

J.L.C. Connections

The Jewish Learning Connection's Weekly Newsletter



Parsha Bechukosai
May 31, 2024 / 23 Iyar 5784
Volume 29, Issue 33
Candlelighting: 8:36 pm

Waxman Torah Center · 2195 S. Green Road · University Heights, OH 44121 · (216) 691-3837 · www.clevelandjlc.com

Friday, May 31

7:00pm Early Mincha / Maariv
8:36pm Candlelighting
8:40pm Mincha / Maariv

Shabbos, June 1

8:45am Shacharis
Kiddush is available for sponsorship.
7:30pm Pirke Avos
8:30pm Mincha / Shalosh Seudos
9:45pm Maariv

Sunday, June 2

9:15am Parsha Class
(R. Nisenbaum)
10:00am "The 613 Mitzvos"
(R. Stoll)

Monday, June 3

8:00pm "Ten Commandments":
Remember Shabbos
(R. Nisenbaum)

Tuesday, June 4

8:00pm Tanna d'vei Eliyahu
(R. Stoll)

Wednesday, June 5

8:00pm Nach Still Speaks –
Tehillim (R. Stoll)

Thursday, June 6

10:15pm Parsha Class
(R. Nisenbaum)

Torah Podcast

Listen to Rabbi Nisenbaum's "Torah Podcast" at Spotify, Apple Podcasts, iHeartRadio, and more, or download at www.maverickpodcasting.com

New episodes twice a week!

Weekday Minyanim

7:00am Shacharis (M-F)
8:00am Shacharis (Sun)
10:00pm Maariv (Sun-Th)

Class Connection

R. Nisenbaum:

425-436-6200 #352171

"The Torah Podcast" weekly
at all podcast locations

R. Stoll:

Zoom: 876-619-3551
Audio: 669-900-9128

Parsha: Bechukosai

The last portion in the Book of Vayikra, emphasizes the importance of keeping the Torah properly. G-d promises many physical and material rewards to the nation when they follow the commandments. The rain will be plentiful and convenient, the crops will be bountiful, and there will be peace and security throughout Israel.

However, the mitzvahs were not meant to be optional, allowing one to choose what to keep and what not to keep. In the section of the *tochacha*, or reproof, the Torah graphically depicts the terrible punishments awaiting those who fail to follow the Torah and its mitzvahs properly.

Seven series of punishments are described, corresponding to seven steps leading away from Torah observance. These steps begin with not toiling in Torah study properly, which inevitably leads to not performing the mitzvahs properly. If one does not know the intricacies of Halacha he cannot observe the details of each mitzvah. This leads to despising others who do keep the mitzvahs, eventually denying the Divinity of Torah and even denying G-d's very existence, Heaven Forbid. Each step brings greater and more horrendous punishments, from physical

illness, famine, war, and exile, to even worse sufferings.

The nature of man is that once he becomes lax in his behavior, even in something seemingly minor, he begins a downslide that is difficult to stop. For this reason, G-d sends various afflictions to arouse people to mend their ways.

Yet, the Torah promises, despite all the terrible punishment, that G-d will never forget or ignore the Jewish people's plight. G-d's covenant with the forefathers is eternal and will never be broken. Eventually, the people will return to their land and return, and G-d will be appeased. This serves to comfort a person when he realizes that suffering does not stem from G-d's indifference, but rather from His love and concern for the Jewish people.

Immediately after the *tochacha*, the Torah discusses the laws of *arachim*, the donation of one's value to the Temple. There are set values placed on people for this purpose, depending on age and gender. The commentaries explain the juxtaposition is meant to emphasize that no matter how seriously a person may have sinned, each Jew has an intrinsic value, and is worthy of having that value dedicated to the Temple.

Insights: Bechukosai

Every tenth animal of your cattle or sheep that passes under the staff shall be holy to Hashem. (Lev 27:32) Rav Eliezer Gordon of Telz once visited a wealthy man for a donation for the yeshiva. When the man asked the Rosh Yeshiva how much he wanted Rav Leizer asked for five hundred rubles. The man replied that he could not give such a large sum at once. Rav Leizer told the man that the Torah instructs a person to count his sheep individually and give each tenth animal to Hashem. Now why was it necessary to go through so much bother? Would it not be easier to count all the sheep and donate a tenth? The answer is that if a person counted everything at one time, the tenth would appear to be much more difficult to give. The Torah therefore has the person count individually, and then donate each tenth, which does not seem difficult at all when he sees how much more he has left. You too, "concluded the Rosh Yeshiva, "If you focus on how much you still have rather than focus on the size of the gift, it will be much easier to donate the money."

Did You Know?

When eating bread one must eat the size of a kezayis, a Biblical olive, in order to be able to recite the Grace afterwards. There are different opinions how much that entails, but generally it requires at least a large slice of bread. Furthermore, the bread must be eaten within the span of a few minutes. If it is eaten over a longer period, one may not recite the Grace. One should be careful to avoid this situation. However, if one ate this amount of cake during a meal within the same time frame, even if bread was not eaten he is still required to recite the Grace.

Thought for the Week: Conclusions should be reached not preached (A Candle By Day)