

CONGREGATION BAIS TORAH

August 18, 2007 · 89 West Carlton Road · Suffern, NY 10901 · (845)352-1343 · www.baistorah.org · ד' אלול שנת פרשת שופטים

Aufruf of Avinoam Erdfarb

ערב שבת פרשת שופטים

מנחה 7:00 PM *
הדלקת נרות 7:20 PM **
Regular Candle Lighting: 7:35 PM

שבת פרשת שופטים

שחרית 8:45 AM
סוף זמן קריאת שמע 9:34 AM

פרקי אבות 5:55 PM
גמרא שיעור 6:35 PM
מנחה 7:20 PM
סעודה שלישית
מעריב 8:33 PM

Sunday שחרית 7:45 AM

Weekday שחרית

Mon. and Thurs.: 6:20 and 7:45 AM
Tues., Wed. and Fri.: 6:30 and 7:45 AM

Weekday מנחה-מעריב

Sun. thru Thurs.: 7:35 PM

ערב שבת פרשת כי תצא

מנחה: 7:00 PM *
הדלקת נרות 7:20 PM **
Regular Candle Lighting: 7:24 PM
* Early mincha for the summer
** Shul Accepts Shabbos

Shiurim

Sundays at 8:30 AM – מסכת סנהדרין – Rabbi Heimowitz
Mondays at 7:30 PM – מסכת ברכות – Rabbi Chaim Wein
Tuesdays at 8:15 PM – Partners in Torah
Wednesdays at 7:30 PM – קהלת – Rabbi Gottlieb – **Shiur will resume in the fall.**
היום I, Monday through Friday 5:25 AM and Sunday at 6:30 AM – Mordechai Rudman
Monday through Friday at 7 AM - ירושלמי - Mordechai Rudman
Monday through Friday after the second שחרית עם רשי - שחרית השבוע עם רשי – Rabbi Yosef Fischer
Monday through Thursday at 9:45 AM - גמרא שיעור - Rabbi Leibel Reznick
היום II, Monday through Thursday 10:00 AM and Sunday at 9:30 AM – Rabbi Yosef Fischer
Women's תהלים group meets on שבת right after the שיעור אבות פרקי אבות.

Shul Announcements

The congregation is invited to a **Kiddush** sponsored by Stuart and Pamala Erdfarb in honor of the aufruf of their son, Avinoam. **סעודה שלישית** is being co-sponsored by Charlie Grandovsky for his father's yurtzeit and by Shimaya Stimler in honor of his in-laws, Manny and Suri Katz.

Announcing Bais Torah's **** LABOR DAY BBQ AND FAMILY PICNIC **** Monday, September 3rd, 1:00 to 5:00 PM at Camp Regesh, 236 Cherry Lane, Monsey. Enjoy boating, volleyball, great food and special entertainment for the entire family. Bring the kids! Bring the grandkids! Bring the whole family! \$36 per family - \$25 per couple - \$15 for single adults. Double watermelon for early RSVPs to 352-1343 or aviva@baistorah.org.

Please reserve Shabbos, Parshas Noach, Motzei Shabbos, October 13th and Sunday, October 14th for a full program of events celebrating the hachnosah of the Sefer Torah written in memory of **Rebbetzin Jackie Wein** a"h. Rabbi Berel Wein will be joining us for the weekend.

Bais Torah has secured seats for the **NY Knicks vs. the Maccabi Elite Tel Aviv** basketball team. They will be playing in Madison Square Garden on October 11th, for the benefit of Migdal Ohr. The number of seats are very limited so they will be sold on a first come first served basis. We are going to have a bus going from the shul to the game and back. Preliminary reservations can be made by emailing baistorah@taxprof.net. That will hold your reservation for 5 days. The total cost of seat and bus is \$80.00. Checks are to be made out to Bais Torah and only reservations that are paid for will be valid. Kosher food will be available at the Garden supplied by Mendy's.

A message from the President: A mailing has been sent for 5768 dues and seating requests - the Seating committee and Gabboim request an immediate return of the forms to provide them with sufficient time to do their jobs. Included in the packet is a small survey primarily based on items discussed at the General Membership Meeting. Your prompt attention to this will allow the Shul's board to address these issues.

There is a home for sale by owner at 99 Carlton Road, Suffern. Anyone interested should contact the Obermeisters at 368-0919.

Mazel Tov

Jossi and Sandy Lieder on the engagement of their daughter, Basya, to Menachem Brickman.
Sam and Rena Wilen on the bar mitzvah of their grandson, Evyatar Cohen, son of Itamar and Deborah Cohen.
Yaacov and Phyllis Colman on the marriage of their children, Duvie and Yael Colman.
Stuart and Pamala Erdfarb on the aufruf of their son, Avinoam.
Yosi and Debbie Rosenberg on the engagement of their daughter, Surie, to Gershon Barkany of Far Rockaway.
Michael and Rena Rossman on their daughter, Karen, making Aliyah.
Shaul and Kreindy Stern on the birth of a grandson, born to Binyomin and Chani Richmond.

Hamakom Yenachem

Eva Vorcheimer on the p'tira of her husband, Kurt.
Fay Roitman (Bella Helprin's mother) on the p'tira of her sister.

Refuah Shelaimah

Mr. Henry Shapiro
חיים מאיר יחיאל בן מלכה לאה
Ben Zauderer בנמיין בן בילה
Manny London מנחם מונש בן חנה פרידא
Ken and Judy Gribetz's grandson, Eitan Witkin
איתן אפרים בן נחמה יטה

יואל בן מירלא
Renee Rosenbaum's mother, Fanny York
רחמה פייגל בת רבקה
Shira Steinberg שירה רות בת שרה -
Yossie Stern's granddaughter -
ציפורה יהודית בת דינה רבקה

How to Reach Us

Rabbi Yisroel Gottlieb 357-3913, rabbigottlieb@yahoo.com – Daytime emergency 362-8362

President Allen Nussbaum president@baistorah.org

Treasurer Barry Lifschitz, 352-0226, Fax 352-0841 or barry@lifschitz.net

Maintenance Yis Helprin 494-7446

Shul Secretary Aviva Schmutter 352-1343 aviva@baistorah.org M-TH 9:00-3:00

Simcha Room Reservations/Kiddushim Jack Gross, 357-4121

Bikur Cholim Eveline Kranzler, 352-8410 and
Chosh Levy, 425-6827

Eiruv 362-4302

Mikvah 425-6101

Chesed Committee Charlie Grandovsky, 425-4683

Youth Michael Kronenberg 368-1064

Sisterhood Liaison Betty Schloss, 369 – 1833

Hachnosas Orchim Facility for homeless, Shea Jacobs 425-9617

Lost and Found Michael Loebenstein, 425-8895

Reb. Wein Sefer Torah Project 368-1064

Chevra Kadisha Steve Fessel, 425-1713, Ephraim Pessin, 914-420-6714 or Gloria Gordon, 425-1276

Sisterhood Tribute Cards, Mona Selzer 356-0129

Bais Torah Bulletins Email baistorah@taxprof.net, Fax (845) 368-4172, or call (845) 368-2222. To receive e-mail updates, write to baistorah@gmail.com. This bulletin is downloadable from the web at www.baistorah.org.

In Case of Emergency

The **red Hatzolah phone** is in the hallway on the wall between the rear washing station and the Simcha Room.

The **defibrillator** is in a cubby in the coat room opposite the Hatzolah phone.

Parashat Shoftim - 5767

“By the Word of Two Witnesses...” (Devarim 17:6)

An over-arching principle of the Torah is stated in Parashat Shoftim (*Devarim 16:20*), “*Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof!*” “*Justice, Justice shall you pursue!*” One of the corollaries of this principle for human beings is stated further on in the Parashah, *Devarim (17:6)*, “*By the word of two witnesses or three witnesses shall the condemned person be put to death; he shall not be put to death by the word of a single witness.*” The concept of the “Eid,” the “Witness,” or rather the “kat,” or “group” of witnesses is put forward by the Torah as the method by which finite Man, with limited sensual acuity, is capable at arriving at an acceptable approximation of the Truth.

In certain areas of the Law, such as Monetary or Civil Law, where two Jews come to “Bais Din,” the Jewish Court, for a “Din Torah,” a resolution of their conflict according to the principles of the Torah, the idea of accepting a group of witnesses is basically unchallenged, it is agreed also that they must be examined carefully for consistency of their testimony. In the case of Ritual Law, where the litigants are the Jew and his Maker, the opinion is accepted that one witness suffices.

In areas of the Torah that involve capital punishment, it is clear from the verse cited above that the Torah theoretically allows the resolution of the matter by means of witnesses. In practical terms, however, we find conflict among the Sages. In Makkos 7a, we find, “A Sanhedrin (Jewish Supreme Court) that executes one individual in a ‘Shemittah’ (a seven-year period) is called ‘violent.’” Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah said that the time period was (not seven, but) **seventy years!** Rabbi Tarfon and Rabbi Akiva said that if they had been members of the Sanhedrin (even though they were among the greatest of the “Tannaim,” they weren’t on the Sanhedrin because they lived in a time after the destruction of the Second Temple when the Roman suppression of the Jewish Religion was especially harsh, and the Sanhedrin at that time was abolished), **no one would have been executed!** (They would have accomplished this by cross-examining the witnesses to such detail that it would have been impossible even for truthful witnesses to maintain their consistency) Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel said that their opinion was very dangerous, and would have multiplied the number of murderers in Israel.”

One thing we see here is the root of the modern controversy concerning capital punishment, with a difference. All sides in the Jewish debate agree that the death penalty is an effective deterrent, while one of the views in the secular debate holds that it would not be a deterrent. The theoretical prescription of capital punishment in certain cases by the Torah seems to confirm that the Author of the Torah believed that it is a strong deterrent. However, that view still allows for three options: Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel felt that it should be used when necessary. Both the first opinion cited in the Mishnah and Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah believed also that it should be used, but exceedingly infrequently, for fear that a mistake would be made. Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Tarfon felt that the Torah’s prescription was **only theoretical**; the danger of mistakenly taking a human life, of destroying an Image of G-d in error, was not within the purview of the human court.

The Ramban expresses a profound thought on the question of why the Ten Utterances do not begin “I am the L-rd your G-d Who Created Heaven and Earth,” a cosmic act with implications for the entire universe, but rather “I am the L-rd your G-d Who took you out of the Land of Egypt,” a great miracle no doubt, but not on the scale of the Creation of the Universe. The Ramban writes (*Shemot 20:2*) “Their Exodus indicates the Existence of G-d, the Active Will of G-d, for it was with His Knowledge and Guidance that we were able to leave, the historical fact of the Exodus indicates that there was a Creation, for if the World itself were Eternal, nothing could ever change, that HaShem is Almighty and that He is One, as it says *‘in order that you know that there is none like Me in the whole world.’*” And he concludes his argument, “...for they (our ancestors at Sinai) **knew and could testify** as to the truth of those Miracles!

Rabbeinu Bechaye (38:1) says, “For this reason, HaShem did not say, “Who Created Heaven and Earth,” because no human being had observed that with his own eyes, and He wanted to bring a proof for them with respect to His G-dliness from something **they themselves had seen with their eyes.**”

The Torah also emphasizes this idea and says (*Devarim 4:35*) “*You have been shown visual proof to give you **certain knowledge** that HaShem is the Almighty; there is none beside Him.*”

The Torah itself is considered the “testimony of HaShem,” as David says (*Tehilim 93:5*), “**Your testimonies are very trustworthy.**”

In *Devarim (4:26)*, “*I call Heaven and Earth to bear witness against you...*” Moshe calls none other than Heaven and Earth themselves, **who have seen it all** and cannot be fooled, **to bear witness against the Children of Israel.**

It is also interesting to note that when the letters spelling “Eid,” **witness:** “Ayin,” “Dalet” are reversed, they spell the word “Da,” **to know**, “Dalet,” “Ayin.”

At the end of the Haftarah of Parashas Kedoshim we find, “*The voice of your lookouts, they have raised a voice, together shall they sing glad song, for every eye shall see when HaShem returns to Jerusalem...HaShem has bared His holy arm to the eyes of the nations, and all ends of the earth shall see the Salvation of our L-rd.*”