



CONGREGATION **לב ישראל**  
**Lev Yisrael**

Parshas Shemini | 27 Adar II, 5784 | April 6, 2024 | Parshas Hachodesh

Mincha: 7:00

Candle lighting: 7:32

Early Shacharis: 8:30

Shacharis: 9:00

Latest time for Shema: 10:18

Learners' Service and Youth Groups: 10:30

Kiddush: 11:35

Women's shiur at the Zakon home "Halachos of the Seder - Part Two": 5:45

Middle School Boys Learning with Rabbi Pekier: 6:35

Sefer Hachinuch shiur: 6:55

Mincha: 7:20

Shalosh Seudos for Middle School Girls at the Lomner home: 7:30

Shabbos ends: 8:37

Shacharis this week: (S) 8:00 (M-F) 6:40

Mincha/Maariv throughout the week: 7:40



## The Chofetz Chaim and the Eclipse

Rabbi Yitzchak Adlerstein

It was a regular summer evening, broiling, a Tuesday night. The Chofetz Chaim, the elder, had just completed saying Aleinu. After he placed his siddur down on the table, he surveyed the crowd that had gathered in his narrow room for the Maariv prayer, and then finally tapped on the edge of the table and began to speak:

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men [Kohelet, 7:2] The implication is that even in a house of feasting, one can learn a similar lesson — for man is not eternal...

When the government sends a new ruler to the city, his predecessor knows that his time to leave is coming, he may still be the ruler, but not for much longer ...

And behold the little children who are recently born, their [presence] reminds us that we should not [subconsciously] think that there exists an exclusive "group of people that will die" [a chevra of dead men] — it is the fate of all men to die — he is not an eternal creation.

Hashem — Blessed be He — established within the natural order of His creation a solar eclipse [lit: a stricken sun] to counter the errant ones (the sun worshippers who believe that a divine power abides in the Sun). A time comes and the sun is stricken, diminished so that they shall know that the sun is a creation and not a creator! — And also with man we see the same.

And the Chofetz Chaim taps again with his right hand on the table with an expression of victory, and smiling he adds, "They should come

to see. It is a mitzvah to see the sun eclipsed, to actually see that a creation was actually formed [by the Creator] ... And he taps lightly again with his right hand, a quiet smile ...

And the whole crowd slowly leaves the narrow room, breathing into their lungs, the refreshing air of the chilly night, and they are conversing regarding the solar eclipse that will take place in the morrow.

Like lightning, the knowledge spreads, in every home they are relating that the Chofetz Chaim has declared "it is a mitzvah to see" how the sun shall be stricken tomorrow...

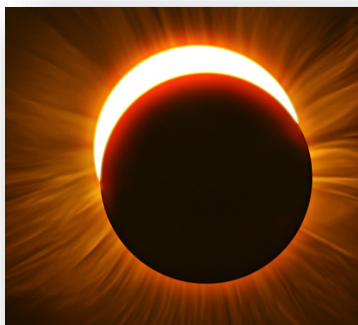
They are looking for broken shards of glass; a cheap purchase ostensibly, that should be easily obtainable (lit. rolls to your feet) — however not at a time of solar eclipse — this is a privileged purchase that simply cannot be found. And the elaborate production of the blackening of the broken glass shards by the light of the candle has commenced.

And it was evening and it was morning on the fourth day. With dawn, it appeared to be a regular morning

like everyday, but nevertheless — so different than always. Never was the street so awake, bustling with life at such an early hour like today — the whole city old and young — on its feet.

And the sun marched on its normal, pride-filled course, it burned with strength on the heads of the men that gathered, on the market and on the green treetops that are shaking, on the horizon.

The sun penetrated that narrow room, it poured light on its floor, like golden sand, sparkling underneath the venerable one. Though he wore shoes, it was like carpet to his feet, the Chofetz Chaim who is



sitting on his chair, with his hands and muscles wrapped in straps of tefillin, straps that connect his hand to his heart and his heart to the [tefillin] knot on the head ....And it is all made of techelet-blue, immersed in techelet-blue, in the sea and the heavens, his fist raised in the air, his voice roaring in strength: "He who forms light and creates darkness" ....And how strange now have the shadows become, shadows of light , that roll around the feet of the venerable one.

And [the sun's] clarity, its blinding white light [lit. Alabaster] has been turned to redness, redness that gains strength, like the whip that strikes a deep wound in its midst, a grave wound.

The giant sphere of the sun in the midst of its flowering adolescence has been suddenly struck down — a cheerful life, its youthful days ever shortening....

(The author continues with the metaphor of the sun's death) The snorting sound of the deathly ill old man can not be not heard, no! The mighty sound of the massive blood spillage is deaf to the ears. The livestock and the cows in the field are afraid; Darkness! All the while, the eyes of men sparkle from happiness and satisfaction.

Here and there, groups are gathering — on the ledges and the bridges. From behind the blackened glasses across to the stricken sun which is darkened halfway — the redness

Also right next to the Yeshiva building, the bochurim [young single men] are standing gazing upwards. Behold, in the corner, by the cherry tree, whose white blossoms have also now reddened, stands Rav Naftali [Trop], the Rosh Yeshiva of Radin, and he looks from behind his darkened glass shards with deep eyes, sunken into their sockets, his fist is closed and shaking, with his big thumb, he explained to those that are close — "we don't simply look we must gaze"

The mashgiach can be seen leaving the Yeshiva building with hurried strides, with alacrity he takes the glass from the hand of one of the bochurim who hands it to him, and he stands, ready to peer deeply....

And there surrounding the venerable one, around the Chofetz Chaim is gathered a large group.

He started his day early and he prayed Shacharis with the community at an earlier time than all other days; Around him stood those who davened in his minyan, in anticipation, with the intent maybe one of them shall merit and the Chofetz Chaim will use one of their pieces of broken glass to look [at the eclipse]....Except that Yitzchak, the black bearded one, preceded them. An energetic and well thought out type, he exhibited many acts of courage and strength in his life; When he was young, he had left his mother and father, [the latter was a Rav in the city V... in Red Russia] and he escaped; he who understood how to deal with the men of the Soviet borders, had already prepared for the Chofetz Chaim, a special triply thick, darkened pair

of glasses which properly fit the good and trustworthy eyes of the holy and vaunted elder.

The righteous one does this [looking at the eclipse] with holy trepidation, exactly as he would silently gaze at his chanukiah, from it he does not remove his eyes so long as there are sparkling remnants of oil...

And the courtyard of the yeshiva entirely is turned into an observatory, except that there, they simply "look" from behind a telescope, while here they "gaze" with supple eyes behind primitive glass shards....

And behold the darkness has eclipsed the entire sphere, as if a large well of ink has spilled and filled the space ... a strange darkness, not that of the twilight nor even like the thick darkness of night ...

Behold, a black curtain has been stretched on the face of the Sun; there remains not even one red streak

And behold the Wonder : – Behold, behold, once again, born is the new sun — like the six days of creation. But not at one time — like a train it grows slowly, like a baby that develops — a red thin narrow streak emerges, it widens more and more, the red streak grows and grows .... and soon the light pours out from the center, a redness [that portends] the signs of life, of the blood that circulates in the veins...and the cherry tree once again receives its white flowering and the cattle in the field are more confident, and the bird in the sky flaps its wings with greater confidence, still mixed with a small amount of fear. And the men, small creatures sparkle with their pleased and satisfied eyes ... Slowly, slowly, its redness turns to a clear and strong light — the sun in its power. And the Chofetz Chaim, the venerable one, sits and rests a bit on the chair they had brought out for him by the door of the house.

He rests, and a deep silence envelopes him — step by step, the elder returns to his house and after him R. Mendel, his son-in-law, and escorting them from behind is Yitzchak the black bearded one, who carries the chair upon which the Chofetz Chaim had rested [back] to the house. And the venerable one, who is completely pure and holy, stops once again by the side of the simple wood table which is in the middle of the room — he utters orders a joyous cry with an expression of victory. Now all have seen that the sun is nothing more than a creation!

*This article was originally written in Hebrew, and has been translated into English for the Cross-Currents publication. The events in the story happened on June 29, 1927, and were verified by Josh Flug of Boca Raton, FL.*

## The Week at a Glance

- ☑ **Sunday morning with Rabbi Dovid Heber** - Shacharis at 9:00 a.m. followed by breakfast and a shiur
- ☑ **Eclipse Program with the Dallas Kollel** - Throughout the day on Sunday and Monday at Ohr Hatorah in Dallas
- ☑ **Kinyan Hamasechta (Bava Metziah) at Morning Kollel** - Weekdays at 6:10 a.m.
- ☑ **Amud Yomi** - Weekdays at 6:10 a.m.
- ☑ **Halacha with Rabbi Poupko** - Monday and Wednesday at 8:15 p.m.
- ☑ **Kinyan Hamasechta (Ta'anis)** - Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday at 8:30 & 9:00 p.m.
- ☑ **Haggadah Class with Rabbi Poupko** - Tuesday at 8:15 p.m.
- ☑ **Parsha with Rabbi Zakon** - Shabbos at 8:30 a.m.
- ☑ **Women's Halacha Shiur** - Shabbos afternoon

Welcome to Plano :

Rabbi and Mrs. Avi Pekier  
(of Torah Day School )

Rabbi Pekier will speak:

- ☑ After the early minyan
- ☑ He will deliver the main sermon (which will follow mus-saf)
- ☑ He will lead a middle-school boys learning program at 6:35



Welcome to Plano:

Rabbi and Mrs. Bentzi  
Epstein (of TORCH  
Dallas)

Rabbi Epstein will speak:

- ☑ At the Learners' Service on the topic of "Pesach: G-d's Fingerprints in the Torah and in Our Life"
- ☑ At Shalosh seudos for the men

**PREPARE FOR THE ECLIPSE  
IN PLANO**

Rabbi Dovid Heber, world-renowned expert of astronomy, z'manim and halacha, will join us in Plano on Sunday morning, April 7. Shacharis will be at 9:00 (to allow Rabbi Heber to join us after landing here), followed by a breakfast and a talk regarding the eclipse. This will be followed by a full-day schedule in Dallas, arranged by the Dallas Kollel, for those that want to join, at Ohr Hatorah.

**DALLAS**  
COMMUNITY KOLLEL  
OF DATA

CONGREGATION **לב ישראל**  
Lev Yisrael

**DATA**  
OF PLANO

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

SUNDAY, APRIL 7		
3:00-3:15	Opening Remarks	Rabbi Yerachmiel Fried
3:15-3:45	Eclipses: Watching the Molad in Slow Motion & Understanding the Jewish Calendar	Rabbi Dovid Heber
3:45-4:15	Solar Eclipses and Human Sin: Attempts at Concilliance	Dr. Jeremy Brown
4:15-4:30	Break	
4:30-5:00	Kitrug Halevana: Machshava on the Molad and the Eclipse	Dr. Ari Bergmann
5:00-5:30	The Jews and their Stars: Astrology, Astronomy and Jewish Destiny from Ibn Ezra to Einstein	Dr. Henry Abramson
5:30-6:00	The Path From Observation to Wisdom and Inspiration	Rabbi Aharon Notis
6:15	Mincha	
6:30-8:00	Dinner	Rabbi Shaya Fox, Dr. Ari Bergmann, Rabbi Yaakov Trump
8:15-9:00	Q and A Panel	Rabbi Dovid Heber, Rabbi Aharon Notis & Rabbi Moshe Baruch Kaufman
9:00	Maariv	
MONDAY, APRIL 8		
8:00	Shachris	
8:45	Breakfast	
9:15-9:45	Shiur: Perspectives on the Mitzvah of Kidush Hachodesh	Rabbi Elchanan Adler
9:45-10:15	The Practice of New Moon Sighting in the Geonic Period	Professor Sacha Stern
10:15-10:45	Seasons in Halacha & Aggada	Rabbi Moshe Baruch Kaufman
10:45-11:15	What we have Learned from Eclipses, and When and What to look for Today	Dr. Israel Uri

Kiddush this week  
is sponsored  
anonymously.



Come out and support the Lev Yisrael chili at the Dallas Chili Cookoff this Sunday. For questions, or to volunteer at our booth, contact Sean Nevin.



The Lev Yisrael middle school shalosh seudos for boys and girls will continue this week with Rabbi and Mrs. Lomner, respectively.  
Boys - At shul after mincha  
Girls - At the Lomner home at 7:30

The Greater Dallas Community's Drive

# Baby Clothes for Israel

All proceeds will go to mothers in Shaarei Tzedek Hospital in Israel. New moms need a touch of happiness and love in these hard times.

**Collection Dates:**  
**April 1 - May 8**

**Drop-off Locations:**  
Torah Day School of Dallas  
Ohr Hatorah  
Akiba Yavneh Academy

For questions, call or text Kate Goldberg at (214) 405-4686 or Tziporah Benami at (214) 385-0994

Monetary donations are also appreciated to help with expenses. You can donate at [www.dataofplano.org/donate](http://www.dataofplano.org/donate)

What is needed: Any of the following items, brand-new only (0-6 months):

Onezies | Sleepers | Hats  
Swaddle blankets

You can also purchase items directly on Amazon from the baby registry under the name Kate Goldberg.

