

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

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February 6, 2016

Mishpatim — Shabbat M'vorchim

27 Shevat, 5776

Send in the Clowns

Once, when Rabbi Beruka met the prophet Elijah in the market-place, Rabbi Beruka asked him, "Can you show me someone who is assured of a place in the World to Come?"

Elijah pointed to two ordinary looking people, whereupon Rabbi Beruka approached them and asked what their occupation was.

"We are jesters who make people laugh when they are sad," they replied.

What exactly is a jester and how did these particular jesters make people laugh when they were depressed? The word "jesters" is defined by Rashi as "one who is joyful and causes others to rejoice."

This word can also be read as "I have given joy to others; consequently, I have also rejoiced." One experiences personal joy only after he dispenses it to others.

The nature of joy is that it permeates a person's entire being. When a person is happy, he lives joyfully. This happiness affects the way he conducts his life and influences everyone with whom he comes in contact. He shares happiness with those around him and his happiness brings him success in all matters.

At the conclusion of a passage in the Torah describing a series of curses to be visited upon the Jewish people, the Torah explains: "Because you did not serve the L-rd your G-d with joyfulness and with gladness of heart ..."

This idea is somehow foreign to the customary notion of happiness. When do we consider ourselves happy? Well, for most of us, happiness connotes some pleasurable situation or occurrence.

Jewish teachings define happiness not only as the feeling of joy that results from pleasure. For the Jew, happiness is itself a form of devotion, of Divine service to the Creator. It is a self-imposed state of mind, which denotes our faith and belief in G-d. We are joyous because we are sure that everything He does is in our very best interest; we are joyous because we are living in accord with G-d's Divine blueprint for universal life, the Torah.

Our joyous state of mind exists regardless of externals, it defines our being Jews. And happiness is also a great mitzva, for it is an affirmation in the truest fashion, of our faith in an omniscient and benevolent G-d, whose plan for us may be unfathomable, but Whom we trust, as a child trusts his mother and father.

Rabbi Yitzchak Luria comments: "Simcha [joy] is fundamental to the service of G-d. Even if our service was lacking in other aspects, if we had been happy while serving G-d, we never would have been exiled."

Of course, the mega-simcha we are all awaiting is the imminent commencement of the Messianic Era. And we can each hasten its arrival by maintaining an attitude of joy, which will most certainly have a ripple effect through our relationships with everyone we encounter on our meandering paths through this world.

This Shabbat we bless the month of Adar, about which the Talmud states, "When Adar begins we increase our joy."

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

Reliving The Pain

"My wrath shall blaze and I shall kill you by the sword, and your wives will be widows and your children orphans" (22:23)

The Torah prohibits Bnei Yisroel from exploiting the vulnerability of a widow or orphan. Hashem warns that if He will hear the cries of widows or orphans, He will kill their oppressors by the sword and render their wives and children,

(continued on the other side)

widows and orphans. The necessity for the Torah to state that the wives and children of the oppressors will become widows and orphans implies that this is an integral part of the punishment; not only will the sinner be killed, but his wife and children will suffer because of his actions. Axiomatic to all of Hashem's punishments is the principle of "midah keneged midah" - "quid pro quo"; Hashem punishes with a severity commensurate to the offense. Why is death by the hands of heaven not a sufficient response for the mistreatment of widows and orphans? The Torah's stress on the children and wives becoming widows and orphans implies that there are two responses, death and bereavement of kin, for one action, the mistreatment of widows and orphans.

Rabbeinu Yona explains that the Hebrew word for widow, "almanah" is rooted in the word "ilem" - "mute", for with the death of her husband the widow is silenced, i.e. she has no one to defend her. Similarly, the word "yatom" - "orphan" correlates to a word found in Bereishis in the verse "vayitom hakesef"- "and the money was depleted". When a child loses a father his confidence is depleted, for he senses that he has no one to champion his cause. Every time widows or orphans are oppressed, they are forced to relive the loss of their husband or parent. They become acutely aware that if their relative, who in the past would defend them, were alive, they would not be forced to endure the current mistreatment. The Torah therefore warns the oppressors that as a result of their actions they will cause their own wives and children to experience the pain and suffering which they have inflicted upon others.

(by Rabbi Yochanan Zweig from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)



We happily wish Mazel Tov to **Mitch and Liz Mayer** on the **Birth of their Grandson, Mordechai Nahum**. Mazel Tov also to the parents: **Adam & Michal Mayer** of Inwood, New York.

Yahrzeits This Week:

Rivka Hain	28 Shevat - Saturday night/Sunday	for father	Chaim Yaakov ben Dovid Tzvi
Bruce Blumenthal	28 Shevat - Saturday night/Sunday	for father	Hillel ben Moshe HaLevi

SHUL DIRECTORY

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Davening and Shiurim Schedule

<p>Friday, 2/5 — 26 Shevat Shacharit — 7:00 Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m. Candles — 5:13 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.</p> <p>Shabbat, 2/6 — 27 Shevat Shacharit — 8:40 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:44 a.m. Berachot Gemara Shiur — cancelled this week Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 5:00 p.m. Ma'ariv — 6:14 p.m.</p> <p>Sunday, 2/7 — 28 Shevat Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Shulchan Aruch Shiur — cancelled this week Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.</p> <p>Monday, 2/8 — 29 Shevat Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m. Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.</p>	<p>Tuesday — Rosh Chodesh Adar I, 2/9 — 30 Shevat Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m. Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday, Rosh Chodesh Adar I, 2/10 — 1 Adar I Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m. Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday, 2/11 — 2 Adar I Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m. Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m. Tanya Shiur — 9:00 p.m.</p> <p>Friday, 2/12 — 3 Adar I Shacharit — 7:00 Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m. Candles — 5:21 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:20 p.m.</p>
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