

**The Shul**  
at the Lubavitch Center  
6701 Old Pimlico Road  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
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www.chabadshul.org



August 26, 2017

Shoftim

4 Elul, 5777

## Filling Space

How many college students can fit into a smart car? How many absolute essentials can a woman place in her evening bag? How many items can a man stuff into his suit pocket and still have the jacket lay properly? How many grapes can a youngster pack into his mouth before they come tumbling out?

Squeezing into an elevator when it's already full; sand patted down by a child in a pail, and patted down yet again to make room for more; a suitcase so packed that you have to sit on it to close it; just one more bite, we promise ourselves as we dig once again into the chocolate mud cake, though we're already stuffed to the gills.

People seem to be obsessed with cramming as many things as possible into a minimal amount of space. From closet organizers to space compressible bags, we want to make full use of space, both tangible and intangible.

There are times in the Jewish calendar when we are given a specific amount of "spiritual space" and encouraged to fill it up.

The month of Elul in which we currently find ourselves is just such a time. Elul is the round-up time for the previous year. It is the "inventory" season, "year-end accounting" time and the moment when each person writes and reads to himself his own "State of the Union" address.

In addition to Elul being a once-over concerning the past, it is a focus on the future, an opportunity to plan ahead armed with the wisdom gained from experience. Elul gives us the chance to concentrate on how we will do things differently in the upcoming year.

But there is a third aspect to Elul, as well. While we're remembering the past and considering the future, we are still living in the present. And in this present, Jewish teachings invite us to use the entire month of Elul to fill up our spiritual space with as many mitzvot (commandments) as we can. We are encouraged to add more mitzvot to our repertoire of mitzvot and to enhance the manner in which we already perform various mitzvot.

In Elul, we are urged specifically to give extra charity; to spend more time connecting with G-d through prayer; to have our mezuzot and tefilin checked by an expert scribe (and to put mezuzot on those doorways which might yet need them); to observe the laws of kashrut more carefully; to bless our friends, neighbors and relatives with a good, sweet year.

Using the spiritual space we're given during Elul to its fullest capacity can only be to our benefit for the coming year. May it be a sweet, happy, healthy and Redemptive one for us all!

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

## Tell It To The Judge

*"You shall appoint judges and police in all of your gates, and they will judge the people a righteous judgment."*

Our Parasha begins with instructions to the people of Israel to set up a judicial system in all of their cities and with an admonition to judges to judge their cases fairly. Our Sages teach that all of the Torah portions that we read in the days between Rosh Hodesh Elul and Yom Kippur contain allusions to the battle with the evil inclination, the Teshubah process and character improvement — all the elements necessary for a successful trial on Rosh Hashanah. The Kli Yakar points out that the verse says, "you shall appoint judges for yourself [Lecha]" — indicating that one should judge himself or herself before they point a finger at others. Check your character and behavior, fix your faults and only then can you judge others fairly. "Appoint judges for yourself" and then you will certainly "judge the people a fair judgment." Others say that the word "lecha"— "for you" advises one to treat others as they would treat themselves. One should not be strict with others and lenient when it comes to themselves. Rabbi Simcha Bunim from Peshischa says that when one is constantly evaluating their own behavior and they realize that they are not perfect

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then it will certainly lead them to see the strong points in someone else. In other words the verse is telling us that when you "appoint judges for yourself" then certainly you will "judge the people fairly". The Shelah HaKadosh sees in this instruction a command to control what goes in and out of you "gates" A person has eyes, ears, a mouth and nose. To reach spiritual perfection one must set judges and policemen at all of your gates. Should we all exercise caution and monitor carefully what goes in and out of our physical "gates" i.e. what we look at, what we say and what we listen to then we can all be assured of "righteous judgment" on that crucial day Rosh Hashanah.

May we all take advantages of this special period of grace and favor called Elul and concentrate on self improvement and forgiveness so that G-d will also only see good when He judges every individual, every community and every country on this Rosh Hashanah for life filled with blessing and happiness Amen. Shabbat shalom.

**DID YOU KNOW THAT**

One is permitted to begin a "melacha" [labor that is forbidden to perform on Shabbat] on Friday afternoon, even late in the day, even though the "labor" will continue on Shabbat and be completed on Shabbat without human intervention.

It is permitted to put a pot with food that is still raw on a fire even though it will cook on Shabbat. Clothing may be put in an AUTOMATIC washing machine on Friday close to sunset, so long as the machine will complete the cleansing and turn itself off on Shabbat. [This law applies to those who follow the rulings of Maran Yosef Karo who does not forbid melacha of this type because of the fact that the machine makes noise on Shabbat - see your local rabbi for explanation] (Source Yalkut Yosef Siman 252).

*(by Rabbi Raymond Beyda from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)*

<p><b>Mr. Yehudah and Mrs. Bracha Buchwalter and Family</b> are sponsoring Kiddush this Shabbat in memory of the yahrzeit of Yehudah's mother <b>Faiga Leba bas Chaim Hacoen.</b></p>	
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Yahrzeits This Week:			
Yehudah Buchwalter	6 Elul - Sunday night / Monday	for mother	Faiga Leba bas Chaim Hacoen

SHUL DIRECTORY	
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Davening and Shiurim Schedule	
<p><b>Friday, 8/25 — 3 Elul</b>          Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>Shabbat, 8/26 — 4 Elul</b>          Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.          Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:46 a.m.          Berachot Gemara Shiur — 6:15 p.m.          Minchah &amp; Seudah Shilishit — 7:15 p.m.          Ma'ariv — 8:29 p.m.</p> <p><b>Sunday, 8/27 — 5 Elul</b>          Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.</p> <p><b>Monday, 8/28 — 6 Elul</b>          Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, 8/29 — 7 Elul</b>          Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.</p> <p><b>Wednesday, 8/30 — 8 Elul</b>          Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.</p> <p><b>Thursday, 8/31 — 9 Elul</b>          Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.</p> <p><b>Friday, 9/1 — 10 Elul</b>          Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.          Candles — 7:18 p.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p>