

J.L.C. Connections

The Jewish Learning Connection's Weekly Newsletter



Parsha Bo
January 19, 2024 / 9 Shevat 5784
Volume 29, Issue 14
Candlelighting: 5:09 pm

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

Friday, January 19

5:09pm Candlelighting
5:10pm Mincha / Maariv
8:15pm Parsha Shiur
@ R. Nisenbaum

Shabbos, January 20

8:45am Shacharis
*Kiddush is sponsored by
Laibel and Alla Preyger
upon her mother's yahrzeit*
4:30pm Laws of Shabbos
5:00pm Mincha / Shalosh Seudos
6:17pm Maariv

Sunday, January 21

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

Monday, January 22

8:00pm "Wisdom of Koheles"
(R. Nisenbaum)

Tuesday, January 23

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

Wednesday, January 24

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

Thursday, January 25

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

Bo

The last three of the ten plagues that were inflicted upon the Egyptians were locusts, darkness and the Plague of the Firstborn.

The locust destroyed any vegetation in Egypt that had survived the previous plague of hail. The plague of darkness came in two stages. The first three days of the plague brought pitch-black darkness to the Egyptians, where they could not see anything at all. During the following three days, the darkness intensified so much that the Egyptians were actually frozen into position, unable to move. The Jews, however, had light and were able to move about freely.

The last plague was the Plague of the Firstborn, where every Egyptian firstborn child and animal died at midnight. This was the first time that Pharaoh felt his own life in danger, as he was also a firstborn, and he finally let the Jews go free.

The Jews were instructed to sacrifice a lamb, the god of the Egyptian nation, for the Paschal sacrifice. Slaughtering their taskmasters' god in front of their eyes without fear of repercussion instilled a sense of

fearlessness and pride in the Jews. Each family had their own sacrifice to be eaten together.

The people were ordered to take some of the blood from the sacrifice and smear it on their doorposts. With this show of solidarity and trust, the Jews would be protected from the Plague of the Firstborn.

The people were also given the mitzvah of sanctifying the new moon. The court would sanctify the beginning of each month after witnessing the new

moon. Time itself would thus be elevated into something holy. The first month to be sanctified was Nissan, the month of the exodus from Egypt. This represents the birth of the Jewish nation and marks the beginning of the Jewish year. (Although Rosh Hashana marks the anniversary of Creation, the months are counted from Nissan, the month of the Exodus.)

Because of the salvation of the firstborn Jews in Egypt, there is a special holiness associated with the firstborn. Thus, the firstborn of the flocks was given to the kohain, and the firstborn of the human is redeemed from the kohain.

Mazel Tov
to Shmuel and Ora Drexler
upon the birth of a daughter

Insights: Bo

"No man could see his brother nor could anyone stand up from his place for three days." (Ex 10:23) A student of Rav Chatzkel Levenstein left the yeshiva and became quite successful in business. He once complained to Rav Chatzkel, "Rebbe, when I studied in the yeshiva I appreciated the great sacrifices Torah scholars made by toiling in study in dire poverty. I always said that when I became successful I would support them generously. But now that I am successful I find it so difficult to part with my money. What happened to me?" The Mashgiach replied, "The Midrash explains the purpose of the plague of darkness was because many Jews did not want to leave Egypt. G-d had them all die during the days of darkness so the Egyptians would not see them die. Now why was that necessary? The plagues lasted a year, and the people could have died slowly over that period of time without drawing much attention. The answer is that as long as redemption seemed distant and abstract, nobody was opposed to leaving. But by the plague of darkness Hashem already began instructing Moshe about details of the exodus. As it began to materialize, the yetzer hara became stronger and they decided they did not want to go. The same is with you," concluded Rav Chatzkel, "While you were learning and financial success was only a dream, it was easy to think about how generous you would be. But now that your dream has become a reality, the yetzer hara has stepped in and made it more difficult for you!"

Did You Know?

Kiddush Levana, sanctifying the new moon, is compared to receiving the Divine Presence. The Midrash says that one who recites Kiddush Levana receives a special protection against calamity. It is recited between the third and fifteenth day of the month, and should be recited after nightfall, not during twilight. Preferably Kiddush Levana is recited after Shabbos, when one is clothed nicely, and with a minyan (quorum), although if one is concerned that he will miss the proper time he may recite other nights, and by himself. It should also be recited under the sky, not in a house or under an awning, and while standing with one's feet together, as during the Amidah. According to Kabbalah, one should not stare at the moon, rather he should glance at it and then recite the blessing.

Thought for the Week: The disguise in most blessings in disguise is not over the blessing but over our eyes. (A Candle By Day)