

The Shul
at the Lubavitch Center
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November 4, 2017

VaYera

15 Cheshvan, 5778

Changing Times

Time. In many countries around the world, times are changing. That is to say, the time on the clock, at least. "Spring ahead, Fall back" we mutter to ourselves, in an attempt to remember whether we're "losing" or "gaining" an hour and which way to adjust our clocks to "standard time."

How long is a standard hour? Perhaps that depends on whether it's an hour that has stretched on endlessly or has passed by in the blink of an eye. Is it an hour that has been "blessed" and in which we have accomplished so much or is it an hour when everything that could have gone wrong went wrong and it was totally wasted.

When it comes to time, many of us think not only in terms of hours, minutes and seconds, but of "quality time" as well. And quality time is anything but standard, because it's usually time that we set aside to be with family, good friends, or in worthwhile and meaningful pursuits.

Is there such a thing as a "Jewish standard hour" or "Jewish quality time"?

In Talmudic times, a Jew whose performance of mitzvot (commandments) was typified by going above and beyond the letter of the law was referred to as "chasid." These (pre-modern) Chasidim used to spend tremendous amounts of time in prayer and only a few hours a day in Torah study. But, the amount of Torah knowledge they gained in those few hours of study was inordinately greater than what the average person would have gained in the same amount of time spent in intensive study. The reward for their intensive prayer schedule was that the time spent studying Torah became "quality time" and their studies were blessed.

The mitzva of Torah study is incumbent upon us at all times. In fact, according to the Talmud, if a person wastes even one minute that he could have spent studying, it's as if he belittled the entire Torah. Yet, the Talmud also states that someone who is involved in helping the community has fulfilled the commandment to study Torah by simply saying one verse from the Shema in the morning and in the evening. Quality time!

In the Mishna (Avot) Rabbi Yaakov says that one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world is greater than the entire time one will live in the World to Come.

What does this mean? On the simplest level, Rabbi Yaakov is telling us that quality time counts. Through spending even just one hour in teshuva - returning to and reconnecting with G-d - and the performance of good deeds, we will appreciate awesome revelations of G-dliness in the Messianic Era. In fact, all the G-dliness we will experience in the times of Moshiach can be acquired through making every second and minute of a Jewish hour count here and now.

How do we accomplish this? The Hebrew word for hour, "sha-ah," also means bending. By bending ourselves in this world - not remaining rigid or stuck in our ways - and setting aside an hour regularly for teshuva and good deeds, we are adjusting our clocks to the ultimate standard time - the Messianic Era, may it commence now!

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

Cutting The Apron Strings

"Avraham made a great feast on the day Yitzchak was weaned" (21:8)

Although Rashi interprets "beyom higamal" as "on the day Yitzchak was weaned", [1] the Midrash records an opinion which says that it was Yitzchak's Bar-Mitzva day which was being celebrated. [2] If "beyom higamal" can be translated as both "he was weaned" and "he became Bar-Mitzva", there should be a connection between the two.

Weaning a child represents the child's becoming independent. The child is no longer viewed as an appendage of his mother, rather he is his own person. The Midrash is teaching that when a child reaches legal majority, he should be treated as a separate individual, no longer attached to his parents. With the acceptance of the responsibility of mitzvot should come some form of independence.

This explains why we refer to the child as a Bar-Mitzva, utilizing the Aramaic term for "son", rather than the Hebrew term, which would be "Ben mitzva". Bar comes from the Aramaic word "bera" which means "outside of" or "separate from". Ben is derived from the Hebrew word "binyan" which means "building" or "attachment". A child that undergoes circumcision is known as a Ben-bris because the procedure attaches him to his nation.

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Since our children give us a sense of continuity, we often view them as extensions of ourselves. As parents we have to be careful that we do not live vicariously through our children. We have to realize that they are also separate from us and need their own individuality.

(by Rabbi Yochanan Zweig from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Community Information of Interest

November 4: Hubris and Atonement: The State of Israel and the Jewish People 1972-75. Lecture by Rabbi Dovid Katz. *Cogs in the Cold War: Israel in the Age of Nixon's Detente.*

This lecture will begin at 8:30 p.m. and be held at the Congregation Shomrei Emunah.

November 5: BONEI OLAM will be holding its annual event to Benefit Baltimore couples, Sunday, November 5th at the home of Ben & Allison Strauss, 2306 Gerard Ct, (corner of Pimlico Road) at 7:30 p.m. Please join us for a light dinner and wine pairing as well as an inspirational talk by Rabbi Shmuel Silber and a meaningful video.

November 6: Sgt. Benjamin Anthony, founder and director of Our Soldiers Speak, will be moderating a discussion on the topic of Combatting Domestic Terror Threats: Israel, Europe, & USA. On the panel will be Major General Avshalom Peled, Commander of the Israeli Police Academy, and Colonel Richard Kemp, former commander of British Forces in Afghanistan. Program begins at 7:30 p.m. and is held at Congregation Shomrei Emunah.

Seudah Shlishit סעודה שלישית

Mr. Marvin and Mrs. Sara Itzkowitz are sponsoring Seudah Shlishit this Shabbat on the occasion of the Yahrzeit of Sara's mother, Mrs. Toby Rimler, Toyba bas R' Dov whose yahrzeit is 20 Cheshvon (November 9, 2017).

"The Rav's Friday Night Hashkafa Q&A Shiur for Men"

will take place **next** Friday night – parsha Chayei Sarah

at 8:00 p.m. and will be held at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Moshe Roth, 6503 Hal Court.

Questions can be submitted in advance to rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com or anonymously in the shul mailbox.

Yahrzeits The Next Three Weeks:

Allan Berman	17 Cheshvan - Sunday night/ Monday	for father	Hillel ben Shmuel
Sara Itzkowitz	20 Cheshvan - Wednesday night / Thursday	for mother	Toba bas R' Dov Rimler

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Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday, 11/3 — 14 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 7:00
 Candles — 5:44 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:45 p.m.

Shabbat, 11/4 — 15 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 10:12 a.m.
 Berachot Gemora Shiur — 4:30 p.m.
 Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 5:30 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 6:45 p.m.

Sunday, 11/5 — 16 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. **Eastern Standard Time**
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Monday, 11/6 — 17 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.



Tuesday, 11/7 — 18 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Wednesday, 11/8 — 19 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Thursday, 11/9 — 20 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Friday, 11/10 — 21 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 7:00
 Candles — 4:37 p.m.
 Mincha / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.