

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



August 18, 2018

Shoftim

7 Elul, 5778

What's On Your Mind?

"Ask the Mayor." "Ask the Governor."

Many major cities throughout the world have call-in shows when you can tell your government official what's on your mind and possibly expedite matters if you're having a problem with some bureaucratic red-tape.

And if it's an election year, well we all know that elected officials make sure to go out of their way to visit neighborhoods, cities small and large, to hear what's on people's minds.

This special time when our leaders are more accessible gives us insight into a Chasidic analogy for the time of the Jewish calendar we find ourselves in. Chasidic thought describes the Hebrew month of Elul, which began this week, as a time when the "King is in the field."

According to the analogy, the king goes into the field, ready and willing to listen to the requests of his people. He didn't go into the city, where it might be necessary to greet him with pomp and circumstance, splendor and glory. He's out in the field, with the workers, the commoners, the simple folk, right there in the nitty gritty of it all.

The King is G-d. "In the field" means that G-d is more accessible to us during this month - the days and weeks that precede Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur - days of reflection, introspection and Divine Judgment.

G-d makes Himself available to us. And He does it out of His great love for us, a love to that can be likened to that of a husband and wife.

The analogy of a husband and wife is especially appropriate during these days, for Jewish teaching explains that Elul is an acronym for the Hebrew words, "Ani L'Dodi V'Dodi Li - I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine."

There is a give and take in every kind of relationship. This is certainly true of the relationship between the G-d and the Jewish people.

G-d gives of Himself by coming out "into the field" at this special time of year. We take advantage of the opportunity, show our appreciation and give of ourselves by greeting G-d in the field and also by doing things that will give pleasure to our Beloved. G-d responds to our overtures by becoming our Beloved in a more revealed sense.

So don't worry if you're in a suit, overalls, wearing shirts with white colors or blue collars. Go out into the field and greet the King! Tell Him what's on your mind. He's waiting for you!

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

One Corrupt Judge May Blind Two Wise and Righteous Judges

The beginning of the parsha contains the positive commandment: "Judges and officers shall you appoint in all your cities - which Hashem, your G-d gives you - for your tribes; and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment." [Devarim 16:18]. The positive commandment to appoint judges is immediately followed by the negative commandments associated with perverting judgment, showing favoritism to one of the disputants in a court case, and taking bribes. The Torah warns that bribery has the ability to blind a person and render his judgments subjective, unfair, and illegal.

I saw an insight quoted in the name of a disciple of Rav Chaim Vital (himself a disciple of the Ari z"l). The disciple questions the grammatical structure of the Torah's prohibition against taking bribes: "...And you shall not take a bribe (which is written in the singular) for the bribe will blind the eyes of the wise (Chachamim - plural) and pervert the words of the righteous (Tzadikim - also plural). [Devarim 16:19] Rav Chaim Vital asks why the pasuk switches in mid-sentence from the singular form to the plural form.

Typically, in the Jewish system of justice, a court case will have more than a single judge. Either there will be 3 judges (e.g. - in most monetary cases) or there will be 23 judges (e.g. - in capital cases) or there will be a full

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Sanhedrin of 71 judges (See Mishna Sanhedrin 1:1 for examples). We would rarely have a case involving just one judge. Given this judicial structure, if one judge takes a bribe, we really should not need to worry about corruption, because he will in any case be over-ruled by at least two other judges who have not been tainted by receiving a payoff. The principle of "majority rules" should provide a fail-safe system to protect us from individual corrupt judges!

The Torah is teaching us that this is not the case. The power of subjectivity is such that this one partial judge, who is so bent on throwing the case on behalf of the person who paid him off, will use his powers of persuasion to influence the other judges as well. The Torah is telling us: "You shall not take a bribe lest your corrosive influence will blind the eyes and pervert the words of your fellow judges, who may themselves be wise and righteous." This explains why the prohibition to take a bribe is formulated in the singular while the phrase "for the bribe will blind the eyes of the wise and pervert the words of the righteous" is expressed in the plural.

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

We happily wish Mazel Tov to
Rabbi Gavriel and Mrs. Rebecca Horan
 on the **Birth and Brit of their Son, Yehudah Aryeh Leib.**



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

Yomim Noraim forms are now available on the shul website at www.chabadshul.org, and there will be a few printed versions available in the vestibule of the Shul. Please fill out and submit all forms at least 10 days before Rosh Hashanah; i.e. by the end of August.



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

SHUL DIRECTORY

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Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday, 8/17 — 6 Elul
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Shabbat, 8/18 — 7 Elul
 Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:44 a.m.
 Berachot Gemara Shiur — 6:30 p.m.
 Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 7:30 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:41 p.m.

Sunday, 8/19 — 8 Elul
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.

Monday, 8/20 — 9 Elul
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.

Tuesday, 8/21 — 10 Elul
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.

Wednesday, 8/22 — 11 Elul
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.

Thursday, 8/23 — 12 Elul
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.

Friday, 8/24 — 13 Elul
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Candles — 7:30 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.