

The Shul
at the Lubavitch Center
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February 10, 2018

Mishpatim – Parshat Shekalim – Shabbat M'vorchim

25 Shevat, 5778

When is a Word not a Word?

Every year Oxford Dictionaries chooses a Word of the Year, but last year's selection was not a word at all. That's right, this year they chose a pictograph—the “Face with Tears of Joy” emoji.

But whereas recent years' selections (such as “vape,” “selfie,” and “GIF”) were used millions of times, last year's word was used 6.6 billion times on Twitter alone! It is, by far, the most tweeted emoji.

It seems bizarre, but when you consider what an emoji actually represents, it all makes sense. Emojis are universal. They transcend language barriers, and are equally as understandable whether you speak English, Afrikaans, Japanese, French, Arabic, Chinese or Swedish. Emojis are visual representations of human emotions, which are understandable and relatable across the board. A smile is a smile in any language.

There are so many emojis, but which one was chosen? The face that is laughing so hard it's crying. Essentially, happiness. This is what people want to share and experience—the joy so extreme it leads to tears. No matter which languages we speak, we can all relate to that feeling.

Can you imagine a world where everybody speaks a single language? Historically, one of the major barriers to mutual understanding and cooperation between people has consistently been language. If we all spoke the same language, and could understand each other with ease, how much more could we accomplish?

We know that when Moshiach comes, that's exactly what will happen. The entire world will share one language, as the prophet Zephaniah prophesied, “For then I will bring one language for all the nations of the world so that they may call out in the name of G-d.”

Perhaps we are witnessing the beginning of that language—the emoji.

Despite the many terrible tragedies the world faced this year, from Jerusalem to Paris, Syria to Tel Aviv, San Bernadino to Afghanistan, maybe we are also inching closer to a universal language. A language free from boundaries. A language that we all know, and understand, and can use to wipe evil off the face of the earth. A language with which we can share feelings of sadness and frustration, but also hope, joy and delight.

(by Rabbi Uriel Vigler from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)

Explaining The Zohar Quoted By The Ketzos

This week's parsha contains the mitzvah of lending money to another Jew. A person may not charge interest. If someone takes a security deposit and the borrower needs it at night (e.g. — it is his bedclothes) then it must be returned each night, etc. A certain individual named, Reb Yosef Gelb, who lives in Lakewood, called me this week and told me the following idea he recently heard from Rav Matisyahu Solomon, the Mashgiach in Lakewood.

The Ketzos HaChoshen rules that if Reuven borrows money from Shimon and Shimon is holding a deposit (pikadon) that belongs to Reuven, if Reuven does not pay up the debt, Shimon can keep the deposit he is holding in lieu of payment of the debt. In other words, if Reuven borrowed \$500 from Shimon and Shimon happens to be a shomer [guardian] of Reuven's watch worth \$500, if Reuven does not repay the \$500, Shimon can keep the watch.

Then the Ketzos HaChoshen does something that he does not do anywhere else in the entire sefer: the Ketzos quotes a Zohar. The Zohar says that even though legally the lender may keep the deposit, morally someone should not do this. Rav Matisyahu Solomon says that his Mashgiach — Rav Eliyahu Lopian, zt"l — asks: What is the meaning of such a statement? If the halacha states that the lender is entitled to keep the deposit, why does the Zohar say that he should not avail himself of this permission?

Rav Lopian explained: The Almighty gave each and every one of us a deposit — our soul (neshama). “My L-rd, the soul that You gave me is pure, You created it, You formed it...” The Ribono shel Olam tells us to watch our neshama and then at the end of our lives to return it to Him. Every single night, when we go to sleep, the Ribono shel Olam takes back that neshama. Hopefully, every single morning He returns it to us and we say “I gratefully thank You O living and eternal King, for You have returned my soul within me with compassion — abundant is Your faithfulness!”

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We all owe the Ribono shel Olam big time. We have big debts that we owe Him. We do not always behave properly. Nevertheless, He keeps extending our credit. G-d could tell us "Listen here. You owe me a lot. I have this 'deposit' of yours. I could keep it in lieu of you paying your debt to Me." However, the Ribono shel Olam does not do that.

This is the interpretation of the Zohar. The Zohar says that even though we are halachically permitted to keep the deposit, but just think — if someone will insist on his rights in this situation, the Almighty, as it were, could stand on His rights and one fine morning He could say, "You know what? I am sick and tired of you not paying up. I am going to keep your neshama that I have on deposit!"

The way we treat others is the way the Ribono shel Olam will treat us. This is why the Zohar says that despite the fact that you have the right to keep your neighbor's pikadon if he owes you and is negligent in his payment, do not do it! This will be a merit, a segula, that the Almighty should treat you in the same generous fashion.

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

Community Information of Interest

February 10: Hubris and Atonement: The State of Israel and the Jewish People 1972-75. Lecture by Rabbi Dovid Katz. *Baiting a Conflicted Bear: The Soviet Jewry Struggle in the mid-Seventies*
This lecture will begin at 8:00 p.m. and be held at the Congregation Shomrei Emunah.



ANNUAL MATZOH BAKING TRIP

The Shul's annual matzah baking trip will be on Presidents Day, which falls out on Monday, February 19th. Since this is a legal holiday, you can take this opportunity of being off from work and join us on this trip. If you are interested in joining us on this trip, please email Yehudah Buchwalter at judahbuchwalter@verizon.net and let us know how many people will be coming and whether you are able to drive and have room for passengers.

In honor of Shabbat M'vorchim Adar, there will be a Tehillim Club at 8:30 a.m. this Shabbat morning in the shul; refreshments will be served.

Yahrzeits This Week:

Rivka Hain 28 Shevat - Monday night / Tuesday for father Chaim Yaakov ben Dovid Tzvi

SHUL DIRECTORY

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Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday, 2/09 — 24 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Candles — 5:19 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:20 p.m.

Shabbat, 2/10 — 25 Shevat

Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:44 a.m.
Berachot Gemora Shiur — 4:30 p.m.
Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 5:00 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 6:21 p.m.

Sunday, 2/11 — 26 Shevat

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:25 p.m.

Monday, 2/12— 27 Shevat

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Tuesday, 2/13— 28 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Wednesday, 2/14 — 29 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Thursday — Rosh Chodesh Adar, 2/15 — 30 Shevat

Shacharit — 6:40 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Friday — Rosh Chodesh Adar, 2/16 — 01 Adar

Shacharit — 6:40 a.m.
Candles — 5:27 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:30 p.m.