



Welcome to Rabbi Yissocher Frand

This week's Kiddush is a Chai Kiddush. Thank you to all of our sponsors

Shalosh Seudos is sponsored by the Shalosh Seudos Club

Schedule

Friday, February 16th (1st Adar)

Rosh Chodesh Adar

Candle Lighting	5:29 P
Mincha	5:30 P
Drasha by Rabbi Yissachar Frand (between Kabalas Shabbos & Maariv)	

Shabbos, February 17th (2nd Adar)

Shachris	9:00 A
BISLI	10:00 A
Drasha by Rabbi Yissachar Frand (approx.)	11:00 A

See Page 2 for additional Learning programs

Rabbi Yissachar Frand:	
"Does Heaven Send Us Messages?"	3:45 P
Daf Yomi	4:00 P
Minchah	5:15 P
Maariv/Havdala	6:27 P
Parent/Child learning	6:55 P

Sunday, February 18th (3rd Adar)

Daf Yomi	7:00 A
Shachris	8:00 A
Yarchei Kallah: Yeshivas Aish Kodesh	9:15 A
Mincha/Maariv	5:35 P

Monday, February 19th (4th Adar)

President's Day

Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Shachris	6:45 A
Yarchei Kallah: Yeshivas Aish Kodesh	9:15 A
Mincha /Maariv	5:35 P

Class on Purim with Rabbi Haber:

Chapter 10: The Aftermath of Purim	7:15 P
Late Maariv	7:50 P
Partners in Torah (JCC)	8:00 P

Tuesday, February 20th (5th Adar)

Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Shachris	7:00 A
Mincha/Maariv	5:35 P
Late Maariv	7:50 P

Wednesday, February 21st (6th Adar)

Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Shachris	7:00 A
Mincha/Maariv	5:35 P
Late Maariv	7:50 P

Thursday, February 22nd (7th Adar)

Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Shachris	6:45 A
Mincha/Maariv	5:35 P
Late Maariv	7:50 P

Friday, February 23rd (8th Adar)

Daf Yomi	6:00 A
Shachris	7:00 A
Candle Lighting	5:36 P
Mincha	5:35 P

CLASSES FOR EVERYONE

DAF YOMI

Morning Class: Sundays at 7:00 AM, weekdays at 6:00 AM with Rabbi Loiterman

Evening Class: Sunday through Thursday after (Late) Ma'ariv

Shabbos & Yom Tov: both classes meet together one hour before Mincha with Rabbi Loiterman

BNOS

Shabbos Afternoon 3:15 PM - 4:15 PM

For girls from Kindergarten to 6th Grade in the Fred Aron Education Wing.

Next Bnos: This Shabbos, February 17th

SHABBOS LEARNING FOR BOYS

Grades 5th - 8th: Gemara class - no class this week

Grades 1st - 4th: Parsha with Rabbi Lipman at shul 30 minutes before Mincha

PARENT-CHILD LEARNING

Motzei Shabbos until March 10th (last session)

Our beautiful Parent-Child learning each Motzei Shabbos.
Inspiring atmosphere, beautiful learning, and exciting prizes.

PURIM CLASSES BY RABBI SENDER HABER:

Mondays at 7:15 PM

"Esther: The Final Chapters"

February 19th - Chapter Ten: The Aftermath of Purim

February 26th - Purim Today: Meaning, Laws and Purpose

PARTNERS IN TORAH

Mondays from 8:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Meets at the JCC in Room 238

KOLLEL NIGHT SEDER FOR MEN

Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays following the Late Maariv

Held in the Bnai Israel Minyan Room.

Includes: Rabbi Goder Open Beis Medrash Learning Night

WOMEN'S TUESDAY NOON LEARNING CLASS

The sefer Tomer Devorah is being studied. **Class is on hiatus till around Purim.**

TALMUD CLASS - For time- check with Gershon

Tuesday evenings: With Gershon Aronoff - Avoda Zara.

YAK 2018 SENIORS FUNDRAISER

Please support the Yeshiva Aish Kodesh Seniors by buying their delicious dips. Flavors available: Onion, roasted garlic, olive, jalapeno with many more to come. Each container of dip is \$4.50. All products are made in the yeshiva kitchen. All orders should be placed before 8:00 AM on Thursdays by emailing: yakseniors2018@gmail.com

SISTERHOOD FLOWER FUND

The Sisterhood provides fresh flowers for the Bimah for every Yom Tov and other services for the shul. Contributions to the Bnai Israel Sisterhood "flower fund" can be mailed to Irene Mazel or Frances Berger.

OD YOSEF CHAI

One of the Primary Mitzvos of Purim is "Matanos L'aveyonim" - "Gifts to the poor". Bnai Israel Congregation has a great tradition of partnering with Od Yosef Chai to help impoverished families in Israel. Donations for Od Yosef Chai can be made before or during Purim (Thursday, March 1st). All monies will be tallied and reported to the organization for distribution before the end of Purim. Their deadline is 5:30 PM on Thursday, March 1st. If you wish that your funds be distributed locally, please contact Rabbi Haber. Checks for Od Yosef Chai should be made out directly to them. Checks for the local use should be made to "Bnai Israel - Rabbi's Discretionary Fund".

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND

Friday, February 16th & Shabbos, February 17th

Rabbi Yissocher Frand, a renowned speaker, author and teacher will be visiting the Norfolk Community as the Norfolk Kollel Scholar in Residence. Rabbi Frand will be delivering the Dvar Torah during the Friday night davening, will be also be delivering the Drasha Shabbos morning. In the afternoon, he will be conducting a shiur in halacha. All of Rabbi Frand's talks are open to both men & women.

KOLLEL YARCHEI KALLAH

This Sunday, February 18th - Monday, February 19th mornings

Join the Norfolk Kollel and Yeshivas Aish Kodesh for an exciting two-day learning program. The schedule for the Yarchei Kallah at Yeshivas Aish Kodesh is:

Sunday, February 18th

9:15 - Breakfast
10:00 - Divrei Chizuk by Rabbi Weinreb
10:15 AM - Learning with the Kollel Rabbis
12:00 N - Shiur, Rabbi Lefkowitz
12:45 to 1:15 - Gala Lunch

Monday, February 19th

9:15 - Breakfast
10:00 - Divrei Chizuk by Rabbi Brandt
10:15 AM - Learning with the Kollel Rabbis
12:00 N - Gala Lunch
12:45 to 1:15 - Shiur - Rabbi Tessler

VAAD HAKASHRUS SHALACH MANOS

Trying to figure what to put in your Shalach Manos? Why do the Work? Let the Vaad will do it for you. They have two options for you.

Option #1: The Vaad HaKashrus of Tidewater will make beautiful Shalach Manos baskets and deliver them to all members of B'nai Israel who live in Ghent, for a flat fee of \$136.00. Our Shalach Manos will contain a deluxe assortment of wonderful treats, Hamentashen and wine.

Option #2: If you would like to send only a few Shalach Manos baskets to people on the B'nai Israel list who live in Ghent, please send a list of names - at the price of \$10 per name. For more information, please contact Rabbi Sholom Mostofsky at (757) 572-6344. All checks are to be made out to the Vaad HaKashrus of Tidewater - **BEFORE PURIM.**

ANNUAL YOUTH PASSOVER CANDY SALE BENEFITTING CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING & BABYSITTING

We are still looking for a few super salespeople! Barton's Pesach candy is back at Bnai! Through these candy sales, we're hoping to be able to increase our children's programming and cover the cost of babysitting during the High Holidays and throughout the year.

Everyone who sells the candy is a winner! There are prizes for all levels of sales.

All children who sell more than \$500 of candy & such will get a \$25 gift certificate
The child who sells the most will get a special local prize of \$100 cash and a lunch with Rabbi Haber. These prizes are IN ADDITION to the prizes offered by Miss Chocolate. Sales began February 4th and all orders must be in by Purim, March 1st.

WOMEN'S CABINET + ONE

Sunday, February 25th at the Sandler Family Campus

The UJFT Women's Cabinet invites you to a special "Bike & Brunch" plus ONE event! Repairing the Jewish World, with special guest KATE BELZA from Richmond, VA, Board Member of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). The schedule is:

9:00 AM (optional) - all-women's spin/exercise class

10:30 AM - Kosher Dairy brunch (from the Cardo Café)

11:00 AM - Around the World with JDC. Enjoy this unique opportunity to see in beautiful photos the kinds of programs you fund; and the faces of those whose lives you improve through your gifts to the Federation's Annual Campaign.

All women in the Jewish community are encouraged to attend - bring a friend! Couvert: \$5 (for brunch). RSVP by Monday, February 23rd to Patty Malone at 965-6115 or pmalone@ujft.org. Please let her know if you're planning to attend the spin class!

ANNUAL BINA PURIM CARNIVAL

Sunday, February 25th - Sandler Family Campus from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Hot Dogs, Cotton Candy, Popcorn

New attractions: Hair Styling, Balloon animals & clown, sponge throw, rainbow sand, fluff & chips, pickle race, basketball, guess how many, arts & crafts, pick a "lolly", spin to win.

Prizes, games, activities and more!

Sponsorships are available - please call 627-2462.

BNAI ISRAEL PURIM CELEBRATION

Purim, Thursday, March 1st

This year's exciting celebration will feature Dessert, Lively Dancing, an Extra Large Bounce House, Professional Balloon creations, and fun booths and activities

Thursday, March 1st (Purim Day) from 4:45 PM to 7:12 PM

Admission is free of charge with no reservations necessary. There will be a small fee for some activities. Please note that refreshments will be dessert only. Spaces are available at individual homes for lively Purim Meals. Please contact Rabbi Haber for more information.

TORAS CHAIM SHABBOS LUNCH

Shabbos, March 10th

Please mark your calendars for the annual Toras Chaim Shabbos lunch on March 10th. The cost will be:

\$12 per child, \$18 per adult, \$65 max per family

Please make your reservations by email to office@toraschaim.net or call 757-686-2480.

Deadline for reservations is Friday, March 2nd

Thank You to our Contributors

To Avraham Ashkenazi for his contribution of a Siddur to Bnai Israel Congregation in memory of his father, Shmuel Ashkenazi.

To Caroline Schloss for her contribution to Bnai Israel Yahrtzeit Fund in memory of her great-uncle, Bert Schloss.

To Aaron & Ruth Cohen for their contribution to the Bridge-Sturman Fund in honor of Rabbi Yitzchak & Shaina Ettel Menda and family.

To Norman Soroko for his contribution to the Bnai Israel Cemetery Fund in memory of his cousin, Stanley Weisman.

To Steve Schaikowitz for his contribution to Bnai Israel Congregation.

Chai Kiddush Sponsors

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ In memory of my husband, Bernard Berger by Frances Berger✧ In honor of Rabbi & Mrs. Sholom Mostofsky, all they do for our community and all Yidden by Yehudah Leib & Leah Rivka Griffin✧ In Honor of Mrs. Chana Baer✧ In honor of my dear wife Sonia by Norman Cohen✧ In honor of the wedding of Leah & Shimon Deutsch by the proud grandparents, Benn & Jackie Richels✧ In honor of Michael Weissman's 70th birthday by Brina & Michael Weissman✧ Jeanene Anker✧ Mikhail & Naomi Zelikovich✧ Refuah Shelaima of my son, Yoel Meir ben Chaya (Joel by Irene B. Mazel✧ Refuah Shelaima of David Haas, son-in-law of Ruth & Dr. Ludwig Sternlicht by Irene B. Mazel✧ Mishenichnas Adar Marbim b'simcha by Dr. Gedalia & Jodi Schwartz and family✧ In honor of Michael Weissman's 70th birthday by Dr. Behrooz & Trudy Dayanim✧ Mishenichnas Adar Marbim b'simcha by Ro'ee & Avigayil Mor.✧ Happy Birthday to our daughters Ilana Shayna and Devorah Leah. Congratulate us to Ilana on completing her basic training in the IDF. We are proud of your achievement and look forward to many more. Love, Mommy and Michael | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✧ From Moshe & Malks Rubinovich in honor of our Norfolk Family✧ In honor of our sons Shaya, Moshe and Avraham and our mothers Anita and Ruth. We love you! Gershon and Chana Leah Rothman✧ In memory of Adele Ashe, Joey's Maternal Grandmother and Bernard Miller, Joey's father by Joey & Carol Miller✧ For the refuah shelaima of Shlomo ben Naomi, father of Naor Hilel by Ken & Debbie Wilson✧ In honor of birthdays of Asher, Shayna, and Binyamin Siegel by Gary & Laurie Siegel✧ In honor and appreciation of Rabbi Baruch Danziger by Esther Sarah Carroll✧ In honor of Michael Weissman on his significant birthday! Ad meah v'esrim healthy, happy, and with Brina by your side! By Esther Sarah Carroll✧ In appreciation to Rabbis Danziger, Rudin & Bauman for taking the time to share their wisdom by being my chavrusas. By Michael Weissman, PhD.✧ Rabbi Sender & Rebbitzen Chamie Haber and family |
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For the Week of Shabbos, February 17th through Friday, February 23rd

BIRTHDAYS

Esther Sarah Carroll		2/17	Naomi Hilel	10th	2/20
Binyamin Yitzhak Ohana	6th	2/17	Ilana Shayna Peck		2/20
Rabbi Aharon Lipman		2/19	Yaakov Bauman	8th	2/22
Basha Leiba Siegel		2/19			

YAHRTZEITS

Sara Jaffee	2/17	Renee Kappel	2/19	Jean Ehrlich	2/22
Israel Bornstein	2/18	Frances Goldblatt Potts	2/19	Max Stoler	2/22
Bessie Coleman	2/18	Sarah Traub	2/19	Doris Benn Weiner	2/22
Irene Drory	2/18	Aaron Weisman	2/19	Joseph Abraham Garson	2/23
Seymour Levinson	2/18	Gussive Aschkenas	2/20	Joe Lind	2/23
Rachel Ethel Oshry	2/18	Benjamin Goodman	2/20	Carl Turchin	2/23
Elliot Pogolowitz	2/18	Leo Max Sandler	2/20		
Samuel Borman	2/19	Faye Ochs	2/21		
Arthur Epner	2/19	Victor Cohen	2/22		

REFUAH SHELAIMA

Women

Shoshana bas Miriam	Adi Simcha bas Penina Leah Aida	Sheva bas Rivka	Tye Miriam bas Zehavit
Vitel Zilke bas Leah	Batya bas Etta	Chaya Ruchel bas Zelda	Yehudis Sima bas Alta Ruchel
Leah Adina bas Chaya Esther	Chaya Tova Gittel bas Shulamis Sima	Shira bas Sarah	Chaya bas Ruchel
Yochana bas Chana	Elka Gittel bas Basya	Nechama Getzel bas Rachel	Chana Rochel bas Sara
Nava bas Fruma Leah	Chana Yitta bas Bryna	Ruchama Malka Briendel bas	Ginendal Sarah bas Perel
Basha Leiba bas Baila Fruma	Yehudis bas Irma	Shaina Shifra	Chana Bracha bas Sara
Simcha bas Tzipporah	Bayla Mishka bas Devora	Miriam bas Chava	Arielle Mazal Tov bas Eliane
Malka Esther bas Devorah	Malka Chana bas Ruchel	Leah Aviva bas Masha	Miril bas Ida Hudya
Devorah bas Ruchel	Miriam bas Tzipora	Rochel bas Tova	Sara bat Zipporah
Sara Bas Sara	Chaya Raizel bas Dena	Chaya Rochel bas Esti Rivka	Devora Faiga bas Malka
Miriam Rochel bas Chava Elisheva	Chana bas Sarah	Rivka bas Chaya Ruchel	Shoshana Aliza bas Aviva Michal
Kayla Dodie bas Rochel Bracha	Devora Leah bas Civet Elkie	Rivka bas Yocheved	Miriam Chava Chana Devora bas
Rochel Bracha bas Baila	Samecha Yehudis bas Esther	Tzippora Aviva bas Rivka	Shaindel Chaya Rivka
Tirtze Sorah bas Rochel Bracha	Adi Bat Miriam	Devora Rivka bas Tzipora	Batya Pia bas Chaya Ruchel
Rivka Tehilla bas Sarah	Chana Leah bas Fraydel	Raizel Shoshana bas Faiga Leah	Etti bas Avraham HaCohen
Hinda bas Dena	Ruth bas Sarah	Orly Rachel Bat Yehudit Rus Leah	
Shula bas Carmela	Chaya bas Ruchel	Rivka bas Sarah	
Eliana Chaya bas Nacha	Tinokes bas Esther Hadassah	Yehudis bas Chana Leah	

Men

Shalom Boruch ben Masha	Avraham Beryl HaLevi ben Miriam	Yehuda Herschel ben Chaya Leah	Chaim Shmuel ben Rivka
Yehuda ben Chasha Ruchel	Yissachar ben Rachel	Dovid Leshem ben Esther	Eliyahu Aron ben Hudel
Moshe Yechezkel Halevi ben Sara Malka	Binyamin Leib ben Rachel Chana	Chaim Yaakov Dovid ben Avigail	Sholom Yehuda ben Fayga
Reuven Simcha ben Naomi Rus	Zecharia Avraham ben Devorah Rivka	Abba ben Tzipora	Tinok ben Rochel
Yonah Michael Alter ben Esther Sarah	Nosson Yitzhak Ben Leah	Pesach ben Baila	Shlomo Yoel ben Chaya Leah
Aryeh Nachman HaCohen ben Ita	Moshe ben Raizel	Rachmiel Leib ben Mordechai HaLevi	Chanina Getzl ben Chana Fradel
Shlomo ben Tzipporah	Eliezer ben Penina Kaila	Chaim Rafael Yoel ben Shayna	Meyer Yisroel Hirsch ben Zahava
David Shlomo ben Rivka Tehilla	Meir Yehoshua ben Penina Kaila	Golda Daniel Yosef ben Miriam	Zippora
Koppel ben Bayla	Beryl ben Chava	Moshe Yosef ben Esther	Shlomo ben Na'ami
Yonatan ben Rivka	Shmuel Yeruchem ben Baila	Reuven HaCohen ben Sarah	Eliyahu Yaakov ben Sarah Roiza
Abraham ben Iza	Yehoshua ben Nechama Aliza	Eitan Shmuel bas Chana Leah Eliezer	Yitzhak Mordechai ben Yehudis Sima
Yoel Meir ben Chaya	Menachem ben Tzipka	Yehuda ben Chana Shaindel Yisroel	Chaim bas Shifra
Yehudah Ben Batya	Avraham ben Chana	Shmuel ben Sarah	Dovid Avraham HaCohen ben Libby
Rafael Messod ben Naomi Sarah	Asher Eliyahu ben Leah	Chaim Avraham ben Feiga	Yeshia
Eliezer ben Sara	Akiva Hillel ben Cooki Tziporah		
	Feige Gittel		

THE B'NAI ISRAEL CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

Week of February 11th through February 17th

Friday, February 16th - Shabbos, February 17th: Norfolk Kollel Scholar in Residence: Rabbi Yissocher Frand
Shabbos, February 17th: Chai Kiddush
Shabbos, February 17th: Special Halacha Class with Rabbi Frand

Week of February 18th through February 24th

Sunday, February 18th: Norfolk Kollel/Yeshivas Aish Kodesh Yarchei Kallah - day 1
Monday, February 19th: Norfolk Kollel/Yeshivas Aish Kodesh Yarchei Kallah - day 2
Monday, February 19th: *Esther: The Final Chapters* series of classes with Rabbi Haber.
Second class: *Chapter 10: The Aftermath of Purim* at 7:15 PM
Wednesday, February 21st: Kollel Holiday Series: "The Queen Unmasked" at the JCC
Shabbos, February 24th: Parshas Zachor
Shabbos, February 24th: Special sponsored Kiddush

Week of February 25th through March 3rd

Sunday, February 25th: BINA annual Purim Carnival at the JCC
Monday, February 26th: BINA Yeseira in the Fred Aron Education Wing
Monday, February 26th: *Esther: The Final Chapters* series of classes with Rabbi Haber.
Third class: *Purim Today: Meaning, Laws & Purpose* at 7:15 PM
Wednesday, February 28th: Ta'anis Esther Fast begins at 5:25 AM (Fast ends at 6:37 PM)
Wednesday, February 28th: First Megilla Reading at approximately 6:35 PM, followed by light refreshments
Wednesday, February 28th: Second Megilla Reading at 8:15 PM
Thursday, March 1st: Candy Sales form due in.
Thursday, March 1st: Purim
Thursday, March 1st: First Megilla Reading at approximately 7:15 AM
Thursday, March 1st: Second Megilla Reading at 9:30 AM
Thursday, March 1st: Yeshivas Mordechai HaTzaddik at 12:00 N
Thursday, March 1st: Early Mincha at 12:47 PM
Thursday, March 1st: Mincha at 5:45 PM
Thursday, March 1st: Bnai Israel Purim Celebr on (4:45 PM to 7:12 PM)
Thursday, March 1st: Maariv at 7:12 PM
Friday, March 2nd: Shushan Purim
Shabbos, March 3rd: Kiddush by Dr. Gedalia & Jodi Schwartz in honor of Sarah Minna Schwartz

Week of March 4th through March 10th

Wednesday, March 7th: Kollel Holiday Series: "Let Them Eat Matzoh" at the JCC
Shabbos, March 10th: Parshas Parah
Shabbos, March 10th: Annual Toras Chaim Shabbos Lunch at Bnai Israel (reservation only)

Week of March 11th through March 17th

Monday, March 12th: BINA Yeseira in the Fred Aron Education Wing
Thursday, March 15th: Kollel pre-Pesach Scotch and Steak, location to be announced.
Shabbos, March 17th: Rosh Chodesh Nisan
Shabbos, March 17th: Parshas HaChodesh

Week of March 18th through March 24th

Wednesday, March 21st: Kollel Holiday Series: "The Exodus Revisited" at the JCC
Shabbos, March 24th: Shabbos HaGodol
Shabbos, March 24th: Bar Mitzva of Chaim Dov Lefkowitz

Week of March 25th through March 31st

Friday, March 30th: Erev Pesach - Last time to eat Chometz (10:41 AM) & Last time to burn Chometz (11:55 AM)
Shabbos, March 31st: First day of Pesach

Week of April 1st through April 7th

Sunday, April 1st through April 7th: Pesach
Wednesday, April 4th: Bar Mitzva of Osher Hilel (in Miami, FL)

Week of April 8th through April 14th

Monday, April 9th: Rabbi Haber starting a Pirkei Avos class at the JCC on Mondays at noon
Shabbos, April 14th: Bar Mitzva of Zev-Adi Goldberg

WE SHOULD TAKE A LESSON FROM G-D

Posted on February 26, 2004 (5764) By Rabbi Yissocher Frand

We Should Take A Lesson From G-d

The verse says, "And they shall make for me a sanctuary and I shall dwell among them" [Shmos 25:8]. The Medrash elaborates as follows: G-d told the Jewish people that He gave them the most precious thing in the world — the Torah. However, this caused a 'problem'. "I cannot separate myself from the Torah." G-d was unwilling, as it were, to just hand over the Torah to the Jewish people and walk away from it. "Therefore, wherever you go with the Torah, I want you to make a dwelling place for me, so that I might still be able to accompany the Torah."

The Medrash compares this to a father who marries off a daughter and finds it very difficult to part with her. So the father requests that the daughter build a room for him in her house, so that he can be a frequent visitor and still enjoy her company. The "room" that G-d asked the Jewish people to build for Him so that he could stay in proximity with the Torah is called the Beis HaMikdash [the Holy Temple].

The message in this Medrash is the message of love of Torah. G-d lacks nothing, but allegorically he is unable to separate himself from Torah because of His great attachment to it. We have the Torah. It is accessible to us. Unfortunately, we may not find it so difficult to separate ourselves from the Torah. We should take a lesson from G-d.

A Person Who Has Torah Has Everything

The verse at the end of last week's parsha says, "Moshe was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights" [Shmos 24:18]. The Yalkut on those words quotes the following Medrash: Rav Yochanan was travelling from Teveria to Tzipori, and he was riding on the shoulders of Rav Chiya Bar Abba. They passed by an orchard and Rabbi Yochanan remarked to Rav Chiya Bar Abba that he used to own this orchard, and then he sold it so that he would be able to spend his time learning Torah.

The Medrash then says that they walked a little further and they passed an olive grove. Again, Rabbi Yochanan said that he used to own this olive grove and he sold it to be able to spend his time learning Torah. They came to a vineyard and he again said that it used to be his, but he sold it so he would have the money to sit and learn Torah.

Rav Chiya Bar Abba was so overcome by this knowledge that he put Rav Yochanan down and started to cry. Rav Yochanan asked him why he was crying. Rav Chiya Bar Abba responded, "I am crying because you will not have anything left for yourself for your old age." In other words, "Where is your retirement fund?" Rav Yochanan responded, "Are you so upset that I sold something which took only six days to create, and exchanged it for something which took forty days and forty nights to acquire (i.e.- the Torah)?"

Rav Yochanan protested, "I am not left with nothing. I have everything! I have all those years that I sat and learned Torah." The Medrash concludes that when Rav Yochanan died, they eulogized him with the pasuk "...If a man gives over all the treasure of his house with love..." [Shir HaShirim 8:7], saying the the pasuk alluded to the love that Rav Yochanan had for Torah.

"What do you mean I have nothing? I have everything!" A person who has Torah, has everything.

The Love Of Torah — Father of the Ridbaz

The Ridbaz (Rabbi Yakov Dovid ben Ze'ev Willowski; 1845-1913) was a very interesting personality. At one point in his life, he lived in Chicago. At the end of his life, he lived in Tzfas. When he was a very old man, someone came into his Beis Medrash in Tzfas and he saw the Ridbaz hunched over his shtender (study desk), crying. This person asked the Ridbaz why he was crying. The Ridbaz answered, "It's my father's Yahrzeit today". At the time of this incident, the father of the Ridbaz might have been dead for over 50 years, so the observer asked him further as to why he was crying.

The Ridbaz explained that he remembered the love of Torah that his father demonstrated. "I remember how much my learning meant to my father." He recounted that when he was six years old, his father hired a tutor (melamed) to teach him Torah. But his father could not afford to pay the tutor and he was two months behind in the tutor's payment. One day, the tutor sent home a note with the Ridbaz giving the father an ultimatum. If the tutor did not get paid, he would need to find other employment and stop learning with the child.

The father was beside himself with anxiety. He went to shul and overheard a wealthy man saying that he wanted to build a house for his future son-in-law who just got married, but he could not find the necessary bricks to make the chimney. Without a chimney, he could not build the house. The father of the Ridbaz went home and dismantled his own chimney brick by brick, sold the bricks to the wealthy person, paid the tutor the back wages and then had enough money to pay him for the next six months.

The Ridbaz said that he remembered the bitter cold of those winters. There was no heat in the house. The father took apart the chimney so that the son could learn Torah. This, he explained, was why he was crying on the Yahrzeit. He was not crying over the loss of a father fifty years after the fact. He was crying for the love of Torah that his father had, to the extent that the whole family should shiver through the winters so that the son could learn Torah.

This is an echo of what Rav Yochanan told Rav Chiya Bar Abba. "What do you mean I'll have nothing in my old age? I'll have the years I sat learning Torah. What could be more important than that?"

We have opportunities galore. We have the Torah there waiting for us in all forms and all shapes — chavrusas, shiurim, all kinds of media — we have it! As with many things in life, we fail to appreciate what we have. Our attitude must emulate that of G-d: "I am unable to separate myself from it."