

**The Shul**  
at the Lubavitch Center  
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July 4, 2020

Chukat — Balak

12 Tammuz, 5780

### Backwash

The ocean sends a wave crashing onto the shore. Most of it is absorbed in the sand. Some of the water, perhaps filtered of the salt, finds its way further inland, part of the complex eco-system.

But there is an excess of the wave, and it seeps back into the ocean, carrying with it sand, silt, drift and flotsam. Until the next wave brings it back. Backwash.

A tanker-truck gets filled with kosher glycerine. The glycerine is used as a food additive, sweetener, preservative. It's used in personal care products and pharmaceuticals.

The transfer from storage unit to tanker-truck has to be carefully supervised, to make sure there's no contamination. And the amount has to be carefully measured - the shipping company, the trucking company, the manufacturer, the Department of Transportation - payment to and from is based on weight.

But occasionally a tank gets over-filled. Some of the glycerin needs to be put back. Of course, there is some spillage and waste; it can't be helped. Backwash.

A child starts to play with her toys. Then takes out the pots and pans and begins to bang away. She then explores the house some more. The house has the chaotic look. The child starts to put things away, becomes over-stimulated, becomes upset, can't put the toys away, and has to take a rest. Backwash.

We feel inspired, energetic, and accept a new project. Then another. And another. We join a committee. And another. We become involved in a civic enterprise, deep research, a new undertaking, a capital venture. As students, we join too many clubs and take too many classes.

We over commit, and have to pull back, preserve our resources, reorganize our lives, rethink our priorities. Some commitments we keep, but delay. Some we drop. Sometimes there's understanding and support, sometimes fallout and repercussions. Backwash.

All of life has moments of back-wash, which involves three elements: excess, reversal and preservation.

Excess: File under cliches such as: Know your limits; your eyes are bigger than your stomach; etc. Excess can come from greed as well as zeal.

Reversal: After excess comes waste. After excess comes a recognition that things must change. An excess of words, emotions run high, we say too much. We are over-filled emotionally and need to reverse, reconsider, regroup, reorganize, rearrange - return and start over.

Preserve: Reversal is not a throwing away of the excess, an abandonment, a trashing of the excess, involvement, commitment or understanding. Reversal preserves the initial impetus and the positive residue, the stuff - intellectual, emotional, physical, even spiritual - that, if exercised and applied appropriately - is proper use of our abilities.

When exhausted or dejected or defeated - look for the backwash.

If you've studied Chasidut (and if you haven't, now is a good time to start), you'll recognize the physical process of "backwash" as a metaphor for the spiritual process of a spiritual account taking. Excess: A person goes too far, does the wrong thing; Reversal: We recognize our errors, regret them, and go back to where we were. The word "teshuva" doesn't "repentance" - it means "return" - a reversal or turning back. Preserve: Learning from one's mistakes, maintaining one's connection to G-d through the entire process, for the soul remains, even in a moment of excess, a part of G-d Above.

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

## It's Real

This week's Parashah begins with the Mitzvah of Parah Adumah / red heifer. R' Shlomo Wolbe z"l (1914-2005) writes: The purpose of the Parah Adumah is to get rid of the spirit of Tum'ah / ritual impurity that is created by the Mal'ach Ha'mavvet / Angel of Death. We cannot sense this Tum'ah, notes R' Wolbe, but neither can we sense air pressure. The reason we do not sense air pressure is that it surrounds us; similarly, Tum'ah surrounds us. But, we know that changes in air pressure exist and have effects—for example, allowing an airplane to fly.

R' Wolbe continues: Our Parashah teaches that spirituality is a reality, not just a concept, that Tum'ah is as real as air pressure. Only with difficulty and with Hashem's help can that reality (i.e., Tum'ah) be changed. Midrash Eichah Rabbah teaches that only two Korbanot / sacrificial offerings in history—those of Hevel (Bereishit 4:4) and Noach (Bereishit 8:21) – were accepted without reservation, because those were the only two Korbanot brought at times when there were no idolaters anywhere in the world. What, asks R' Wolbe, would the existence of an idolater at the opposite end of the world have to do with my Korban? That is the nature of the spiritual reality; an idolater, even at the far end of the world, constructs a barrier that impedes our Divine service.

Our Sages say: "Woe to a Rasha and woe to his neighbor." Evil is a reality, no different than the bacteria that transmit a contagious disease. We must recognize that fighting Tum'ah and evil is an actual battle. (Shiurei Chumash: Vayikra p.161)

(by Rabbi Shlomo Katz from Project Genesis at [www.torah.org](http://www.torah.org))

**In case you haven't heard, our Shul is now opened. We have all the necessary soap, sanitizer, wipes etc, along with keeping all the doors opened and windows opened for ventilation purposes, while the A/C is running. When you first come in, please wash your hands. Wearing a mask is mandatory, and keeping the 6 feet social distance. Between the Shul and the Kiddush room, we have plenty of room inside to keep the 6 feet social distance.**

We extend our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to **Layne Lowenstein** on the loss of her father, **Philip Marcus**.

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

### Yahrzeits This Week:

Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan 13 Tamuz - Sat night / Sunday for father HoRav Moshe Binyomin ben HoRav Aryeh Laib

### SHUL DIRECTORY

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### DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

#### Friday – July 4<sup>th</sup> Observed, 7/3 – 11 Tammuz

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.  
Candles — 8:18 p.m.  
Mincha / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

#### Shabbat, 7/4 – 12 Tammuz

Shacharit – 9:00 a.m.  
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:26 a.m.  
Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 7:05 p.m.  
Minchah — 8:05 p.m.  
Ma'ariv — 9:21 p.m.

#### Sunday, 7/5 – 13 Tammuz

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.  
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.

#### Monday, 7/6 – 14 Tammuz

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.  
Mincha / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.

#### Tuesday, 7/7 – 15 Tammuz

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
Mincha / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.

#### Wednesday, 7/8 – 16 Tammuz

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
Mincha / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.

#### Thursday – Shiva Asar b'Tammuz, 7/9– 17 Tammuz

Fast Begins — 4:00 a.m.  
Shacharit — 6:40 a.m.  
Mincha / Ma'ariv — 8:20 p.m.  
Fast Ends — 9:08 p.m.

#### Friday, 7/10 – 18 Tammuz

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
Candles — 8:16 p.m.  
Mincha / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.