

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



March 5, 2016

VaYakhel — Parshat Shekalim — Shabbat M'vorchim

25 Adar I, 5776

Learning to Walk

Have you ever watched a baby learn to walk? There's a lot of hesitation, a lot of trial-and-error, a lot of holding on, letting go, reaching out - and falling down.

How does it work?

After crawling around for a few months, the baby can pull herself up to a kneeling position. That seems like a lot of fun, especially when the parents make a big deal out of it. But having figured out how to kneel, the baby goes back to crawling. There's a lot of experimenting with pulling herself up, using a table leg or the couch, to kneel before moving on to standing up.

Now this one's a bit harder. The legs are wobbly. As soon as she's up, plop, down she goes. And sometimes she's so unsteady on her feet that instead of plopping down, she becomes disoriented, and forgets how to plop. So she lets go and falls over, startling herself.

Once she's learned how to stand and keep standing without knees buckling, she begins to figure out how to slide along the edges of furniture, keeping a firm handhold as she gets her bearings and masters the art of walking.

Then she ventures across the gap - a hand reaches from nightstand to bed, or coffee table to couch. It doesn't quite make it and, plop, down she goes. After figuring out how to negotiate the space between, she's ready to launch into uncharted waters - walking by herself.

Watching an infant learn to walk teaches us much about faith in and knowledge of G-d, what they are, and what's the difference between them.

There are two parts to the process of learning to walk: the innate impulse, the instinctive faith that one can walk, and the personal effort, the trial and error of learning how, so that one does not imagine or believe or dream or hope one can walk; one walks because one knows how.

The same applies to the concepts of faith in G-d and knowledge of G-d. We have an instinctive faith, a belief we receive as an inheritance, as Rabbi Shneur Zalman, founder of Chabad Chasidism stated unequivocally, "We are believers, the children of believers." At first, we believe in G-d simply because we're told by those we trust that G-d exists. But we don't really experience G-dliness; we don't know G-d.

Only through trial-and-error, only through effort and concentration, can we come to have a knowledge of G-d. Just like learning to walk, or getting to know someone so well (a spouse) that the relationship becomes a bond, a unity, so too knowledge of G-d takes time, reflection and all the other mental work it takes to get to know anything or anyone.

The "classroom" that teaches us is prayer, and the "text" is the prayer book. When we really "get into" the words of the prayers, we can begin to understand concepts related to knowledge of G-d - His omnipotence, His being Infinite, G-d as Creator, and so forth.

So we begin with faith (an inherited instinct) and grow into knowledge (irrefutable experience, gained through effort and trial and error).

But we don't stop there. We come back to faith, a faith that transcends intellect - much as, once we've learned to walk, we no longer think about walking, or how to walk - we simply walk.

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

Laziness May Be Lurking In Noble Decisions Not To Do Something

There is a pasuk in Parshas Vayakhel, which reads: "And the Princes brought the Shoham stones and the Miluim stones for the Ephod and the Choshen" [Shmos 35:27]. Rashi cites a teaching of Chazal - "What prompted the Nesiim [Princes] to contribute first at the inauguration of the Mizbeach [altar] [Bamidbar 7:1-2], while they did not contribute first at the construction of the Mishkan [Tabernacle]? The answer is that by the Mishkan, they took the attitude 'Let the public contribute whatever they contribute and we will complete any shortfall.' Since the public contributed everything that was needed, the Nesiim said 'What is left for us to do?' The only things not yet contributed were the

(continued on the other side)

Shoham stones and the Miluim stones for the Ephod and the Choshen and so that is what they brought. Therefore, they made sure to be the first to contribute by the dedication of the Mizbeach. Since they were somewhat lazy in contributing to the Mishkan, the spelling of the word Nesiim is defective in this pasuk (without a yud between the sin and the aleph)."

Rav Simcha Zissel says that we learn from here something that we should all take to heart. Namely, whenever we have an opportunity to do something or not to do something and we decide to delay, even for the most noble of reasons, we should realize that such an attitude is really based on laziness and inertia. Rav Simcha Zissel quotes Rabbeinu Bachye Ibn Pakuda's preface to his classic work Chovos HaLevovos [Duties of the Heart]: "When I first decided to write this work, the thought crossed my mind that I was not worthy to write such a sefer. Therefore, I changed my mind and decided not to write it. The decision not to write it brought me some sense of relief and leisure, but I ultimately decided it was only laziness that caused me to come to the conclusion that I should not write it. "Therefore, he did write the sefer and the rest is history. Klal Yisrael is so much richer for that final decision of Rabbeinu Bachye Ibn Pakuda to write and publish Chovos HaLevovos.

Rav Simcha Zissel's point is that regardless of the nobleness of the reason or justification for not doing something, a person must always carefully introspect and truly consider the possibility that the noble justification was only a fig leaf for a not so noble character trait – namely, laziness.

(by Rabbi Yissocher Frand from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Community Information of Interest

March 5: The Last Years of the Old Order: Israel and the Jews 1962-1966. Lecture by Rabbi Dovid Katz. *The Importance of Being Earnest: Tensions in Anglo-Jewry 1962-1966.* This lecture will begin at 8:00 p.m. and be held at the Congregation Shomrei Emunah.

Time to gear up. One week from Sunday we are moving to Daylight Savings Time. Off-setting the loss of one hour of sleep next Saturday night, we will now have the advantage of restarting the daily Minchah/Ma'ariv minyan. For the week beginning Sunday, March 13, this minyan will begin at 7:00 p.m.



Rabbi Kaplan will be leading a trip for Matzah baking in Brooklyn, New York on Monday, March 21 - 11 Adar II. We will leave from Shul at 4:00 a.m. and return that evening. Anyone interested in participating should please contact Yehudah Buchwalter.

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 Kaplan hkaplon@towson.edu

Website: Shoshana Zakar sue.zakar@gmail.com
Gabbaim:
 Yehudah Buchwalter . . . judahbuchwalter@verizon.net
 Allan Genut agenut@gmail.com
 Ephraim Siff

Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday, 3/4 — 24 Adar I
 Shacharit — 7:00
 Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
 Candles — 5:45 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:45 p.m.

Shabbat, 3/5 — 25 Adar I
 Shacharit — 8:40 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:25 a.m.
 Berachot Gemara Shiur — 5:05 p.m.
 Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 5:35 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 6:46 p.m.

Sunday, 3/6 — 26 Adar I
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Shulchan Aruch Shiur — 8:45 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:50 p.m.

Monday, 3/7 — 27 Adar I
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.

Tuesday, 3/8 — 28 Adar I
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.

Wednesday, 3/9 — 29 Adar I
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.

Thursday — Rosh Chodesh Adar II, 3/10 — 30 Adar I
 Shacharit — 6:40 a.m.
 Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:50 p.m.
 Tanya Shiur — 9:00 p.m.

Friday — Rosh Chodesh Adar II, 3/11 — 1 Adar II
 Shacharit — 6:40 a.m.
 Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
 Candles — 5:52 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:55 p.m.