

The Shul
at the Lubavitch Center
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February 2, 2019

Mishpatim — Shabbat M'vorchim

27 Shevat, 5779

What a Joy!

Two enemies face each other on the battlefield. One hums a merry tune as he takes a few practice sweeps with his sword before engaging his foe.

The other is clearly down-hearted, barely placing one foot before the other as he approaches the opponent.

Who will win?

One does not need to know the record or the weight of each participant. The one whose spirit is high will carry the day.

What is true in battle is true in sports and in our spiritual lives as well.

Chasidic teachings place major emphasis on the importance of joy. And especially now that we are entering the month of Adar, when we are enjoined to "increase in joy" this topic, behavior, mindset, approach, is of worth considering.

Based on the Biblical verse, "Since you did not serve G-d with joy and gladness of heart ... you shall serve your enemies," it is explained that depression and sadness are the root of all evil.

Often, "serving G-d with joy" is merely a question of counting our blessings, of acknowledging the benevolence of our Creator in providing for all His creations.

At other times, however, happiness does not come easily.

The secret to joy, when things are not going so well, is faith. Faith means the conviction that "the Source of all good can only do good," that everything that happens is part of a Divine plan.

The Talmud describes several personalities throughout history who saw the good in everything.

Rabbi Akiva, for example, saw a fox run across the Temple Mount after the destruction, and laughed while his companions cried.

He was able to comfort the other Sages by explaining that once the prophecy of destruction had been fulfilled, the prophecy of the rebuilding of the Third Temple would certainly also occur.

A Chasidic motto is: "Think good and it will be good."

This is not a guidebook for ostriches on how to bury one's head in the sand. Much more than blind optimism, it is the belief that a trusting and positive approach actually creates a brighter future.

If a doctor tells a patient's family, "Only two months left," the belief of the family, and the patient, that things will get better can be eroded and actually decrease the patient's life. Conversely, a positive attitude has been shown to add years to the life of a person.

In fact, the Torah frowns on doctors who predict the years allotted their patients. To quote the Talmud, "The doctor has been given license to heal" - and only to heal.

Not only as regards the specifics of one individual's life, but in the life span of the world itself, this forward-looking and optimistic sense prevails.

Judaism teaches that in the end, all will be well. Death and evil will be eliminated; war, jealousy, and hatred will cease; and the knowledge of G-d will fill the entire world. This long-awaited time is indeed imminent.

This knowledge should inspire joy. After all, our joy is an expression of our faith. And the faith this joy represents will make that reality even a bit closer.

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


Six vs. Seven

In last week's parashah, we read of the momentous revelation at Har Sinai. In this week's parashah, we begin to learn the detailed laws of the Torah. Why, of all those laws, does the Torah begin with the laws of eved ivri / a Jew who is sold as a slave because he is unable to repay what he stole?

R' Yitzchak Leib Kirzner z"l (1951-1992; mashgiach ruchani of Yeshivat Rabbeinu Yaakov Yosef in Edison, N.J.) explains: Maharal of Prague z"l writes that only a person's body can be enslaved; his soul, his spiritual intellect, is always free. Thus, writes R' Kirzner, the revelation at Har Sinai in last week's parashah and the laws of eved ivri at the beginning of this week's parashah highlight two extremes: the heights to which the soul can ascend and the lows to which the body can fall. This contrast is why the term of an eved ivri is six years, and in the seventh year he goes free, for "six" represents the physical (the six days of Creation), while "seven" represents the spiritual (Shabbat).

The Torah states that an eved ivri's master may give him a non-Jewish maidservant as a wife, and their children will remain behind as slaves even after the eved ivri goes free. R' Kirzner asks: Kabbalists teach that one's children are his very essence. If a person's essence, his soul, cannot be enslaved, how can his children remain slaves? R' Kirzner answers: It is true that the spirit cannot be enslaved. Nevertheless, the lowly state to which the eved ivri has fallen takes some toll even on his spirit, which finds expression in the enslavement of his offspring. (Ma'oz La'tam)

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

	<p>The Rav's next "Hashkafa Q&A Shiur for Men" will take place next Friday night (Parshat Terumah, February 8th) at 8:15 p.m. at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Ari Taragin, 6603 Chelwood Road. Questions can be submitted in advance to rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com or anonymously in the shul mailbox.</p>
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Yahrzeits This Week:

Rivka Hain	28 Shevat - Saturday night / Sunday	for father	Chaim Yaakov ben Dovid Tzvi
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SHUL DIRECTORY

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Davening and Shiurim Schedule

<p>Friday, 2/01 — 26 Shevat Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Candles — 5:09 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:10 p.m. Father & Son Learning (& Chollent) — 7:45 p.m.</p> <p>Shabbat, 2/02 — 27 Shevat Shacharit — 9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:44 a.m. Berachot Gemora Shiur — 4:25 p.m. Minchah & Seudah Shilshit — 4:55 p.m. Ma'ariv — 6:10 p.m.</p> <p>Sunday, 2/03 — 28 Shevat Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.</p> <p>Monday, 2/04 — 29 Shevat Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p>	<p>Tuesday — Rosh Chodesh Adar I, 2/05 — 30 Shevat Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday — Rosh Chodesh Adar I, 2/06 — 1 Adar I Shacharit — 6:40 a.m. Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday, 2/07 — 2 Adar I Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.</p> <p>Friday, 2/08 — 3 Adar I Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Candles — 5:17 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m. Father & Son Learning (& Chollent) — 7:45 p.m.</p>
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