

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road

Baltimore, MD 21209

410-486-2666

www.chabadshul.org



September 10, 2016

Shoftim

7 Elul, 5776

Getting in Shape

When the concept of being in a “zone” first gained popularity it referred primarily to athletes zeroing in on a task so that they were oblivious to distractions. Today, people have found that following personal rituals can get them into creative zones, work zones, comfort zones, school zones ... the list goes on.

Following rituals not only helps us focus on the task ahead and enter our “zone” in the more mundane, world, they can also help us enter our “spiritual” zone.

Let’s take the example of prayer. There are many rituals that we do that help us get into a “prayer zone” before we even begin praying.

If we were going to a crucial meeting, we would certainly perform various preparatory actions in order to get ready. In addition to making sure that our dress was immaculate, that we had brushed up on the proper etiquette, and that we had sufficiently “psyched” ourselves up, we would use the time traveling to the meeting to further contemplate and meditate on the ramifications of the meeting and the various strategies we wished to present.

When we pray, we are attending the ultimate meeting with the Biggest CEO of all. But, as we don’t see G-d, it is much more difficult to get into the mood of preparing for our meeting with Him. So we have “rituals” that help us get into our zone, that help us psyche ourselves up for that all-important meeting.

True, we have been cautioned not to make our prayers “fixed” or habitual, repeating the words like a meaningless chant, but with the right attitude, our rituals help us get into a “prayer zone.” We wash our hands before praying; give charity; recite a declaration that we take upon ourselves the obligation of treating our fellow Jews with kindness, love and respect; and have a fixed place for prayer.

These pre-prayer rituals are neither are they trivial or trite. They help us reach our “prayer zone” so that we can connect with G-d more effectively.

Take an example from the upcoming High Holiday period. The annual rituals help us get into the “mood,” reach our spiritual “achievement zone,” and get ready.

An entire month before Rosh Hashana we start wishing people verbally and in writing that they should be signed and sealed for a good year. A simple ritual like that helps us (and the person we’re saying it to) focus on what we should (and should not!) be doing to insure that we have a good year.

The month before the High Holidays we sound the shofar daily. Let’s face it, if you don’t already know how to blow the shofar one month before Rosh Hashana, practicing won’t help enough. And even if it does help, why a whole month and not just a few days before Rosh Hashana?

Sounding the shofar is another pre-Rosh Hashana ritual. Our prophets say that one can’t possibly hear the shofar without being moved to introspection.

The closer we get to Rosh Hashana, the more the rituals intensify. This includes saying the special “Selichot - Penitential” prayers starting this Saturday evening.

Even the more well-known and seemingly less significant rituals such as dipping apples in honey, eating honey-cake, or sending and receiving Rosh Hashana cards create an atmosphere that not only brings back warm memories, but also helps us focus on the significance and uniqueness of this time of year.

So, as we begin to perform “all those rituals,” let’s remember that not only does each ritual have its own unique spiritual ramifications and significance, but it also helps us arrive at our achievement zone more efficiently.

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

"So that [the king's] heart does not become haughty over his brethren and not turn from the commandment right or left, so that he will have years over his kingdom, he and his sons amid Yisrael."

R' Hillel Lichtenstein z"l (1814-1891; rabbi of Kolomyia, Galicia) writes: We learn in Pirkei Avot, "If his fear of Heaven precedes his wisdom, his wisdom will persist." Fear of Heaven is the foundation for remembering one's learning.

This may be alluded to in our verse, R' Lichtenstein writes. Our Sages say that if one is haughty, his wisdom will be forgotten. And, there is an expression in the Gemara, "Who are royalty? Torah scholars!" Thus, our verse could be read: If one is not haughty and one does not deviate right or left from the mitzvot, i.e., he has fear of Heaven, then he and his descendants will remain royalty, i.e., Torah scholars. (Shiyarei Maskil 1:4)

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



We wish Mazel Tov to **Mr. Yehudah and Mrs. Bracha Buchwalter** on the **engagement of their daughter**

Elisheva

to

Shmuel Shalom Greenberg

of Brooklyn, New York.

We wish both of you much mazel, simcha and a long life together.



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

High holiday seating forms are now available on the shul website. If we have your e-mail address, forms will be sent to you by e-mail shortly. If you do not have e-mail, there will be a few printed versions available in the vestibule of the Shul. If we do not have your e-mail address, please send your e-mail address to agenut@gmail.com and the appropriate forms will be sent to you via e-mail.

We will iy"H have groups on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur from 10-12 run by our very own Rivky Goldenberg.

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

Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday 9/9 — 6 Elul

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

Shabbat, 9/10 — 7 Elul

Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:49 a.m.
Berachot Gemora Shiur — 6:05 p.m.
Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 7:05 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:17 p.m.

Sunday, 9/11 — 8 Elul

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Shulchan Aruch Shiur — 8:45 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Monday, 9/12 — 9 Elul

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, 9/13 — 10 Elul

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

Wednesday, 9/14 — 11 Elul

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

Thursday, 9/15 — 12 Elul

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

Friday, 9/16 — 13 Elul

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Parshat HaShavua Shiur — 7:45 a.m.
Candles — 6:55 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 6:55 p.m.