

**The Shul**  
at the Lubavitch Center  
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May 16, 2020

Behar – Bechukotai

22 Iyar, 5780

## Individuality

Inconsistencies and incongruities seem to be part and parcel of our lives in these days.

We have previously unfathomable information literally at our fingertips via tablets and smartphones. Yet, when we call to order a new state-of-the-art, faster-than-ever device, we will almost certainly be told “please wait while my computer pulls up your information,” followed by what seems like an interminable pause. We can take our phones everywhere and can talk to people anywhere by all kinds of messaging, but when it’s really important the person didn’t see the text or his battery just died.

Judaism has long acknowledged that there can be seeming inconsistencies and that those inconsistencies are alright.

For example, each Jew is a very distinct individual with his own mission and Divine service that he and only he can and must accomplish. And yet, he is also very much a part of a whole, a collection, one people, without whom the entire Jewish people are incomplete.

Concerning each individual’s mission, Judaism explains that only a completely righteous individual knows where his mission is at every particular moment. Such an individual knowingly and purposefully seeks out those missions and accomplishes those acts destined for him and only him.

The rest of us, well, as the verse says, “G-d guides the steps of man.” We often don’t know why we’ve wound up in a certain place until, days, weeks, or even years later we pull some information or a name out of the recesses of our memory and use that information that we acquired “by coincidence” to help make the world a better place.

In the actual participation in mitzvot we see the importance of the individual as well as the collective group. When a person does a mitzva, he is doing that mitzva. No one else is doing it and no one else can be doing it for him. And yet, at the moment that he does a mitzva, he joins together with every other Jew who is also doing that mitzva individual doing a mitzva and ultimately, with the entire heritage of the Jewish people.

When a woman lights Shabbat candles, she - the individual - is connecting with and connected to women and girls around the globe who are lighting Shabbat candles and to women throughout Jewish history who have lit Shabbat candles since the times of our Matriarch Sara.

And when a man puts on tefilin, he - the individual - is connecting with and connected to men and boys around the globe who are putting on tefilin and to men throughout Jewish history who have put on tefilin since the times of our Patriarch Abraham.

This bond between individuals both here and there, both past and present, grants each individual the potential to carry out his service - which effects himself, his family, the Jewish people and the entire world - with renewed energy.

As we all continue to pursue and accomplish, knowingly or unknowingly, our individual divine missions, we ready ourselves for the time when the true meaning of an individual as an integral part of a whole will be realized. For, at the time of the Redemption and the ingathering of all Jews to the Holy Land of Israel a united and unified whole - “a great congregation will return” - of very different individuals - “our sons and daughters, youth and elders” - will return to the Holy Land.

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

## What Difference Does it Make?

Children intuitively feel their parents’ love... even when their parents are upset. Children may not like the experience of being reprimanded, losing a privilege or being sent to their rooms, but they still know whether they are loved.

*(continued on the other side)*

This week we read the section of the Torah called the "Tochacha – the rebuke." The Torah portion begins with a description of the great rewards promised to the Jewish nation if they remain loyal to the Commandments of the Torah, but then turns to the dire consequences for not following the Torah's teachings. The punishments are laid out, and the Torah even warns that should the Jewish nation not return to G-d, the severity of the rebuke will increase.

In Lev. 26:23-24, G-d says, "If with these [punishments] you will not return to me and you continue to act with me with indifference, I too will act with you with indifference." The description of the consequences that follow appear to be a new level of severity, but the expression of "indifference" – Keri in Hebrew – seems strikingly mild. Is "getting the silent treatment" such a terrible punishment?

Beyond the showering of gifts or the sting of discipline, children recognize their parent's love through the attention parents give them. Toys and treats can be meaningless, or even painful, if the parents don't have time for their children. If parents are indifferent to their children's accomplishments, or even to their misbehavior, the child feels they have no value. They tell themselves, "my parents don't care what I do." And if their parents don't care about them, why should anyone else?

Feeling parental interest is critical to a child — and feeling G-d's interest is critical to us.

We must, as G-d's children, show our love as well. Serving and loving G-d demonstrates that our relationship with Him is valuable to us, much like gifts to a parent, even simple drawings, represent a child's love. Our lives are busy, but we must make time for prayer and studying G-d's words. If G-d doesn't make a difference in our lives, we cannot expect to feel His blessings of love and His direction. May we all find new ways to incorporate G-d into our schedule, and then we can look forward to a more meaningful, spiritually connected life. (Based on the teachings of Rabbi Shmuel Yaakov Weinberg zt"l")

(by Mordechai Dixler from Project Genesis at [www.torah.org](http://www.torah.org))

Yahrzeits This Week:			
Jeffrey London	23 Iyar - Saturday night / Sunday	for mother	Esther bas Moshe
Lawrence London	23 Iyar - Saturday night / Sunday	for mother	Esther bas Moshe

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE	
<p><b>Friday, 5/15 — 21 Iyar</b>            Shacharit — 7:00            Candles — 7:56 p.m.            Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>Shabbat, 5/16 — 22 Iyar</b>            Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.            Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:25 a.m.            Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 6:45 p.m.            Minchah — 7:45 p.m.            Ma'ariv — 8:59 p.m.</p> <p><b>Sunday, 5/17 — 23 Iyar</b>            Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.            Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.</p> <p><b>Monday, 5/18 — 24 Iyar</b>            Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.            Mincha / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, 5/19 – 25 Iyar</b>            Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.            Mincha / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.</p> <p><b>Wednesday, 5/20 – 26 Iyar</b>            Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.            Mincha / Ma'ariv — 8:05 p.m.</p> <p><b>Thursday, 5/21 – 27 Iyar</b>            Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.            Mincha / Ma'ariv — 8:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>Friday, 5/22 — 28 Iyar</b>            Shacharit — 7:00            Candles — 8:02 p.m.            Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p>

Daven at Home