

The Shul
at the Lubavitch Center
6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209
410-486-2666
www.chabadshul.org



January 2, 2016

Shemot

21 Tevet, 5776

Optical Illusions

We've all seen pictures of optical illusions: which line is longer? Is it a vase or two faces? Which dots are darker? But did you realize that every instant you are encountering optical illusions?

Lying in bed just days before his passing, Rebbe Shneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad Chasidut, was discussing this very topic with his son, Rabbi Dov Ber. "Do you see that ceiling beam," the Rebbe asked his son. "It is pure G-dliness," he declared.

Touching the beam, Rabbi Dov Ber objected, "But father, all I feel is material wood."

"That is because you are touching it with physical hands," his father explained.

Does it seem hard to imagine that everything in this world is, as Rebbe Shneur Zalman proclaimed, pure G-dliness? Try considering the following and it might be easier.

Every part of matter is made up of atoms and even smaller particles. These atoms and all of their particles are constantly in motion. Yet, when we look at a ceiling beam for instance, what we see is a very solid, stationary object.

Now, rather than discussing particles of matter, consider pure G-dliness. According to Jewish philosophy, G-d is very much in touch with the world He created. He did not simply, as some believe, create the world and then leave it to its own devices. In fact, the world continues to exist because, and only because, G-d is constantly reinvesting His life-force into the world. This means that each and every object, from the largest building to the smallest particle, from the squirmiest jello to the most solid ceiling beam, exists only because it is constantly being reinvested with G-dliness. It is pure G-dliness!

When Rebbe Shneur Zalman explained to his son that he was feeling physicality because he was using his physical hand, it's like the old-fashioned 3-D glasses that let you see everything three dimensionally, or rose colored glasses that make everything seem rosy. The fact that everything looks 3-D or seems rosy doesn't mean that either of those conditions are true. Similarly, because we look at or touch things with physical limbs doesn't mean that they lack G-dliness.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe said that Moshiach is already here; if we only open our eyes we will see him. Most people don't go through life with their eyes closed. So what does "open your eyes" mean? Perhaps the Rebbe is not talking about physical eyes but spiritual eyes.

How do we open our spiritual eyes? How about trying to see the positive points in others. Or, every time something happens "coincidentally," realizing that it is Divine Providence that orchestrated the event. Or, thanking G-d for all the good you have in your life (if this seems difficult, spend just a few moments with the less fortunate and you'll understand that there's a lot to be thankful for).

Looking at everything with spiritual eyes is unlike using rose-colored or 3-D glasses, though. For, with spiritual eyes, we see the true essence of everything; as Rebbe Shneur Zalman declared, everything is pure G-dliness. And once we have exercised our spiritual eyes in this manner, they will be healthy and fit enough to see Moshiach, who is already here.

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

Today in Jewish History

24th Tevet: Passing of R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1812)

The founder of Chabad Chassidism, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745-1812), passed away on the eve of the 24th of Tevet, at approximately 10:30 p.m., shortly after reciting the Havdalah prayer marking the end of the Shabbat. The Rebbe was in the village of Peyena, fleeing Napoleon's armies, which had swept through the Rebbe's hometown of Liadi three months earlier in their advance towards Moscow. He was in his 68th year at the time of his passing, and was succeeded by his son, Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch.

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20th Tevet: Passing of Maimonides (1204)

Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, Talmudist, Halachist, physician, philosopher and communal leader, known in the Jewish world by the acronym "Rambam" and to the world at large as "Maimonides", passed away in Egypt on the 20th of Tevet in 1204.

(from www.chabad.org)

Community Information of Interest

January 2: The Last Years of the Old Order: Israel and the Jews 1962-1966. Lecture by Rabbi Dovid Katz. "Where is Yossele?" *The State of Israel and the Jewish Religion 1962-66.* This lecture will begin at 8:00 p.m. and be held at the Congregation Shomrei Emunah.

On Friday, January 1st, after 8:00 a.m. Shacharit, Rabbi Kaplan will present Part II of "**Understanding and Applying the Fundamentals of Emunah and Bitachon**", followed by Q&A. Please join us for the shiur and breakfast, sponsored by **Chaim and Esty Kahn.**

"The Rav's Friday Night Hashkafa Q&A Shiur for Men"

The next shiur will take place **this** Friday night (Parshat Shemot – January 1st) at 8:00 p.m. and will be held in the home of Mr. & Mrs. Ben Gutman at 6618 Shelrick Place (corner of Pimlico Road).

The Rosenfelds are Sponsoring Kiddush this Shabbat
l'iluy nishmas their father, **Esriel ben Moshe z"l**,
in commemoration of his yartzeit this Tuesday, 24th of Tevet.



Yahrzeits This Week:

Moshe Rosenfeld	24 Tevet - Monday night/Tuesday	for father	Esriel ben Moshe
Arlene Gittleson	24 Tevet - Monday night/Tuesday	for mother	Leba Malka bas Yehudah

SHUL DIRECTORY

Rabbi: Shmuel Kaplan . rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com
Treasurer: Michael Frank . . . shul.chabad@gmail.com
Membership: Jay Bernstein . . . bernstein1@msn.com
Kiddush: Reuven Frank rfrank82@gmail.com
Bulletin: Howard Kaplon hkaplon@towson.edu
Website: Shoshana Zakar sue.zakar@gmail.com

Gabbaim:
Yehudah Buchwalter . . . judahbuchwalter@verizon.net
Allan Genut agenut@gmail.com
Ephraim Siff
Arnie Gittleson arnoldgittleson@yahoo.com

Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday, 1/1 – 20 Tevet

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Breakfast / Shiur — 8:45 a.m.
Candles — 4:36 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Shabbat, 1/2 – 21 Tevet

Shacharit – 8:40 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:48 a.m.
Berachot Gemara Shiur — 3:55 p.m.
Minchah & Seudah Shilshit — 4:25 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 5:38 p.m.

Sunday, 1/3 – 22 Tevet

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Shulchan Aruch Shiur — 8:45 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Monday, 1/4 – 23 Tevet

Shacharit – 6:50 a.m.
Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.

Tuesday, 1/5 – 24 Tevet

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.

Wednesday, 1/6 – 25 Tevet

Shacharit – 7:00 a.m.
Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.

Thursday, 1/7 – 26 Tevet

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.
Tanya Shiur — 9:00 p.m.

Friday, 1/8 – 27 Tevet

Shacharit — 7:00
Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
Candles — 4:42 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:45 p.m.