

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road

Baltimore, MD 21209

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www.chabadshul.org



June 30, 2018

Balak

17 Tammuz, 5778

Reflections on Independence

Not only is the red, white and blue of the American flag a fine symbol of patriotism, it also symbolizes the freedom and independence for which the Founding Fathers of the United States fought so tirelessly over two hundred years ago.

If you questioned a cross-section of people on how they define freedom, you would undoubtedly get a wide range of answers. Freedom to a typical teenager is totally different from the "freedom" of a parent whose children have all left home. And neither of these definitions will have much in common with freedom as defined by someone who emigrated from the former Soviet Union when it was still a communist country.

In Ethics of the Fathers Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi discusses how one can become a truly free person: through studying the Torah. He quotes the verse: "The Tablets [with the Ten Commandments] were the word of G-d, and the writing was the writing of G-d engraved ('charut') on the Tablets." Says Rabbi Yehoshua, "Do not read 'charut' but 'cheirut' ('freedom'), for there is no free person except one who occupies himself with the study of Torah."

"What?" one might ask incredulously. "How can you call a 'religious' Jew who learns and lives Torah free? Isn't he anything but free? His life is filled with so many do's and don'ts. "And," the person adds in a whisper, almost conspiratorially, "aren't rules made to be broken? No," such a person might conclude, shaking his head emphatically, "true freedom means being able to do whatever you want whenever you want."

A cursory look each day at the front page of any newspaper or a glance at a network news program will quickly highlight the fallacy of such statements. For we are living in times when rules are constantly broken, where people do whatever they want, whenever they want. And we are anything but free.

Before we enter our car to return home each night from work, we check the back seat. We buckle up to save ourselves as much from a fluke accident as from drunk or drug-crazed drivers. We reset the car alarm upon arriving home and open the door that has been double-or triple-locked. This is freedom? It's certainly not the freedom envisaged by the Founding Fathers of the United States who came to these shore because they wanted freedom - freedom to practice their religion as they saw fit.

According to the Midrash, if you fill your life with spiritual pursuits, your soul will not be "enslaved" to your body. And even those material needs that the body does have become elevated through one's spiritual service.

In the words of Rabbi Nechunya in Ethics of the Fathers, "Whoever takes upon himself the yoke of Torah - the yoke of government and the yoke of worldly cares are removed from him ..."

A person who involves himself in Torah, says the Maharal of Prague, elevates himself above the cares and concerns of this physical world and is freed from the natural order of the universe. Thus, though a person needs a livelihood in order to live, the "yoke" of making a living is removed from him; it is put in G-d's "hands" and comes more easily.

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

Making Time

"Tell the Cohens I can't make it for dinner tonight because I have an important meeting, so we'll go out on Thursday. Then call Mrs. Smith, and tell her that I am too busy this Thursday to do my weekly volunteer work with her autistic son."

"And he (Bilaam) saddled his donkey (on his way to cursing the Jews)" (Bamidbar 22:21). Rashi points out that in order to do an evil act, Bilaam was willing to saddle his own donkey, which was really beneath his dignity.

Use your mundane acts (or sins) as a yardstick to see if you really can't do that mitzva!!

(by Rabbi Chaim Flom from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)



ONE SMALL ACT
MAKES A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

**Ahavas Yisrael
Charidy Campaign**

July 2, 2018

Goal: \$1,000,000 ▶ charidy.com/AYBaltimore

This Summer, Join ladies of our community for weekly Shabbat afternoon Torah Learning and Refreshments.

Presented by **Mrs. Rochel Kaplan**

at 6509 Deancroft Road (corner of Hanway Rd)

from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. RSVP 410-486-1959

לעילוי נשמת חיה יוטא בת חנוך הענוך הכהן ה.ב.צ.ג.ת

We happily wish Mazel Tov to **Mr. Dovi & Mrs. Atara Ziffer** on the **Birth of a Son**.



Mazel Tov also to the grandparents **Rabbi Larry & Mrs. Flo Ziffer** and **Mr. Abe & Mrs. Susan Zwany**.

The Shalom Zachor will take place at 6610 Clarington Road this Friday night after 9:30 p.m.

Yahrzeits This Week:

Ariel Goodman 22 Tamuz - Wednesday night / Thursday for father Kalman Chaim ben Avraham

SHUL DIRECTORY	
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Davening and Shiurim Schedule	
<p>Friday, 6/29 — 16 Tammuz Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Shabbat, 6/30 — 17 Tammuz Shacharit — 9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:24 a.m. Berachot Gemora Shiur — 7:05 p.m. Minchah & Seudah Shilshit — 8:05 p.m. Ma'ariv — 9:21 p.m.</p> <p>Sunday, 7/1 — 18 Tammuz — Fast of 17th of Tammuz observed Fast Begins — 3:53 a.m. Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m. Fast Ends — 9:10 p.m.</p>	<p>Monday, 7/2 — 19 Tammuz Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.</p> <p>Tuesday, 7/3 — 20 Tammuz Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday — Independence Day, 7/4 — 21 Tammuz Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday, 7/5 — 22 Tammuz Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.</p> <p>Friday, 7/6 — 23 Tammuz Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Candles — 8:17 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p>