

YOUNG ISRAEL OF THE MAIN LINE

Weekly Update

Rabbi Avraham Steinberg
273 Montgomery Ave.
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19044



Rabbi Mordche Young
(610) 667-3255
www.yiml.org

Parshas Va'eschanan Shabbos Nachamu

פרשת ואתחנן שבת נחמו

August 19–20

Shabbos Davening Times

Candle lighting:	7:35pm
Mincha - Friday:	7:00pm
Sof Zman Krias Shema:	9:41am
Shacharis:	8:45am
Mincha followed by Seudah Shlishis:	7:20pm
Maariv:	8:37pm

Weekday Davening Times

Shacharis Sunday:	8:00am
Shacharis I (Tue., Wed., Fri.):	6:50am
Shacharis I (Mon., Thu.):	6:40am
Shacharis II (Mon.–Fri.):	8:00am
Mincha/Maariv (Sun.–Thu.):	7:35pm

Chevra Mishnayos

The Chevra Mishnayos is now learning Seder Tohoros. See the bulletin board.

Seri Friedman Memorial Scholarship Fund

The Friedman family has requested that those wishing to make a tax deductible contribution in Seri's memory consider contributing to the "Seri Friedman Memorial Scholarship Fund." For more information, please speak with Daniel Eisenberg or e-mail him at eisenber@pol.net.

Calendar of Shiurim

DAY	TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER	NOTES
Shabbos	8:15am	Chumash	R. Steinberg	
Shabbos	6:20pm	Rambam, Sefer Hamitzvos	R. Steinberg	CNCLD
Sunday	After Shacharis	Sefer Hachinuch	R. Steinberg	CNCLD
Mon., Wed.	After Maariv	Mishna Berura, Hilchos Shabbos	Eli Back	
Sun.-Fri.	15 min. before Shacharis	Mesilas Yescharim	R. Steinberg	CNCLD
Monday	9:45am	Women s Tehillim Group		Eisenberg home
Tuesday	After Maariv	Gemora Sukka	R. Steinberg	Res. Sept. 6
Wednesday	8:45pm	Women's Shiur	R. Steinberg	ON BREAK
Thursday	10:10pm	Nefesh Hachaim	Rav Sholom Kamenetsky	Res. Sept. 8

* All shiurim are at YIML unless specified.

A lecture at the Young Israel of the Main Line:
Rabbi Zelig Pliskin: "Mastering Joy"
Sunday, August 28, 11am.
At YIML, 273 Montgomery Ave., Bala Cynwyd
\$18 Suggested donation, sponsorships available.
Contact Sid Laytin, (610) 527-6828.

Kiddush and Seudah Shlishis

Sponsored by the "Committee to Avoid Cooking Lunch in a Hot Kitchen."

Are you on our e-mail list?

To subscribe to the shul mailing list, send a message to majordomo@chaseplanet.us with the following in the message body (all one line): subscribe yiml YOUR-EMAIL

Rabbi Steinberg Contact Information

Home: (610) 664-3796 Shul: (610) 667-3255 ext. 1 E-mail: rabbi@yiml.org

All submissions, suggestions, and sponsorships should be directed to Moshe Eisenberg, creator of this Weekly Update. But do not blame him for this edition.

After Mourning

This Shabbos will be the fifteenth day of the month of Av, a day that the Gemora identifies as one of the most joyous of the Jewish year. Interestingly, according to some, this date is referred to in the opening line of this week's Parsha, and this very fact may help us to understand the true happiness of the day.

The thirty-third day of the Omer is traditionally observed as a day of celebration, although the reason for such celebration is not immediately clear and is not specified in the Gemora. The Vilna Gaon in a cryptic gloss to Shulchan Aruch (*Orach Chaim*, 693) intimates that the celebration of Lag B'Omer is similar to that of the fifteenth of Av—just as the Gemora tells us that one of the reasons for rejoicing on the fifteenth of Av is that the Jews who were condemned to die in the desert stopped dying on that day, so too, since the twenty-four thousand students of Rabbi Akiva who were condemned to die stopped dying on Lag B'Omer, the day is celebrated.

But these hardly seem like fair reasons for joy. Is the fact that a harsh decree has been carried out fully, leaving no one left to die, a reason to celebrate?

Rather, it seems more likely that the Vilna Gaon was referring to a different element of these incidents. The Gemora says (*Yevamos* 62b) that after the students of Rabbi Akiva died, the world was spiritually desolate until Rabbi Akiva trained five new students, from whom Torah was revived and communicated to the Jewish People. Thus, it is not the end of tragedy, but the beginning of Torah rebirth that we celebrate on Lag B'Omer. And herein lies the similarity to the fifteenth of Av. A careful reading of the Gemora (*Bava Basra* 121b) reveals that it is not the fact that no more Jews died after the fifteenth of Av that we celebrate, but the fact that Hashem reestablished open communication with Moshe. As the Tosafos (*ibid.*, 121a) explain, Hashem does not shine His Presence on those in a state of sadness; so only after the end of the protracted sorrow associated with the passing away of the desert Jews, did Moshe once again enjoy full communication from Hashem. It is this fact that we celebrate.

This week's Parsha begins with Moshe's recounting of how he asked Hashem, again, to allow him to enter the Land of Israel. "And I implored Hashem at that time..." Rashi explains that "that time" means after Moshe was granted entry into the land of Sichon and Og, which was part of the land given to the Jews. Thus, Moshe's entry into this land could have been taken as a sign that he would, in fact, be allowed into Eretz Yisroel proper, as well.

The Pnei Yehoshua (*Commentary to Gemora Berachos* 32a, s.v. *darash*) gives a deeper insight into this matter. He says that "at that time" refers to the fifteenth of Av. Since the Gemora tells us that Moshe's words in last week's Parsha were spoken when the Divine Presence was brought back to him, this means that the time Moshe refers to in his continued monologue in our Parsha is that date, as well.

(It seems to me that this might be the reason for the Gemora's special directive relating to the fifteenth of Av. Although the Gemora gives us no special observance or ceremony relating to this holiday, there is one statement about a proper change in

behavior. The Gemora says that from this date onward, one must increase his time spent studying Torah. Although the simple reason for this is because the nights start to get longer, offering more "quiet time" for learning, perhaps at a deeper level the notion of increasing Torah study on the fifteenth of Av has its root in the fact that Moshe's communication from Hashem was increased on this date.)

The end of the mournful period in the desert brought about greater Divine communication. Moshe's reaction to this development was Va'eschanan—increased prayer. Just as Hashem communicated more fully with him, Moshe hoped that he would be granted the right to communicate more fully with Hashem, as well. Although Moshe's request was not granted, perhaps the fact that Moshe tells us the reason for his increased prayer efforts means that this lesson will have value in the future.

When the month of Av begins, joy is reduced (*Gemora Taanis* 26). According to some, this inauspicious period ends with the fifteenth of Av. The end of the mourning period in the desert brought about greater Divine Presence which, in turn, elicited greater prayer from Moshe. We too, should take advantage of the end of the mournful period to enjoy greater study of the word of G-d, as well as increased efforts in our prayer. If Moshe's prayers for Eretz Yisroel were not answered, perhaps ours will be. Now, as much as ever, the Jewish People need the help of Hashem. Let us take advantage of this post Tisha B'Av season to hear and be heard by HaKaddosh Baruch Hu.

May it be a true Shabbos Nachamu.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos,

Rabbi Steinberg

Membership and Yomim Noraim Information

Membership and seating packets are in the mail and should be in your hands within a few days. If you do not receive your packet by Tuesday please let David Chase know (610-667-6448, david@chaseplanet.us) immediately, so we can get that information to you.

We ask that you make every effort to return your High Holiday seating request forms as soon as possible. Final seating assignments will be made one week before Rosh haShanah, and incomplete and late seating requests will not be able to be honored. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.