged Jew and her son thus free from any Moavi identity.

The slave woman informed her mistress, Nitzeves, of his plot and advised her to take her place the night of the union, feigning her identity. When Yishai discovered that Nitzeves was pregnant, not realizing it was from him, he accused her of adultery and declared Dovid a mamzer child. For twenty-eight years Nitzeves never uttered a word to anyone of the subterfuge she employed.

When Shmuel searched for the child Yishai who would be king, and pointed toward Dovid, the ‘illegitimate’ one, she finally revealed the truth.

Dovid thus epitomizes a replica of our first father, Avraham, the preserver of the way of Hashem, in leading the Jewish nation to the final redemption, through Mashiach his descendant. Dovid embodied this trait of staying on path as so brilliantly portrayed in the life and times of his dear mother Nitzeves the ‘keeper of secrets’.

Evidently, she possessed a relationship with G-d that strengthened her sense of confidence in all her choices, never vulnerable to loosening her lips, remaining powerfully quiet for twenty-eight years.

The mission of Avraham is borne by our people. The famous Midrash tells us that in the merit of preserving our Jewish names, modest clothing, and pure language we were redeemed. The Midrash adds one more asset, that we did not גלו סתורין - reveal our secrets. This refers to our having been told a year prior to leaving Egypt that we would one day prior to the exodus ‘borrow silver and gold vessels’ from our neighbor Egyptian, and rightfully take these riches with us upon the exodus. No one, despite the obvious favor they would gain in the eyes of their taskmasters, revealed this ‘secret’. When Moshe discovered many years earlier that Dasan and Aviram contentiously revealed the ‘secret’ of Moshe having killed the cruel Egyptian taskmaster, he exclaimed, “Now I know why the Jews are enslaved!” This flaw was now rectified. It was not about the sin of slander alone, but about the failure of the people to assess and evaluate the consequence of every action, permitting themselves to opt for personal gain rather than preserve the ‘path of Hashem’. They lacked that inner bond with G-d that would invest them with quiet confidence to do what was right, not necessarily for their immediate benefit. This is the secret of our survival.

We begin the Seder with an invitation for guests to join us. It was in this context that both Avraham and Lot were depicted when eating ‘matzah’. The imperative to ‘draw in guests’ is much more than a singular act of kindness. It is an assertion that we are all on a journey on that ‘path of Hashem’, and we are aware that each one of us beholds their unique ‘secret’ to getting to our ultimate destination, with no two alike. Occasionally we intersect on that journey. We must validate each other in appreciating another and his purpose.

Lot bequeathed an inner secret that will find its full expression at the final redemption.

We each, the children of Avraham Avinu, must preserve our ‘secret mission’, by connecting with the legacy of Avraham who charted this path, being ever conscious of the consequences of our choices, and of the abiding faith our Father in Heaven has in us.

We open the door towards the end of the Seder to welcome in Eliyahu HaNavi.

We hear the echoes of that last verse in the prophets which sums up the objective of his and our mission: *to restore the hearts of the fathers to children and the heart of children to their fathers...*

*In a very moving letter, a son who struggled with his personal mission, penned a letter to his father recently, to read before he will sit down at his table to participate in the Seder.*

*He challenged his father to look around the table, observe his many children seated there, and identify which of his son’s is the ‘Wicked Son’ and which the ‘Wise One’.*

*Was it he with his long hair, worn out jeans, who despite having dealt with adversity as a child in cheder, nevertheless still dons his tefillin daily even though he may not make it to minyan? Is it he who despite being discouraged and disillusioned about Yiddishkeit learns a daily portion of Torah? Is it he who comes each Shabbos to daven in the neighborhood shul despite the glares? Or is it one of his accomplished brothers, who were blessed with natural learnings skills and intelligence, who observes everything carefully, plays by the rules, but never struggles in the choosing to stay on the path?*

This young man is certainly a keeper who is not ‘off the derech’. On the contrary, he is traveling mightily on ‘the path of Hashem’.

How good are you at keeping ‘your secret’? The answer is at your door!

It is a ליל שמורים - a night to ‘preserve’ and ‘protect’ our profound secrets to success.

Avraham Avinu, Eliyahu HaNavi and of course, Hashem eagerly awaits our response!

Keep it, and he, the Mashiach will come very soon!

בראשית,  
זג כשר ושמו,  
צבי יהודה טייכמאן