

Congregation Etz Chaim



74 Billings Street, Sharon, Massachusetts 02067
www.etzchaimsharon.com
(781) 784-7204

President: Leonard Gerber, Ph.D.
Treasurer: George Monat
Secretary: Janis Monat
Member at Large: Robert Dell
Member at Large: Michael Ferber
Member at Large: Rabbi Chuni Rappoport

Synagogue
Member



Parasha Acharei Mot-Kedoshim

12th of Iyar, 5785

Lik ner 7:34 PM

Shabbos Day

Shacharis 9:00 AM

Latest Shema 9:05 AM

Latest Tefilla 10:17 AM

Mincha 7:53 PM

Ma'ariv 8:41/9:05 PM

Shabbos Day at YI

Mincha 7:34 PM

Ma'ariv 8:41 PM

Shabbos Day at Chabad

Mincha 7:30 PM

Maariv & lik ner 8:42 PM

Weekday Young Israel

Mincha/Ma'ariv 7:34 PM

Weekday Chabad

Mincha 7:40 PM

Maariv 8:28 PM

Pesach Sheni is Monday, May 12

L'ag B'Omer is Friday, May 16

TORAH LEARNING

Rabbi Hartman's class is **Sunday, 9:30 a.m.**

Zoom ID: 903 917 1656

Password: 170 smain

SHAMIRAS HALASHON is on hold until May 22.

Please contact Janis Monat: jmonat@aol.com for the link.

DAF YOMI WEEKDAY ZOOM SCHEDULE

Via Zoom: Mon - Th 7:00 pm and Tu & Th 7:30 am

Meeting ID: 822 979 966

Password: 727190

DAF YOMI LIVE SCHEDULE:

Shabbos mornings at shul, 8:00 a.m., one hour before shacharis;

Sunday mornings at shul, 7:00 a.m., one hour before shacharis.

Contact Melvyn Huff

(781) 784-6608) or

melvynhuff@comcast.net for more information.

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RABBI REISMAN

Rabbi Yisroel Reisman's shiur is this motzei shabbos, May 10, at **10:30 P.M.** All are welcome.

BOARD MEETING

Etz Chaim's monthly board meeting is **Wednesday, May 21** at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom. Please contact Janis Monat jbmonat@aol.com for the link.

ANNUAL SHUL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

All fully paid members of Etz Chaim are invited to attend our annual congregational meeting **to vote** and hear the updates of the shul's finances and programing on **Sunday, June 8 at 11:00 a.m.** We will be **voting** for the open board seats of president, vice -president, treasurer, recording secretary, and two member-at-large positions. All are welcome to be a part of the "inner" aspects of Etz Chaim's decisions. Please RSVP to jbmonat@aol.com.

ETZ CHAIM BOOK CLUB

Our next book we'll be reading is **The Confidante** by Christopher Gorham. It's the first-ever biography of **Anna Marie Rosenberg**, the Hungarian Jewish immigrant who became **FDR's closest advisor** during World War II. We will be meeting Monday, June 16 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Please contact Merilee Maeir for the link: Melmaeir@gmail.com.

PRAYERS FOR THE STATE OF ISRAEL

May release and healing come soon for the hostages held captive in Gaza. May healing come for the injured Israeli soldiers and citizens, and comfort for the mourners of Israel. As Golda Meir said, "Peace will come when the Arabs will love their children more than they hate us." Am Yisrael Chai 🇮🇱

REFUAH SHELAIMA

We continue to pray for the health of Heidi Goldblatt, Rachel Chana bas Menucha; Robert Dell, Chana Reuven ben Leah; George Monat's sister-in-law, Shayna Baila bas Rachel; a friend, **Chayale** Tzipporah Zlata bas Bluma Yehudis; the son of Leisha Martin, Yosef ben Rus; Tzila Pass, Tzila Chava bat Raquel; and **Ben Cable**, Chaim Baruch Binyamin Aharon ben Shulamit. May HaShem send healing for our brethren!

THOUGHTS on Acharei Mot and Kedoshim 16:1-20:27

by Janis Monat

"**Acharei Mot**", after the death of Nadav and Avihu, Hashem commands Moshe to relay to Aharon to **ONLY** come into the Holy of Holies **on** Yom Kippur. Having witnessed the death of his two eldest sons based on their unbounded excessive energy Aharon was even more sober in understanding the commandment, "bring atonement for the Children of Israel to the Holy of Holies for all of their sins once a year", ch. 16:33-34.

We must be mindful of boundaries in order to keep relationships between us and Hashem and with one another respectful, properly spaced.

The latter was what was lacking further on in parasha, Acharei. Hashem through Moshe was teaching/**warning** the Jewish people about what were allowable and unlawful sexual relations in ch. 18:1-30. In **Kedoshim** Hashem tells Moshe to apprise the Jewish people of the consequences/**penalties** if they were to become involved in forbidden relationships, ch. 20:10-21.

Both in Egypt where the Jewish people had exited from, and the Land of Israel (Canaan) to which they were headed had populations involved in illicit sexual activities. About 500 years prior, Avraham Avinu had specifically told his servant not to look for a wife for his son Isaac amongst the Canaanite women but to return to his homeland and find a mate in Aram-Naharaim, the city of Nahor. Avraham was aware of the licentious and idol worshipping behaviors in Canaan and he wanted a wife found for Isaac from among his own kindred - Avraham's relatives, including his brother Nahor's family, still lived there.

Canaan was on the coast of the Mediterranean Ocean where ships came in to trade and other ships left with exported goods. People from Mesopotamia, particularly the city-states of Ur and Haran, Egypt, the region around the Nile River, Sumer, Babylon, and Assyria were also magnets for this trade. Illicit sexual, moral and religious ways affected the inhabitants. (Some time ago I was a social worker in CT. A certain port city off the CT coast had issues with prostitutes and sexually transmitted diseases. It was this sea environment with sailors coming abroad and departing that led to loose sexual relationships with both sides getting sick with STD. Not much has changed in 4000 years!)

The reading of laws of sexuality, specifically in our parasha Acharei, ch. 18:1-30 are also **read on Yom Kippur afternoon**. They remind us of the importance of ethical sexual behavior, particularly the sanctity of marriage. They awaken us to do "teshuva", to return to the right path with sexuality being guided by moral values. When fasting people can look at their struggle in following ethical **guidelines**. The next part of this parasha note is about another **ethical guideline**.

In **Kedoshim** the guiding principle of "Love your neighbor as yourself" is presented. Hillel posited it as, "Don't do to others what you wouldn't want done to you". Leviticus 19:18 states, "Don't take revenge from, or bear a grudge against, the members of your people. **Love your neighbor as yourself. I am G-d.** It's the immediate prior 9 verses of commandments that tell us **how** to be kind and love one another, ch. 19:9-17. Without these concrete examples our guiding principle wouldn't be so easily understood or enacted. These mitzvot tell us to leave parts of our field open, keep fallen grapes for the poor, not steal, not swear falsely by Hashem's name, not withhold wages of another, not curse a deaf person, not place a stumbling block before a blind person, not favor a poor person nor a powerful person in a court of law, not gossip about another, and not hate one's "brother" in our hearts.

When we act righteously and respectfully toward another, we are acting the "G-dly" way Adomye wants us to, **commands us to**. We are bringing the Torah to life in our day to day thoughts, actions and speech. Remember Hashem's shechina "came down" into the Jewish people's beit hamikdash, the house of the holy. G-d's presence was unlike any other. Hashem comes into our hearts when we give people the benefit of the doubt, prepare accurate weights and measures, watch our words to prevent hurting the other's chances for a shidduch, a job, a friendship. **As Chabad sums us, "Holiness, in this context, isn't about perfection—it's about decency, integrity, and compassion."**

Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov said, "A soul may descend to earth and live 70 or 80 years for the sole purpose of doing a favor for another - a spiritual one or even a material one."

This Sunday is Mother's Day. It's also my younger sister's birthday. She, Ann, cared for our mother 24/7 the last 2 ½ months of her life. Always patient with her, Ann was unfailing in lovingly being with our mother every step of the way. In fact, literally she was escorting our mother upstairs to bed when she, Rivka Petal bas Yitzchak, said she could go on no more. I think this moment may have been Ann's "**sole purpose in doing a favor for another.**" My mom passed away just like she wanted, at home and with family. A shabbos of love and care with giving our moms a virtual or in-person hug. A good shabbos!

