

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road

Baltimore, MD 21209

410-486-2666

www.chabadshul.org



September 21, 2019

Ki Tavo

21 Elul, 5779

Raising the Rates

Wherever we turn, it seems the rates are going up. It's not just inflation. It's not prices keeping up with costs and wages. Things are just getting more expensive.

Utility companies ask for an increase in the rates. Mass transit - buses, trains - fares increase. Airline tickets cost more. And on most airlines, first they introduced a rate for baggage, then raised it.

It's one thing when the price of goods and services goes up. We don't have to buy the most expensive car or the fanciest watermelon. And when the market, when properly regulated, allows for the ups-and-downs of prices.

The difference between a price and a rate is choice: goods and services have prices, which we can choose to pay or not. Requirements and necessities have rates, which may be regulated or controlled within certain parameters, but over which we have neither control nor choice. You can't negotiate the rate the sewerage & water board charges. Or the electric company. Now you can move between phone carriers, but the rate plan remains the rate plan.

And the rates almost never, ever go down.

Our Sages teach us that this world is a world of falsehood. So on a spiritual level, the rate remains the same, or even lessens, while the price continues to rise. To explain:

What are the spiritual necessities? Torah study and the observance of the mitzvot (commandments). These are what sustain the world, what transform the world, what turn the world into a place of goodness and kindness, what make the world a dwelling for G-dliness.

Yet the "rate" of a mitzva remains the same, regardless of who performs it (provided the person is commanded to perform it - certain mitzvot are place specific [in Israel only] or person-specified [only a Kohen], etc.), when or where it's performed. For example, when Moses put on tefilin and a Bar Mitzva boy today puts on tefilin for the first time in his life, it has the same spiritual value.

In other words, G-d never raises the rates on a mitzva. In a spiritual sense, the cost to usage ratio remains constant.

What fluctuates in value - what varies in spiritual price - is our emotional investment and intellectual engagement with the mitzva or Torah learning. It is our ability to understand a mitzva, the fervor and devotion, and even the self-sacrifice with which we perform it that changes. Its "price" varies not only from individual to individual - Moses understands the significance of tefilin at a much deeper level than I ever could - but also within the individual. At different times and at different places, the "price" of a mitzva varies.

Nevertheless, we're not in it - in the Torah and mitzva business - just for ourselves, our feelings, our intellectual growth, our spiritual benefit. We're in the Torah and mitzva business to transform the world and reveal G-dliness. So even if the price changes, if sometimes we have to pay more, put in more effort for less of a personal payback, we have to know one thing:

The value never varies.

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

You Can Make A Difference

This week's Parashah tells us (28:9), "You shall walk in His ways," teaching that a person, through his good deeds, actually can walk in Hashem's footsteps. R' Eliezer Zvi Safran z"l (1830-1898; Komarno Rebbe) observes, though, that most of us don't believe this, that is, we don't believe in our own spiritual potential.

For example, how often do we pray, and, when we see that we aren't answered, we assume that our prayers can't really make a difference? The Ba'al Shem Tov z"l (died 1760) teaches that this is the result of excessive self-deprecation. One must believe that his prayers have untold consequences in the heavens, even if he doesn't see those effects. If one believed this, the Komarno Rebbe adds, how joyously would he pray! How carefully would he pronounce every letter, every syllable!

(continued on the other side)

If one believed that he is (in the words of Bereishit 28:12) "a ladder standing on the ground with its head in the heavens," that every movement, every word, every step and every business deal makes a spiritual impact on the world, he would do them all for the sake of Heaven. Also, the Zohar comments, "If people knew the love with which Hashem loves the Jewish people, they would roar like lions in their eagerness to follow Him."

On the other hand, if one thinks that he can't make a difference, he should know that he is on the road to heresy. If he thinks that way, it's a sign that the Yetzer Ha'ra has succeeded with him and will soon deprive him of life in this world and in the next.

Rather than despair, one can learn from Yaakov, who said (Bereishit 35:5), "I lived with Lavan and I delayed until now." The letters of "Lavan" are the reverse of the letters of "naval"/ "degenerate one," a reference to the Yetzer Ha'ra. Why was Yaakov successful in turning around the "naval," and "whitening" it (from "lavan" / "white")? Because "I delayed until now," that is, because he did not expect immediate results from his prayers and Mitzvot, but rather had faith that the results would come with time. (Zekan Beto, p.216)

(by Rabbi Shlomo Katz from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

The Shul is seeking a volunteer to coordinate the occasional rental of the Shul.
Please contact Rabbi Kaplan if you are able to do this.



We wish Mazel Tov to **Rabbi and Mrs. Avrohom Wolowik** on the **engagement of their daughter Mussia to Mendy Sudak.**
 We wish both of you much mazel, simcha and a long life together.



Sponsorship is available for two flower displays on the Bima during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Please consider sponsoring the flowers in honor or in memory of someone. Please email Allan Genut at agenut@gmail.com to make arrangements

Yahrzeits This Week:

Leslie Silverberg 23 Elul - Sunday night / Monday for father Eugene Hettleman

SHUL DIRECTORY

Rabbi: Shmuel Kaplan . . . rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com
Treasurer: Michael Frank . . . shul.chabad@gmail.com
Security: Jay Bernstein . . . jaybernsteinesq@gmail.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 . Mrs. Rochel Kaplan, Director
www.alephlearninginstitute.org / email: alephjili@gmail.com

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 9/20 – 20 Elul
 Shacharit – 7:00 a.m.
 Candles – 6:48 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv – 6:50 p.m.

Shabbat, 9/21– 21 Elul
 Shacharit – 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema – 9:52 a.m.
 Beitzah Gemora Shiur – 5:35 p.m.
 Minchah & Seudah Shilishit – 6:35 p.m.
 Ma'ariv – 7:49 p.m.
 Selichot – 1:00 a.m.

Sunday, 9/22 – 22 Elul
 Shacharit – 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv – 6:45 p.m.

Monday, 9/23– 23 Elul
 Selichot & Shacharit – 6:20 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv – 6:45 p.m.

Tuesday, 9/24– 24 Elul
 Selichot & Shacharit – 6:30 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv – 6:45 p.m.

Wednesday, 9/25 – 25 Elul
 Selichot & Shacharit – 6:30 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv – 6:45 p.m.

Thursday, 9/26 – 26 Elul
 Selichot & Shacharit – 6:20 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv – 6:45 p.m.

Friday, 9/27 – 27 Elul
 Selichot & Shacharit – 6:30 a.m.
 Candles – 6:37 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv – 6:40 p.m.