

# The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

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Shelach — Shabbat M'vorchim

23 Sivan, 5777

## Cruising Along

With summer almost here, many of us look forward to various activities associated with water. Swimming, jet-skiing, canoeing, and even relaxing on a cruise ship - whether for an afternoon or a fortnight.

The Baal Shem Tov taught that we can learn a lesson from everything we see and hear. From a boat cruise, as well, there is a lesson to be learned.

The natural habitat of man is on terra firma; sailing off to sea is something different, a bit out of the ordinary. Since the sea is not the norm for human life, one must travel on sea by a vessel that offers protection and provides for the person's needs while at sea.

In ancient times and yes, even today, crossing an ocean or travelling long distances on water, can be dangerous. Thus, when we return to solid ground, we are enjoined to thank G-d through the special "HaGomel" blessing. As we read in Psalms (107:23-31):

"Those who go down to the sea in ships ... . Let them give thanks to G-d for His kindness, and [proclaim] His wonders to the children of man."

Going down to sea is symbolic of the descent of the soul into the physical world and its journey through life. For life in this world is compared to the stormy sea comprised of much water.

In Song of Songs, it says, "Many waters cannot extinguish the fire of this love, nor rivers wash it away." Chasidic philosophy explains that the "many waters" are the difficulties of earning a livelihood and the tendency to become engrossed in worldly matters. Yet these problems, pressures, stress and difficulties, cannot extinguish the love - the hidden love - that exists in every Jewish soul by its very nature and which radiates from its G-dly soul.

What course should we follow to save ourselves from these tumultuous waters overwhelming us to the point that we feel that we are "drowning"? We should travel on the sea in a sturdy ship, a ship fashioned of Torah study and the performance of mitzvot (commandments). On such ocean liners the soul will chart a safe course through the stormy sea and reach its destination in peace.

This is the lesson to be gleaned from an ocean cruise. Just as we can exist at sea only if we are on a sturdy ship, so too, can we sail or cruise through life, only on a craft comprised of Torah and mitzvot.

An additional point: when one encourages another Jew to get more involved in Jewish living and learning, he is not only giving him/her good advice, he is actually telling him how to stay afloat and alive. If someone is drowning, G-d forbid, pulling him onto your boat is not just doing him a favor it is saving his life.

Cruising on a boat also has the aspect of leisure and pleasure, it is not something which is absolutely necessary. Those who will join the cruise will choose to do so for the sake of having a good time.

The analogue of this facet of the cruise adds another facet to the observance of Torah and mitzvot. For not only do we observe Torah and mitzvot because they are our lifesaver - but we can and should also derive great pleasure in our Torah and mitzvot. And we should remember all of this even once we've docked and returned to dry land!

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

## The Common Thread

Our parashah contains four main sections: First, the story of the Spies who were sent to Eretz Yisrael and returned with a bad report, Bnei Yisrael's reaction to that report, and Hashem's anger at Bnei Yisrael; second, the laws of the korban chatat / sin offering, which is brought, in particular, for the sin of avodah zarah / idolatry; third, the story of the man who gathered wood on Shabbat; and fourth, the mitzvah of tzitzit. R' Aryeh Finkel shlita (rosh yeshiva of the Mir Yeshiva in Modi'in Illit, Israel) explains the connection between these sections as follows:

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The essence of Bnei Yisrael's sin in accepting the Spies' report was not merely that they listened to lashon hara about Eretz Yisrael and about G-d. Rather, it demonstrated a lack of emunah / faith that Hashem keeps his promises. Specifically, since Hashem had promised to take Bnei Yisrael to a good land, there should have been no question in Bnei Yisrael's minds that the land is, in fact, good.

In this light, the connection to avodah zarah is apparent. Avodah zarah is the denial of G-d. Bnei Yisrael, too, suffered a breakdown in their emunah and effectively denied G-d.

The connection to transgressing Shabbat is apparent as well, for Shabbat is the ultimate expression of emunah. In Lechah Dodi we recite, "Enter in peace, crown of her husband, in happiness and exultation ... ." Why is Shabbat a time of happiness? Because our Sages say that Shabbat is a microcosm of Olam Ha'ba. In other words, it is an expression of our faith that Hashem keeps His promise to reward man for his good deeds.

Our parashah ends with the mitzvah of tzitzit and the declaration, "I am Hashem, your Elokim." Our Sages teach that this expression always means, "I am Hashem who has the power, and can be trusted, to reward man for his good deeds." Thus, the parashah comes full circle to the idea that Hashem keeps His promises. (Yavo Shiloh p.481)

*(by Rabbi Shlomo Katz from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)*

### This Week in Jewish History

Rebbe Arrives in US (1941.) After escaping Nazi-occupied Paris, and many perilous months in Vichy France, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902-1994), and his wife, Rebbetzin Chaya Mushkah (1901-1988), boarded the SS Serpa Pinto in Lisbon, Portugal. On Monday, June 23 – Sivan 28 on the Jewish calendar – at 10:30 A.M., they arrived in New York.

The Chesed Fund & Project Ezra's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Free Father's Day Shred Day Marathon will take place this Sunday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. Drop-offs to be accepted at the 7 Mile parking lot from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. On site shredding between 5 and 8 p.m. Only reasonable quantities of items will be accepted. Shaimos will not be accepted. For a complete list of acceptable/ unacceptable items check page of the Baltimore Jewish Home. Rain Date is June 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Yahrzeits This Week:**

Marsha Blumberg      24 Sivan - Saturday night / Sunday      for mother      Nechama bas Elchonon

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Davening and Shiurim Schedule	
<p><b>Friday, 6/16 – 22 Sivan</b> Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>Shabbat, 6/17 – 23 Sivan</b> Shacharit – 9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:21 a.m. Berachot Gemara Shiur — 7:05 p.m. Minchah &amp; Seudah Shilishit — 8:05 p.m. Ma'ariv — 9:19 p.m.</p> <p><b>Sunday, 6/18 – 24 Sivan</b> Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p> <p><b>Monday, 6/19 – 25 Sivan</b> Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, 6/20— 26 Sivan</b> Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p> <p><b>Wednesday, 6/21 – 27 Sivan</b> Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p> <p><b>Thursday, 6/22 – 28 Sivan</b> Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p> <p><b>Friday, 6/23 – 29 Sivan</b> Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Candles — 8:18 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p>