

The Shul
at the Lubavitch Center
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February 8, 2020

Beshalach — Shabbat Shira

13 Shevat, 5780

Horse, Donkey, Fool

"A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey and a rod for the fool" Proverbs (26:3) states. At first glance, the meaning seems obvious: in order to control or guide a horse, a donkey or a fool, one needs a whip, bridle or rod, respectively. That is, to stir a horse, to make it run fast (think of races), one needs to "whip" the horse. A donkey, being more stubborn than a horse, requires a bridle, or more specifically, the bit in its mouth, which is a more forceful means of control.

And the fool, being a fool, won't listen to reason. Words of advice won't keep a fool from doing foolish or even harmful things. So, more forceful means must be employed.

But there's more to the saying than the obvious meaning. There's an inner dimension, one that applies to each of us. Chasidic teachings explain that at one level, and at some time or another, we are all a horse, or a donkey, or a fool. And the statement in Proverbs tells us how to deal with that aspect of our personalities.

The horse represents physicality. What's the characteristic of a horse? It eats, it runs, and it doesn't look up. The "horse" within us knows only the material side of life. Give it a little grass, a field to walk in, and it's satisfied.

Once in a while, the "horse" within us will exert itself, canter, maybe run to stretch its muscles. But to really move, to strain itself to achieve something - something more than another bag of oats - for that the horse needs to be "whipped." That is, we have to force the material side to run after spirituality, and to look up to the heavens.

The donkey represents stubbornness, the stubbornness of desire. It does what it wants, when it wants. And, it wants what it wants. If a donkey doesn't get what it desires, it will stubbornly refuse to move - to do anything - until it gets what it wants.

The donkey recalls the famous saying of the Alter Rebbe, founder of Chabad: What is forbidden is of course forbidden. But what is permitted, is also not necessary. In other words, just because we're allowed to do something doesn't mean that we have to do it, that we should do it, or even that it's good for us.

So the donkey - the stubborn "I want" of our personality - requires a bridle, which is a form of restraint. Our desires must be restrained, our stubbornness "reined in," and our tongues refrained from the constant "but" and the relentless "I want."

The fool: If the horse represents our focus on physical needs and the donkey represents our focus on our emotional desires, the fool represents our intellectual limitations. What makes a fool a fool? His being close-minded, his refusing to acknowledge the truth, his "refutation" of facts before his eyes.

But where does such foolishness come from? Surely it must come from a kind of arrogance, because when someone recognizes they're being foolish, they stop acting like a fool, admit their ignorance, and acknowledge the truth.

So the only recourse against a fool is the rod. The rod is not just for hitting; the rod symbolizes leadership, authority. In other words, the way to deal with the fool within ourselves is to recognize our intellectual limitations and acknowledge there is a Higher Authority. G-dliness, as expressed in the Torah and Jewish law, must rule over our pretensions to mystical wisdom and spiritual understanding.

The horse, the donkey, the fool - there's some of each in all of us, and Chasidic teachings teach us how to deal with, and transform, them all.

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



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

will take place **this** Friday night (Beshalach, February 7th)
at 8:00 p.m. and will be held at
the home of **Mr. & Mrs. Yossi Kelemer**, 6217 Green Meadow Way.

The New Year For Trees

The 15th of Shevat on the Jewish calendar—celebrated this year on Monday, February 10, 2020—is the day that marks the beginning of a “new year” for trees. Commonly known as Tu Bishvat, this day marks the season in which the earliest-blooming trees in the Land of Israel emerge from their winter sleep and begin a new fruit-bearing cycle.

We mark the 15th of Shevat by eating fruit, particularly from the kinds that are singled out by the Torah in its praise of the bounty of the Holy Land: grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates. On this day we remember that “man is a tree of the field” (Deuteronomy 20:19), and reflect on the lessons we can derive from our botanical analogue.

(from www.chabad.org)

In the last months of his life Yaakov (Eugene) Fischer expressed a special interest in stimulating the dedication of plaques on the Shul board which is prominently located in the hall at the entrance to the Shul. I believe this would be a most appropriate way for us to honor him and support the Shul as well. Below is the list of items available. Please contact Rabbi Kaplan for more information.

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| 1. Top (large) Plaques \$5,400 | 2. Medium Plaques \$3,600 |
| 3. Small Plaques \$1,000 | 4. Simcha leaf \$180 |

Kol Hanaarim– Father and Son Learning – has ended for this winter season (Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow, so this winter is almost over). However, Rabbi Itzkowitz encourages all of the participants to continue the program at their individual homes. Chulent and other refreshments are now left to each of you to provide. We look forward to the resumption of this program next winter.

Adam and Hadassah Block are sponsoring Kiddush this Shabbat
on memory of the 21st Yahrzeit of Hadassah's mother,
Yerushah bas Sarah.



Yahrzeits This Week:

Ethel Fischer 15 Shevat - Sunday night / Monday	for husband	Yaakov Mordechai Ben HaRav Zev Yehudah
David Feierstein 17 Shevat - Tuesday night / Wednesday	for father	Chaim Mordechai ben Rav Naftoli Hertzfel

SHUL DIRECTORY

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 2/7 — 12 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Candles — 5:16 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:15 p.m.

Shabbat, 2/8 — 13 Shevat

Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:42 a.m.
 Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 4:35 p.m.
 Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 5:05 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 6:17 p.m.

Sunday, 2/9 — 14 Shevat

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:25 p.m.

Monday — Tu b'Shevat, 2/10 — 15 Shevat

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Kerisus Gemora Shiur — 7:45 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Tuesday, 2/11 — 16 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Kerisus Gemora Shiur — 7:45 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Wednesday, 2/12 — 17 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Kerisus Gemora Shiur — 7:45 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Thursday, 2/13 — 18 Shevat

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Kerisus Gemora Shiur — 7:45 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Friday, 2/14 — 19 Shevat

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Candles — 5:24 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:25 p.m.