



February 10, 2012

י"ז שבט תשע"ב

פרשת יתרו

Candle Lighting 5:51 PM

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Issue 10



Dvar Torah - The Power of a Doughnut by Rabbi Yaakov Fried

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Although we often take it for granted, eating can have a powerful effect on us aside from the calories. There is another side to eating which can help one reach a high spiritual level.

In the beginning of this week's parsha, the ויקה יתרו חתן משה עלה וזבחים לה' " פסוק says " ויבא אהרון וכל זקני ישראל לאכל לחם עם חתן משה לפני ה'".

יתרו brought a קרבן and ate a סעודה with אהרון and the זקנים. The רבינו בחיי explains that it was in honor of the גירות of יתרו, and had the status of a מצוה. The רבינו בחיי adds that the purpose of the סעודה was to add to the רוחניות level of יתרו and his companions. A person's רוחניות is tied to his גשמיות. When a person strengthens his גשמיות it has a direct effect on his רוחניות. If a person has lofty intentions when he eats, therefore, the eating

Dvar Halacha - Tu B'Shvat

The 15th of שבט is called the New Year for Trees and is one of the four New Years listed in מסכת ראש השנה. The Halachic significance of this day is that it is the beginning of the year regarding the הלכות of מעשר, תרומה, and ערלה.

Even though ט"ו בשבט is called a ראש השנה, it carries no special מצוה of feasting, additions in the davening, or prohibition of מלאכה.

רוחניות has a positive effect on his רוחניות.

How could this extra boost affect יתרו, one might ask? He had already heard about the great miracles of מלחמת עמלק, קריאת ים סוף, and the מן; he was presently in the מדבר experiencing the imminence of Hashem's שכונה; he saw the עונני הכבוד and all the other miracles that were taking place, not to mention being in the presence of משה, אהרון, and זקנים. What would eating a סעודה add?

The answer, based on this רבינו בחיי, is that being human, every physical action we do has an effect on us. It can even add to a strong spiritual situation, like that of יתרו. Internalization of this reality is classified by the מסילת ישרים as חסידות, which is one level higher than פרישות, which is complete separation from physical reality.

In our everyday lives, we find plenty of opportunity to eat and do other actions that add to our physical well being. If we have the right intentions, even a Krispy Kreme doughnut can add to our רוחניות.

Nevertheless, the following laws are practiced: we don't say תחנון the day of ט"ו בשבט or in מנחה of the previous day, eulogize the deceased, or say צדקתך if ט"ו בשבט falls on a שבת.

There is a מנהג throughout כלל ישראל to eat new fruits requiring a שהחינו, and particularly those of the שבעת המינים, on this day.

The Weekly Quiz

Q: Who wrote the Sefer HaShataros?

Answers or ideas for future questions may be submitted in writing to the Spotlight office or emailed to Quiz@ytcteam.org

The first correct answer submitted will be announced in the next Spotlight. You need not be a student to participate. Hatzlochah!

Answer to last issue's question:

Q. Why is a chazzan called a chazzan?

A. The person who leads the Tefilla is called a chazzan because he looks in a siddur. The word Chazi (חזי) in Aramaic means to look.

New Friday Enrichments by Uri Goldberg, 9th Grade

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This semester's enrichment courses are entertaining and educational. Mr. Agenor is presenting Brainteasers & Puzzles, where his key goal is to encourage the students to challenge their minds. "It's very entertaining and continuously stimulates our brains," says Eli Sugerman, 9th grade. Outside the classroom, Mr. Richardson is presenting his well-liked and popular Sports Fitness Training course, which is filled to the max with students. "Every physical task he sets for you isn't just there to wear you out and make you sweat, but to build you and push you to your limit", comments Shragi Bistriz, also 9th grade. Dr. Cowett is once again presenting his Creative Writing workshop, which was a smashing success during the first half of the year. "It's a small class, so the amount of *Achdus* going around is mind-blowing", reports Yehuda Mittel, 9th grade. "Already on the first day, Dr. Cowett has given us all the opportunity to express ourselves through our own literature." On a different

note, Rabbi Meth is giving kids the opportunity to join his Choir & Music class, another workshop focused on giving students the chance to express themselves in a colorful way. Ezra Cash, 9th grade, says he is taking pleasure in the opportunity to "sing and be ourselves." Another new enrichment to Toras Chaim is Mr. Spring's Financial Day Trading workshop, which many kids were excited to join. "It prepares us for real life encounters", says Aryeh Chesal, a 9th grader in this enrichment. Mr. Spring has first hand experience with his material and even worked on Wall Street, which adds to the entertainment and education of the enrichment course. Another instantly popular addition to the enrichments this year is the Study Hall course, which gives students a much needed and useful opportunity to use the library to get ahead on homework, study for tests, or just catch up on some work. Spear-headed by our one and only Mr. O'Toole, the Study Hall workshop "is a really great

idea to help us ease our schedules a little bit, plus we get to hang out with Mr. O'Toole," says Chaim Balgley, from the 9th grade. Back outside on the court, our multi-talented Rabbi Winter is continuing to instruct the Basketball Team, improving their skills by the day and instilling in them basketball and character fundamentals to take with them far beyond their practices. "Rabbi Winter is great at focusing on individual aspects of a player's game and building his role to add to the team while also building you as a person," Pesach Bixon, the sole 9th grader on the team. The excitement for all of our new enrichment courses will hopefully carry us through to the end of the year, and we all look forward to enriching ourselves with the wisdom and entertainment that our new courses will provide for us.

Tefilin Testing at the Rohr Middle School



This past Tuesday, Rabbi Dreyfuss's shiur went to the Rohr Middle School to administer a practical Tefilin test to the 7th grade. Every year, Rabbi Fried teaches his 7th grade class the details of properly putting on Tefilin, culminating with a test given by talmidim of the high school. Each 7th grader was paired up with a high school student and was required to put on a pair of Tefilin and give a detailed explanation of his procedure and the Halachos pertaining to the wearing of Tefilin.

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