

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



August 26, 2023

Ki Tetze

9 Elul, 5783

Two Eyes

When the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe was a child, he once asked his father: "We have one nose and one mouth. Why do we have two eyes?"

His father, ever-conscious of the opportunity to provide his child with character-building guidance, told him: "One to see the good in other people and the other to see what needs to be corrected in ourselves."

This lesson takes on greater significance in the present month. The month of Elul is a month of preparation for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Elul, the last month of the Jewish year, is compared to a time when the owner of a business closes his shop to take inventory. Similarly, at this time of year, we step back and evaluate our conduct.

We all like to do, to make decisions, to see the results and to progress further. If we are successful, we also look back and glow in the halo of achievement for a while, but honestly, we prefer doing much more than reviewing what we have done.

Certainly, there is virtue in continued positive activity, but if we never give our efforts adequate evaluation, it is possible we will misdirect our efforts. Moreover, behavior tends to be self-reinforcing. So quite often, we may continue following the same pattern, relearning our mistakes and ingraining them deeper into our personalities.

One of the signs of maturity is to contemplate our actions and examine them, considering whether we acted correctly or not. Recognizing the necessity to do this is one of the first signs of growing up spiritually.

Jewish thought puts an emphasis on such careful review. At the end of each day, we recite the "Shema Before Retiring." Before the Shema, we conscientiously evaluate our conduct throughout the previous day, seeing where we've been successful and where we've failed, where our energies were employed advantageously and where they could have been better used.

This process is carried out with greater intensity Thursday night, as we assess not only our conduct on that particular day, but throughout the entire week. On the last day of every month, we should think over the entire month and make such an accounting.

All these times, though, are dwarfed by the process of self-analysis that should characterize Elul. Elul is an entire month devoted to examining our conduct in the previous year and preparing for change and progress in the coming year. It is a month dedicated to taking stock of our conduct and seeing how it can improve.

Introspection, however, does not always lead to positive results. Sometimes, it just makes us heavy, without propelling us forward. Introspection is valuable when we have a purpose. Then our thoughts are directed to defining our goals more clearly and seeing whether or not our deeds are aligned with these purposes.

For when a person feels purpose and direction, he is charged with energy and feels the need to achieve. He wants to see the goals in which he believes and identifies to be manifested in actual life. Therefore he is both active and reflective. He desires to do, but wants his actions to be constructive and fruitful. So from time to time, he appraises his activities and sees whether they are aligned with his ultimate objective or whether it is necessary to redirect his focus.

When we set aside time in Elul to review our conduct with this focus, we will ensure ourselves a good and sweet year in all matters, including the matter of ultimate importance, the coming of Moshiach.

(from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)

Passion For Progress

"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way when you were leaving Egypt ... you shall wipe out the memory of Amalek from under the heaven – you shall not forget." (Devarim/Deuteronomy 25:17,19) Consistent with the maxim that the Torah contains no extra letters, no less extra instructions, the Talmud (Megilla 18a) explains that "remembering" is a physical, verbal expression, versus "not forgetting", which is done in the heart.

No, it is not. Not forgetting is a memory function, something that occurs in the brain, not the heart. How do we understand the Talmud?

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Rabbi Moshe Feinstein reminds us that our nature is that the brain recalls readily that which our heart yearns for passionately. The Torah is instructing us to instill into our heart an appreciation of the corrosive evil of Amalek, an evil that allowed them to attack our forebears in the wilderness – even though they knew they would be decimated in battle – simply to demonstrate that G-d's Chosen People were not untouchable. Once we understand that the human is capable of such depravity, and this knowledge shakes us to our core, we will be vigilant to guard ourselves from such degeneracy and, perforce, we will not forget Amalek.

Similar, notes Rabbi Feinstein, is the basis of the teaching of Rabbi Dostai bar Yannai in the name of Rabbi Meir (Pirkei Avos/Ethics of the Fathers 3:10): Whoever forgets anything of his Torah learning, Scripture considers as if he bears guilt for his soul, as it says, "But beware and guard your soul exceedingly lest you forget the things your eyes have seen." (Devarim/Deuteronomy 4:9) How can we be culpable for failing to remember? We should have such a passion to instill the truths of Torah into the depths of our heart until the totality of our bodies and souls yearn for Torah and mitzvah fulfillment. With such a yearning, forgetting would be impossible.

We find ourselves more than a week into the month of Elul. For a week the shofar has been blown every morning, calling us to wake up and return to G-d and His mitzvos. But we have done this already, last year, two years ago, and the year before that ... How can we make this year different? Maybe the problem is not WHAT we decide to improve, but HOW we decide to improve.

A laborer who toiled from morning till night for his daily bread once asked Rabbi Yisroel Salanter, founder of the Mussar movement: since he only had ten or fifteen minutes a day to dedicate to Torah study, to what realm in Torah should he dedicate himself? Rabbi Salanter encouraged him to learn Mussar, for if he toiled in Mussar for those fifteen minutes he would discover that he, indeed, had much more time available for Torah study.

(by Rabbi Pinchas Avruch from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Please complete and send to the Shul your: (1) High Holiday Seat Reservation Form, (2) Membership Information Form and (3) Yizkor Form for 5784. All are available on the Shul Website at www.chabadshul.org



Sponsorships are available for two flower displays on the Bima during each of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Succot. Please consider sponsoring the flowers in honor or in memory of someone. Please email Allan Genut at agenut@gmail.com to make arrangements.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to **the Neuman Family** on the loss, **Chazzan David Neuman**.

Shiva will take place at 6604 Linco Avenue.

Ma'ariv: Motzaei Shabbat: 8:30 p.m.

Shacharit: Sunday at: 8:00 a.m. / Monday – Thursday at 7:00 a.m.

Minchah / Ma'ariv: Sunday – Wednesday at 7:30 p.m..

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 8/25 — 8 Elul

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.

Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Shabbat, 8/26 — 9 Elul

Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.

Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:46 a.m.

Minchah — 7:20 p.m.

Shiur — after Minchah

Ma'ariv — 8:30p.m.

Sunday, 8/27 — 10 Elul

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.

Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:25 p.m.

Monday, 8/28 — 11 Elul

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.

Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:25 p.m.

Tuesday, 8/29 — 12 Elul

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.

Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:25 p.m.

Wednesday, 8/30 — 13 Elul

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.

Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:25 p.m.

Thursday, 8/31 — 14 Elul

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.

Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:25 p.m.

Friday, 9/1 — 15 Elul

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.

Candles — 7:19 p.m.

Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.