



The Chabad Weekly

Vol. 22 Issue 49



Candlelighting
(Los Angeles)

6:44 PM

Friday Mincha:

7:00 PM

Early Mincha: 6:00 PM

LATEST SHEMA: 9:42 AM

Shabbat Schedule

- **Tanya** 8:45 AM
- **Shacharit** 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen
- **Pirkei Avos** 6:00 PM
- **Mincha** 6:30 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- **Shabbat ends** 7:44 PM

Announcements:

Yartzheits: Rouhollah Illulian - Elul 12, Gutman Taus - Elul 12, Jack Dattels - Elul 14, Elimelech Urman - Elul 14, Helen Gross - Elul 15, Nasrin Rashti - Elul 16, Ita Chein - Elul 17, Nissan Rochel - Elul 18.

Happy Birthday to Rabbi Shalom Ber Charytan, Lida Davidpour and Aviva-Nicole Aminzadeh.

Happy Anniversary to Rabbi Srolik and Chayale Sperlin, Sammy and Miriam Clifford.

Mazel Tov to Isaac Mahgerefte on his upcoming marriage to Elmira.

GOOD SHABBOS!

Parshas Ki Seitze

Friday, Elul 13, 5779 / Sept. 13, 2019

DIY Destiny

By Yossy Goldman

We read in Deuteronomy 22:8: "When you build a new house, you must place a guard-rail around your roof so that you will not bring blood upon your house should any man fall from the unenclosed roof."

The Hebrew wording for "should any man fall" is "ki yipol hanofel," which literally means "should the one who falls fall." The commentators say that this unusual phrasing implies that this individual—known as "the one who falls"—was actually destined to fall off a roof and lose his life.

Why should his blood be on my hands?

So the question is, if that person was in fact pre-ordained to fall, why am I at fault just because it happened in my house? Why am I responsible for the fulfillment of his destiny? Why should his blood be on my hands?

Jewish philosophers answer this question by saying that although we definitely believe in destiny—that whatever happens is part of the Almighty's vast eternal plan—nonetheless, every individual has an obligation to do his or her best to take precautions and prevent tragedy. Although we believe in miracles we are not permitted to rely upon them.

There is a Yiddish proverb that "the man destined to drown will drown even in a glass of water." But that doesn't mean that you have to be the one to dunk his head into the glass. In short, we believe in the concept of bashert, but we mustn't live by it.

One may ask, is it not an expression of faith to leave it all to G-d? To put our trust implicitly in Him that He will provide? That He will protect and guard us from accidents? In the Grace after Meals we say that G-d is "the feeder and provider for all." So if G-d is supporting me, I might ask, why must I shlepp off to work? The answer is that it is a Jewish belief that "G-d helps those who help themselves." That's why it is a commandment of the Torah to safe-

guard our health. Likewise, we are not to live dangerously by leaving roofs unenclosed, swimming pools unfenced or our doors unlocked.

A few chapters before the command to erect fences on roofs, the Torah states that "The L-rd, your G-d, shall bless you in all that you do." Meaning that to succeed in any endeavor, we need G-d's blessing, but He blesses us in all that we do. In order to merit His blessing, we must first lay the groundwork and create the opportunity for G-d's blessings to be realized.

This is the approach of the farmer who knows that the success of his crop depends on G-d granting rain, but that the blessing of rain will only help after he has tilled, ploughed and planted.

There is the story of the shlemiel who kept praying to G-d that He make him win the lottery and solve all his financial problems. Day after day he implored the Almighty to grant him his personal salvation via the lottery. When the lottery was drawn, unfortunately our shlemiel was not the winner. So he went back to the synagogue the next day and cried out to G-d bitterly, "L-rd, you let me down. I prayed so hard. Why didn't I win the lottery?"

And a deep, booming voice rang out from the heavens saying, "Because you never bought a ticket!"

You never bought a ticket!

The concept of playing a role in shaping our destinies applies to every area of life. As the famous golfer Gary Player said, "The more I practice, the luckier I get." If you want to be mazaldig, don't depend on mazal alone. If you want to have nachas from your children, don't rely on the luck of the draw that they will marry the right person. Parents have to plough and plant (and pray very hard) for nachas to happen.

In the Psalmist's words, which we say before the Grace After Meals on holidays in Shir Hamaalot (Psalm 126), "He who sows with tears, will reap in joy." (Chabad.org)

Chabad of Beverly Hills

9145 Wilshire Blvd.

Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Chabadofbeverlyhills.com

Rabbi Yosef Shusterman

Rabbi Mendel Shusterman

310-271-9063

This Wednesday is Chai (the 18th of Elul, the "birthday" of the greater Chasidic movement and of Chabad Chasidut in particular.

The Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the path of Chasidut, was born on Chai Elul. On that date 26 years later, Achiya Hashiloni began to teach him Torah "as it is studied in Gan Eden." Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad Chasidut, was also born on Chai Elul.

As the Previous Rebbe explained, Chai Elul introduces an element of chayut, vitality, to our Divine service during Elul, the month in which we correct and make amends for past misdeeds.

In the merit of our repentance, G-d grants us a good and sweet year. By infusing our service with vitality, Chai Elul helps us do teshuva with enthusiasm, not just by rote or out of habit. Superficially, vitality and teshuva may seem contradictory. Vitality is associated with joy, whereas repentance is associated with bitterness, regretting past actions and resolving to do better. Those these seem to be opposite emotions, in Elul we feel both, and at the same time!

Every mitzva we do should be performed with joy, for by observing that mitzva, we fulfill the will of G-d. As teshuva is a mitzva like any other, we experience joy for having been given the privilege.

However, Chasidut gives us another reason to be happy while doing teshuva, by explaining how bitterness and joy can exist simultaneously.

Rabbi Shneur Zalman describes this in the Tanya as "weeping on one side of the heart, and joy on the other side." When we do teshuva, we rage against our Evil Inclination and of failure to withstand temptation. Yet at the same time we are happy, for we know that we are becoming closer to G-d.

Chai Elul (and by extension, Chasidut) thus transforms the entire month of

Elul into a labor of love and joy.

From L'Chaim #1386 Lchaimweekly.org

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Sunday 8:00 AM

**Gemara – Tractate Sanhedrin
(men)**

Monday 8:00 PM

Chumash (men and women)

Tuesday 8:00 PM

**Gemara B'Iyun
Tractate Kesuvos (men)**

Wednesday 8:00 PM

Halacha and Tanya (women)

Thursday 10:00 AM

Chassidus (women)

Daily

Chassidus 6:45 AM– 7:15 AM

**Halacha Between Mincha
and Maariv**

**There will be no classes
next week.**

Daily Minyonim

**Weekday Shacharis:
6:00 AM & 7:30 AM**

**Sunday Shacharis:
7:00 AM & 9:00 AM**

**Mincha/Maariv:
6:55 PM**

Each Day

**Purify time.
The Baal Shem
Tov taught that
each day you must
find an act of kind-
ness and beauty
that belongs to
that day alone.**

From the wisdom of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, rendered by Rabbi Tzvi Freeman.
chabad.org

Story of the Week:

In the Air to Brisbane

I (Rabbi Pinchas Woolstone) was raised in a traditional Zionist Jewish home in Sydney, Australia. While on a visit in Israel, I became attracted to Chabad-Lubavitch and, upon return to Australia, I enrolled in a Chabad yeshiva, which eventually led me to learning in New York. That is when I found out I had Chabad ancestors - including the Tzemach Tzedek, the third Rebbe of Chabad - and I became a loyal follower of the Lubavitcher (Chabad) Rebbe.

While I was in New York, I was approached by a prestigious rabbi from another chasidic group, who told me about a family that was searching for their long-lost daughter. She had been born and raised in Boro Park, and she had married there; unfortunately, the marriage ended badly, but her husband - for whatever reason - refused to agree to a divorce.

After this went on for a period of time, she "snapped" (to use a slang term), and she suddenly disappeared. Her family had learned that she had gone to Australia, but they had no idea where. Since I was from Australia, the rabbi who approached me thought that maybe I could help them bring their daughter back to her people.

I said, "Australia is geographically the size of the United States. Looking for someone there without an address is like trying to find a needle in a haystack."

He said, "I don't know what to tell you, but maybe the Rebbe would know what to do."

Before returning to Australia I had an audience with the Rebbe, so I told him this whole story. He asked, "When are you going back?"

I said, "I'm going back Wednesday."

He said, "Sometime after you get back, maybe the week after, you should take a trip to Brisbane."

He didn't explain why I should do this, but, of course, I would follow the Rebbe's instructions without question. So, when I returned to Australia, I got on a plane to Brisbane.

Now, Brisbane is a northerly city, about an hour's flight from Sydney, and it has a very small Jewish community. At that time, there was no Chabad emissary in Brisbane; Rabbi Levi and Devorah Jaffe had not yet arrived in town, so it was a desolate place, Jewishly speaking.

Flying there, I found myself sitting next to a well-dressed, non-Jewish woman who identified herself as a Greek Orthodox Christian. Seeing that I was Jewish, she began asking me theological questions concerning the Hebrew Bible. Toward the end of our conversation, she asked me something peculiar: "What is the Jewish view of a person who leaves the Jewish faith? Is such a person allowed back in, or is the door bolted?"

I answered, "Nobody can ever be separated from Almighty G-d, and if somebody has, for whatever reason, taken a vacation from commitment to Torah but then decides to come home again, the Jewish community will welcome that person with open arms."

Then she said, "I want to tell you something - I own a chain of dress shops around Aus-

tralia and, in Cairns, I have a shop which employs a Jewish girl. She came from a very religious home in New York and I can see that she's living a very different life here from how she was brought up there. She tells me she's happy, but I can tell that she's not, and I believe that she would be better off back in her own community."

At that moment, bells started ringing in my head. Here I am going to Brisbane on the Rebbe's instructions without knowing why I am going there. And on the way, I meet a Greek Orthodox Christian woman who is telling me about a Jewish girl who left home. Realizing what this could mean, I suddenly got goose pimples all over my body, and I started to shake.

I said to the woman, "You should know that I am going to Brisbane without knowing why I am going there. I am doing this because a Rebbe in New York, who is probably the greatest living sage of our time, told me to do so. He told me to do so after I asked him how I could find a lost Jewish girl."

When I said that, the Christian woman started to shake as well. "Maybe she's the one," she said. "Maybe this girl working for me in Cairns is the one."

I had to admit that she could be right. The woman immediately offered to facilitate everything and to pay all costs involved, so that I could meet this girl - though I declined her offer.

From Brisbane, I flew to Cairns, and I walked into this dress shop. She wasn't there because the salesgirls worked in shifts and her shift had not started yet. I went off to buy myself a Coke, but I was so nervous, I bought a beer instead.

When it was time, I walked back to the store, and there she was. This was the girl I was looking for! Obviously she was not dressed like a religious girl from Boro Park, and she was clearly surprised to see me there - a chasid visiting a women's dress shop at the end of Australia, where she thought she could get away from her people.

I said, "My name is Pinchas Woolstone, I'm a Lubavitcher..." I was trying to find the right words, how best to explain what I was doing there. I decided it was best to just tell her what happened, which is what I did. Then I asked her, "Are you willing to talk to me?"

She answered abruptly, "I can't talk now, I'm working."

I said, "I'll come back when the store closes." She wasn't overly enthusiastic. She said, "All I want - all I ever wanted - is a get," referring to the Jewish divorce document.

I said, "But you are not religious; what do you need a get for?"

She said, "If you can help me with a get, that's good. But if not, then just leave me alone."

I called the people back in New York, and they managed to finally arrange her get. While I was making these arrangements, I met with her again, and I said to her, "To be honest, your reaction to what happened to you is understandable. But getting divorced from your husband doesn't mean you must divorce yourself from your family, from your community, from Torah and G-d."

S h e h e a r d m e .
After she received her get, she came back to America and enrolled in a university. This was, of course, a path far removed from her Boro

Park roots, but at university she connected with the local Chabad emissary and began attending the Shabbat dinners he organized once a month.

Little by little, she became Torah-observant again. Today she is religious; she is married again, and a mother of a beautiful family. And that chain of events began when the Rebbe said to me, "Go to Brisbane."

Source: Adapted by Yerachmiel Tilles from a mailing of "JEM - Here's My Story" (JEMedia.org), as part of their extraordinary "My Encounter with the Rebbe" project, documenting the life of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi M. M. Schneerson of righteous memory, in one of the thousand plus videotaped interviews conducted to date.

- ascentofsafed.com

PARSHA INSIGHTS

The Power of Words

זָכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְמִרְיָם
(דברים כ"ד): וגו'

[Moses told the Jewish people,]
"Remember what G-d did to Miriam."
Deuteronomy 24:9

It is important to realize that Miriam did not lie or even criticize her brother, Moses. She merely voiced her disapproval of his behavior without bothering to discuss her grievances with him privately first. Nonetheless, Miriam was immediately punished for having spoken against Moses.

This teaches us how careful we must always be when we talk (or write) about other people. Even seemingly harmless discussion can easily slip into gossip or slander. Rather, we should always be careful to speak and write constructively. If someone's behavior seems inappropriate, we should clarify matters with them privately, thereby sparing everyone the grief that inevitably results from misunderstanding.

From: The Daily Wisdom Translated and Adapted by
Moshe Wisniefsky

PIRKEI AVOS

Shimon Ben Shatach said: "Examine the witnesses thoroughly" (Ethics 1:9)

There is a homiletic dimension to this teaching. Our Sages say: "The walls of a person's house testify regarding his [character]." On the most simple level, it is possible to "examine the witnesses" and determine a person's character by studying the walls of his house - which books, whose pictures, and which art do they feature.
(The Rebbe) (From: L'Chaim 1486)

HaYom Yom Elul 14

From my father's guiding instructions: Keep away - to the ultimate degree - from a campaign of attack. Not because we lack the means of prevailing or because of timorousness, but because we must consecrate all our strength exclusively to strengthening our own structure, the edifice of Torah and mitzvot performed in holiness and purity. To this we must devote ourselves utterly, with actual mesirat nefesh,¹ not merely with potential mesirat nefesh.