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Parshah Bechukosai in a Nutshell
(Leviticus 26:3-27:34)

On G-d promises that if the people of Israel will keep His commandments, they will enjoy material prosperity and dwell secure in their homeland. But He also delivers a harsh "rebuke," warning of the exile, persecution and other evils that will befall them if they abandon their covenant with Him.

Nevertheless, "Even when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away; nor will I ever abhor them, to destroy them and to break My covenant with them; for I am the L-rd their G-d."

The Parshah concludes with the rules on how to calculate the values of different types of pledges made to G-d, and the mitzvah of tithing produce and livestock. ❖

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Parshas Bechukosai

Erev Shabbos – May 31 – Iyar 26

Candle Lighting.....8:03 pm

Mincha7:30 pm

Shabbos Day – Jun 1 – Iyar 27

Tehillim Reading..... 8:00 am

Shacharis.....9:30 am*

Torah Reading10:35 am

Rabbi Neubort's Drasha..... 11:10 am

Kiddush12:10 pm

Gemara (2-31 Summit) 7:10 pm

Shiur & Shalosh Seudos 7:10 pm

Mincha8:15 pm

Rabbi's Drasha.....8:35 pm

Shabbos Ends9:12 pm

**Latest morning Shema is 9:08 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Weekday Schedule: *Minyan*

Shacharis.....6:15 am

Mincha1:45 pm

Maariv.....9:15 pm

Classes

Chassidus, Mon-Fri5:55 am

Halachah, Mon-Fri1:40 pm

and at 9:25 pm

Torah Studies Mon. 7-8:00 pm

Tuesday Talmud9:30-10:00 pm

Wednesday Mishna 8:30-9:15 pm

Shhhhh

Talking during the prayer service and during the Torah reading is inappropriate and disturbing to fellow congregants. If you must talk, PLEASE go outside.

Eruv website:

www.fairlawneruv.com

Eruv Hotline phone number:

201-254-9190.

Thank You to:

**Avi Lebovic
for reading the Torah
and to our
Kiddush Volunteers**

This week's Kiddush is sponsored by Igor and Dora Lauren in commemoration of the yahrtzeit of Dora's father Refoel Ben Pinchas.



Tehillim - Psalms

Join us this Shabbos morning June 1 at 8:00 am for Shabbos Mevorchim Tehillim.

This week's Tehillim reading is dedicated to a refuah sh'laima for Elohue Mayer ben Devorah Sara.

Be a sponsor of the Shavuot Dairy Kiddush Participation is \$36 per family

For more information, please contact Rabbi Neubort.

Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, June 1

Daylight Savings Time

Earliest Tallis..... 4:17 AM

Latest Morning Shema 9:08 AM

Earliest Mincha (Gedola) ..1:33 PM

Plag Hamincha6:53 PM

Earliest Evening Shema8:55 PM

Chassidic Masters

“Eating on the Job”

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe
Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com*

The Torah reading of Bechukotai (Leviticus 26:3-2:34) opens with G-d's promise of material prosperity for those who adhere to His commandments. "If you walk in My statutes," the Parshah begins, "and keep My commandments and do them; I will give your rain in due season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit..." — and goes on to list the multiple blessing that will flow when we faithfully carry out the Divine plan for life on earth.

Many of the commentaries struggle to explain this emphasis on material reward for the observance of the mitzvot. Did not our sages (in Ethics of the Fathers 1:3) state the ideal, "Do not be as servants who serve their master for the sake of receiving a reward; but rather be as servants who serve their master not for the sake of receiving a reward"? Are we not enjoined, as Maimonides puts it, to "do the truth because it is true"? And if the Torah does have its reasons to promise to reward a righteous life, why does it speak of material rewards, awarded in our physical lifetimes upon earth? Wouldn't spiritual blessings, awarded to the soul after it is freed from the confines and limitations of the body, more aptly reciprocate a G-dly life? Indeed, the Talmud states so in so many words: "Today (i.e., in this world) — to do them (the mitzvot); Tomorrow (i.e., in the World To Come) — to receive

reward." The Talmud cites one authority who categorically states: "There is no reward for mitzvot in this world" (Talmud, Eruvin 22a, derived from Deuteronomy 7:11).

As we said, numerous commentaries and scholars discuss this contradiction, seeking to reconcile the Torah's promises in Bechukotai (and other places) with the principles cited above, which are also rooted in Torah. In one of his talks, the Lubavitcher Rebbe approaches the issue from an interesting angle — the legal angle. Using Torah law as our criterion, what would G-d's obligations toward us be when we fulfill the tasks He demands of us? Is there any legal basis to our petitions to G-d in our daily prayers for life, health and sustenance?

(For although G-d invented these laws, He too, by choice, is bound by them. In the words of the Midrash (Shemot Rabbah 30:6): "G-d's way is not like the way of flesh and blood. The way of flesh and blood is that he instructs others to do, but does not do himself; G-d, however, what He Himself does, that is what He tells Israel to do and observe.")

To define G-d's legal obligations to us, we first need to define our legal relationship with Him. There are, in fact, three models for this relationship: the slave, the employee, and the partner.

Which of these models our individual life fits into is entirely up to us. The Talmud (Megillah 12b) states: "In the manner in which man measures himself, so is meted out to him."

As we have elaborated in an earlier essay, G-d leaves it to us to define our vision of life and our relationship with Him, and then relates to us accordingly. So it is up to us whether to perceive — and thus define — the labor of life via the mentality of the "slave", the attitude of the "employee", or the perspective of the "partner".

Some apt to see themselves as slaves of an autocratic master. I didn't ask to be born — goes this line of thinking — nor was I consulted when the laws of life were formulated. All this was imposed on me. As the Ethics puts it, "Against your will you are born, and against your will you die." My master is all-powerful, so I had best carry out His commands.

Others adopt the less apathetic attitude of the employee. I have a job to do, is their approach, and I'll give it my best effort. And has G-d not promised to reward my toil? True, our sages have established that "There is no reward for mitzvot in this world"; but certainly the eventual rewards of the World To Come will more than compensate for my present-day labors.

This vision of life — life as a job — is expressed by the talmudic sage Rabbi Tarfon in the closing words of the second chapter of Ethics of the Fathers:

"The day is short, the work is much, the workers are lazy, the reward is great and the Master is pressing... It is not incumbent upon you to finish the task, but neither are you free to absolve yourself from it. If you have learned much Torah, you will be greatly rewarded, and your Employer is trustworthy to pay you the reward of your labors. Know, that the reward of the righteous is in the World to Come."

Finally, there are those who experience life as a partnership. They, too, are "slaves" in the sense that they acknowledge G-d's absolute mastery over their lives; they, too are "employees" in the sense that He has defined their life's assignment and has promised to reward them for their labor. But they also believe that man has been granted the ability to elevate life into a partnership with G-d. As G-d's partners, they develop themselves and their world in accordance with the Divine will not only because they must, nor merely to "do their job," but as an intensely personal enterprise. Life is their joint venture with G-d — a venture conceived and enabled by Him, but fueled by their own initiative and ambition.

The Initial Verdict

So what does Torah law legislate in regard to these three models of the G-d-man relationship?

At first glance, it would seem that however we define our relationship with G-d, our life's toil on His behalf does not obligate Him toward us in any way, at least not regarding our material needs and wants. If we are His slaves, G-d already owns the product of our toil.

On the other extreme, if we are His partners, we are laboring for ourselves as well as for Him: for the "partner" — to again quote the Ethics — "The reward of a mitzvah is the mitzvah itself." When the perfect world that is the aim of G-d and man's "joint venture" is complete, this will itself yield the ultimate spiritual and material reward for man. "At that time," writes Maimonides in the closing words of his Mishneh Torah, "there will be no hunger or war, no jealousy or rivalry. For the good will be plentiful, and all delicacies available as dust... 'For the world shall be filled with the knowledge of G-d as the waters submerge the sea' (Isaiah 11:9)."

The only one who might seem to have any legal claim is the "employee." Indeed, the Torah commands an employer, "Do not delay the wages of your employee overnight" (Leviticus 19:13). But this law applies only to a day-laborer, not to one who is hired for a longer period or to accomplish a specific task. In such cases, the law is that "wages must be paid only at the conclusion of the employment" (Talmud, Eruvin 22a). So when G-d tells us, "Today, is the time to do; tomorrow, to receive reward," this is fully in keeping with the laws He instituted to govern the employer-employee relationship: He owes us our wages only upon the completion of the collective task for which He has "hired" us.

Get a Better Lawyer

This is what a cursory look at the law yields. But a more thorough examination reveals a series of laws that G-d commanded in His Torah which would obligate Him to

provide us with our daily needs in all three cases — whether we define our duties toward Him as those of the slave, the employee or the partner.

The slave: "A master is obligated to make his Hebrew slave or Hebrew maid equal to himself in food, drink, clothing and dwelling. This is derived from the verse 'for it is beneficial to him together with you' (Deuteronomy 15:16.) — i.e., you cannot eat fine bread and feed him coarse bread; drink aged wine and have him drink new wine; sleep on soft fibers and have him sleep on straw... Thus it has been said: one who acquires a Hebrew slave, acquires for himself a master..." (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Slaves 1:9; Talmud, Kiddushin 20a.).

The employee: In Deuteronomy 23:24-25 we read: "When you enter your fellow's vineyard (as an employee), you may eat your fill of grapes, at your desire... When you enter the standing crop of your fellow, you may pluck grain with your hands..." These verses are interpreted by our sages to mean: "Workers who are employed in processing produce of the earth that has not yet reached its final desired state... the employer is commanded to allow them to eat from the produce they are working with." This is quite apart from the wages owed to the employee upon completion of the term of his employment.

This law applies to work-animals as well; as the Torah (Deuteronomy 25:4) commands, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is threshing." (Rashi on verse; Mishneh Torah, Laws of Hire 12:1.)

The partner: A law dealing with a partnership that parallels our own joint endeavor with the Almighty, reads: "If a person gives eggs to a chicken-farmer so that he seat his chickens on them until they hatch and raise the chicks, with the understanding that the profit is to be divided between them, he is obligated to also pay him his labor and feeding costs" (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Agents and Partners 8:1; Talmud, Bava Metzia 68b. To have the chicken-farmer hatch the eggs and raise the chicks solely for the promise of profit would be a violation of the prohibition against usury — see Rashi on Talmud, *ibid.*). So when G-d gives us a world to develop and perfect as a "profit-sharing" venture, Torah law mandates that He also provide us with the daily expenses our work entails.

This is the basis for Maimonides explanation of the material, this-worldly rewards promised by the Torah when the people of Israel fulfill the commandments of the Torah (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Repentance 9:1):

Since we know that the reward for the mitzvot is... the life of the World To Come... why does it say throughout the Torah, "If you obey, you will receive such and such; if you do not obey, it shall happen to you such and such" -- all this, things

that are of the present world, such as plenty and hunger, war and peace, sovereignty and subjugation, inhabitancy of the land and exile, success and failure, etc.? ... The explanation of this [apparent contradiction] is: G-d gave us this Torah, it is a tree of life, and whoever observes all that is written in it and knows it with a complete knowledge merits thereby the life of the World To come... Yet G-d also promised us in the Torah that if we observe it with joy... He will remove from us all things that may prevent us from fulfilling it, such as illness, war, hunger, etc., and He will bestow upon us all blessings that bolster our hand to observe the Torah such as abundant food, peace, and much gold and silver, so that we need not preoccupy ourselves all our days with our material needs but be free to lean the wisdom and observe the commandments by which we shall merit the life of the World To come...

So when we approach G-d in prayer — concludes the Rebbe — we can do so with the confidence that no matter what level we have attained in identifying with our life's mission — whether we have achieved the commitment of a partner, or only the responsibility of an employee, or merely the resignation of a slave or beast-of-burden — He will surely heed our requests and bless us with a health, sustenance and tranquility. ❖

Haftorah in a Nutshell – Bechukosai

Jeremiah 16:19-17:14

The haftorah discusses the punishments that await those who disregard G-d's law, and the blessings that are the lot of those who follow the Creator's wishes. This follows the theme of this week's Torah reading which details at length the blessings and curses.

The prophet Jeremiah rebukes the people of Israel for their idolatrous ways and for not having faith in G-d. He conveys G-d's words of wrath towards those who do not put their trust in Him — foretelling exile as their punishment — and of blessings for those who do.

"Cursed is the man who trusts in man and relies on mortal flesh for his strength, and whose heart turns away from the G-d. He shall be like a lone tree in the desert, and will not see when good comes, and will dwell on parched land in the desert, on salt-sodden soil that is not habitable. Blessed is the man who trusts in the G-d, to whom G-d will be his trust. For he shall be like a tree planted by the water, and which spreads its roots out into a stream, so it will not be affected when heat comes, and its leaves shall be green, and in the year of drought will not be anxious, neither shall it cease from bearing fruit."

The haftorah ends with the following poignant verses: "G-d who is the source of the hopes of Israel, all that forsake You shall be shamed, and they who turn away from me shall be marked out on the earth that they have forsaken G-d, the source of living waters. Heal me, O G-d, then shall I be healed; help me, then I shall be helped, for You are my praise!" ❖

Community Events

June 27 – Museum of Jewish Heritage Holocaust Exhibit. Email tuesdaystorah@yahoo.com for more info and to register.

June 27 – Floral Arrangement with Beth Feldman. \$30/person. Thursday, 8:00 – 9:30 PM. To register go to <https://www.yifl.org/event/flowers>.

Aug. 15 – Yankees vs. Indians. \$35 for one ticket, or two for \$65. Pre-game BBQ and transportation will be available options. A Shomrei Torah event, with locations and times to be announced. Contact Mendy Aron at tuesdaystorah@yahoo.com for details or to secure tickets.

Help make the Paterson Minyan this Shabbat, June 1st Parshat Bechukotai with a special Torah reading

9am Minyan @ Federation Apartments 510 E. 27th Street/12th Ave.

Special Sefardic/Macedonian style Kiddush is also planned!

Your participation helps benefit Jewish senior citizens from all backgrounds.

Visit: www.patersonshul.org or contact JerrySchranz@gmail.com

Jerry Schranz
Gabbai – Paterson Shul

From Our Sages

If you walk in My statutes (Leviticus 26:3)

The word “if” is to be understood as a plea on the part of G-d: “If only you would follow My statutes . . .”
-- (Talmud, Avodah Zarah 5a)

Good Shabbos!



שבת שלום! • גוט שבת!



CHASSIDUS

5:55-6:10 AM
Monday-Friday
THE MITZVAH OF HAVING FAITH IN G-D
A discourse by Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, the Tzemach Tzedek



SHULCHAN ARUCH

1:40-1:45 PM
Monday-Thursday
Currently learning **HILCHOS TEFILLAH**
Laws of Prayer

9:25-9:30 PM
Sunday-Thursday
Currently learning **HILCHOS KRIAS HATORAH**
Laws of Reading the Torah



MISHNA

8:30-9:10 PM
Wednesday
Currently learning **MISHNAYOS, tractate SHEKALIM Chapter 8**



TALMUD

9:30-10:00 PM
Tuesday
Currently learning **TALMUD, tractate SUKKAH p. 19a**



WANT TO LISTEN TO A CLASS ON-THE-GO? Text your WhatsApp number to 201-362-2712 to join the Torah Classes @ Anshei Group



MONDAY EVENING TORAH STUDIES

7:00-8:00 PM • Maariv at 9:15

Monday, June 3 2019
THE DAY G-GAVE US THE TORAH... OR NOT?

Making Sense of the Holiday of Shavuot

Shavuot is known as the day the Torah was given. A look at the phenomenon of crossing the international date line before the holiday unravels a whole new element to the holiday—and lends us fresh perspective on what it means to be Jewish.

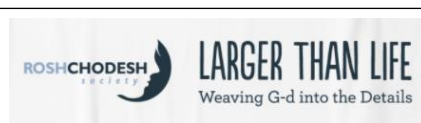
Special date and time:

Sunday, June 9, 2019, 8:30 pm

GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT!

Frugality or Extravagance? A Third Option

Are you letting your inner artist go to waste? What about that project that you really wish you can accomplish one day: Are you letting the opportunity slip away? From the surprising behavior of certain desert princes, we learn that maximizing your potential is to realize the divinity in creation.



On Higher Ground With Liberty and Justice for All

With Rebbetzin Rivky Bergstein

Wednesday, June 19, 7:15 PM

Our responsibilities don't end with our responsibilities to our fellow Jews and human beings. Other Torah values include animal welfare; concern for the conservation of wildlife, natural resources, and habitats; and the environment. What is our nation's spiritual mission vis-à-vis society? In addition to our social accountability, we are also charged to be "a light unto the nations."

Questions? Want to host a class? Call or text Rivky Bergstein: 201.362.2909



Bored in Shul?

Join us this Sunday evening, May 26, at 7:30 pm for

With All My Heart – The Jewish Art of Prayer

Lesson Four – "Hear O Israel"

We will explore the Shema prayer, the most famous Jewish prayer, and the prayers that frame it. We will appreciate the unique meditation of this section of the prayer book, and we will discuss how this meditation can motivate us for continuous growth.

Join us at 7:30 pm at Anshei Lubavitch, as we decode the meaning of the Shema prayer and discover its power.

SHIUR & SHALOSH SEUDOS FORTUNE OR MISFORTUNE? A HALACHIC PERSPECTIVE ON ABORTION SHABBOS AFTERNOON, 6:40 PM SPONSORED BY JEFF & PENINA VILINSKY
לעילוי נשמת
משה בן משולם ז"ל

MOSES AND MAIMONIDES NOW MAKE HOUSE CALLS.
Learn more. Study about your heritage, faith and history by illuminating your life with knowledge, insight and an understanding of Torah.
You choose. Pick an area of study: Torah, the Prophets, Talmud, Jewish Law, History, Philosophy, Chassidic Thought, you name it!
We'll bring the class to you!
For our fee schedule and to set up your personal study session at your home or office, please email RabbiBergstein@FLChabad.com or call 201.362.2712.