

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



April 1, 2017

VaYikra

5 Nisan, 5777

Happiness Is...

Who can repress a smile when seeing the joy of a small child shrieking in delight as he glides down a slide in a park? Whose gait isn't emboldened as he passes a newsstand and the headlines report good news? Or what about when you're at a wedding and the stomp of the foot on the breaking glass elicits resounding cries of "mazel tov"; the surge of simcha, or joy, is electric.

"Serve G-d with joy," King David demands. And since we are in the employ of our Boss 24-7 we must be in a continual state of joyousness.

"That's easier said than done," you might be thinking. Perhaps in the above-mentioned scenarios joy is intrinsic, but what of other times, those regular, run-of-the-mill days when there's no particular reason to rejoice? Or worse yet, those gray periods when we see everything around us through cheerless lenses? How can we sustain an upbeat feeling, an optimistic outlook?

By not thinking too much about ourselves. When a person focuses on himself, it's natural that he should start thinking about what he lacks materially or his failings in regard to self-growth and actualization. Obviously, these thoughts aren't conducive to inspiring a cheerful attitude.

Also, by not thinking too much of ourselves. When a person has an inflated sense of self, he is often hurt or angered by slights real and imagined.

If a person really wants to be in a joyous frame of mind, he has to rise above self-concern. He needs to spend time reflecting on the idea that there is something deeper and great beyond him, G-d. And when a person thinks more about G-d and less about/of himself (especially if those reflections are based on the Jewish mystical teachings found in Chasidism), he will find it easier to maintain a positive and even joyous attitude in life.

And there's something in it for us, as well. When a person is joyous, he generates a new-found energy that he would not otherwise be able to muster. This doesn't mean that real problems miraculously cease to exist (though sometimes they do disappear), but rather that we are able to view them and even solve them from our new, energized positive perspective.

When we're so happy that we're "bursting" with joy, it's natural to want to share it with others. An instinctive part of being happy is wanting those around us to be happy as well. That means we get double the opportunities to practice being happy! And as the old saying goes, "Practice makes good enough!"

One more thought about simcha: In Hebrew it shares the same root letters as the word "Moshiach." This teaches us that by actually working on ourselves to be happy, we actually hasten the time when the whole world will be happy; the time of Moshiach.

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

Sanctifying Oneself Through The Physical

The Medrash in this week's parsha says, "Rabbi Yochanan said, G-d only reveals himself to idolaters at night — a time when people separate from one another — as it is written 'G-d came to Avimelech in a dream at night' [Bereshis 20:3] or 'G-d came to Bilaam at night' [Bamidbar 22:20]. However, G-d reveals Himself to Jewish prophets during the day, as it is written 'And he sat at the opening of the tent in the heat of the day' [Bereshis 18:1]."

What is the meaning of this Medrash? The Ateres Mordechai explains that this Medrash is teaching a very significant difference between Judaism and other religions. Many religions believe in a basic dichotomy between the physical and spiritual. They believe that if a person really wants to reach the highest levels of spirituality, he must separate himself from physical things, be celibate, become a monk. The more separate a person can become, the more holy he can become.

(continued on the other side)

Judaism teaches us just the opposite. Torah teaches that the highest form of holiness comes through material matters. As the Kotzker Rebbe explains "V'ANSHEI-Kodesh Te'heyu Li" — holy PEOPLE you shall be to Me. I want you to be both 'holy' and 'people', not holy angels. We believe that a person can sanctify that which is physical. He can take a meal and make it into a Shabbos meal. He can take any act and elevate it to a higher form. That is our goal. "Through all your paths, know Him" [Mishlei 3:6]. By infusing all of our activities — our eating and sleeping and drinking and work — with holiness, we can become close to G-d.

This is precisely the meaning of the Medrash. G-d must come to Bilaam the idolater at night, at a time when people are separated from one another and when physical activity is on the wane. Only then can Bilaam deal with spirituality. Otherwise, he is not able to deal with the conflict between the spiritual and the physical. However, G-d can come to a Jewish prophet, I'havdil [to distinguish (between two very different things)], even during the day, when the prophet is occupied with daily activities. Even in the midst of all that, there can be spirituality.

This is a powerful ethical teaching. The essence of a Jew's life is about taking his daily activities — the accounting and the doctoring and the practicing of law — and infusing them with a Kedusha [Holiness]. Every act that a person performs should be for the sake of Heaven.

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

The Chesed Fund & Project Ezra invite you to attend the community's Harry A. & Lillian Frid Annual Chometz Burning event at Pimlico Race Course Clubhouse Parking Lot on Monday, April 10, 2017 from 6:30 -11:30 a.m. No bulk trash will be accepted. Event is free thanks to the efforts of City Councilman Isaac "Yitzzy" Schleifer.



There will NOT be any meals in the Shul on Shabbat Hagadol. Please plan accordingly if you were thinking about coming to Shul for those meals.

Sale of Chometz forms are online at www.chabadshul.org and in the bins in the Shul lobby.

Deadline for giving these filled-in forms to Rabbi Kaplan is **Friday, April 7, 2017.**



Yahrzeits This Week:

Rabbi Fred Lewin 11 Nisan - Thursday night/Friday for mother Bosya bas Aryeh Lev

SHUL DIRECTORY

Rabbi: Shmuel Kaplan . rabbikaplan@chabamd.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
Mikvah Mei Menachem 410-415-5113
Aleph Learning Institute 410-486-2666 Option 2

Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday, 3/31 — 4 Nisan
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Shabbat, 4/1 — 5 Nisan
 Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:58 a.m.
 Berachot Gemara Shiur — 6:00 p.m.
 Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 7:00 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:13 p.m.

Sunday, 4/2 — 6 Nisan
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.

Monday, 4/3 — 7 Nisan
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.

Tuesday, 4/4 — 8 Nisan
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.

Wednesday, 4/5 — 9 Nisan
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.

Thursday, 4/6 — 10 Nisan
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:20 p.m.

Friday, 4/7 — 11 Nisan
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Candles — 7:18 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.