

# The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road

Baltimore, MD 21209

410-486-2666

www.chabadshul.org



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Eikev

18 Av, 5780

## Look Ma, No Hands!

Perhaps it's as straight-forward as not wanting to get hurt. Or maybe there's more to it, like being afraid of making a fool of oneself or, worse yet, failing. For a child, learning to ride a "two-wheeler" bicycle is an opportunity to acquire a new skill and taste independence.

And yet, for many a youngster there is a certain reticence toward this significant childhood experience.

At first the child sits stiffly on the bicycle seat. A "bigger person" pushes the bike along as the child gets a sense of balance. After the child becomes more comfortable and secure, the spotter can let go for a second or two and the child will coast on his own for a couple of feet or yards before losing his balance.

Eventually, after a few scraped elbows and bruised knees - all of which the child takes in stride - the novice bicyclist will glide and then begin to peddle. The look of intensity and seriousness on his face is a sight to behold.

Within days the now veteran bike-rider will be maneuvering turns, confidently making short stops and riding one-handed. Each new stunt elicits shouts of "fantastic!" and exclamations of "wow!" from his fans.

A few weeks later, an utterly confident thoroughly delighted child will be calling out, "Look Ma, no hands!" as he has learned to balance the bike and his body and form them into one unit.

Getting more involved in Jewish living - observance mitzvot (commandments) and Torah study - is sort of like learning to ride a bicycle. For many there is an initial reticence or even wariness. "If I accept the invitation for a Shabbat meal will I end up making a fool of myself by doing something wrong?" "I'll be the only one in the synagogue who doesn't know the choreography of prayer." "I know I'm going to sit in the Torah class and not understand anything or ask a question that's so basic that everyone will think I'm an imbecile."

Once we get over the initial cautiousness and actually decide to give it a try, though, we've begun the life-long journey of acquiring a new skill and tasting independence.

Of course, we shouldn't be self-conscious or shy to have a "spotter" help us out as we get a sense of Torah balance. Before long the spotter will be cheering us on, marveling at the new-found insights we share with them or inspired by our enthusiasm.

It's natural that our first encounters with Torah and mitzvot might be approached with the same intensity and determination as that of a child learning to ride a bike. We won't be coasting along effortlessly, taking in the sites, hollering to passersby.

Rather, we'll be focused, which is exactly what people do when learning a new skill or experiencing something for the first time. But before we know it, we'll be easily maneuvering around the holidays, putting on the brakes (and staying balanced) to stop and study Torah, doing a one-handed drop of a coin into a charity box.

Jewish teachings refer to people as "mechalchim" - movers (as opposed to angels which are referred to "omdim" or standing still. The Torah propels us forward, giving us opportunities to coast, peddle, shift gears or brake before continuing on our journey once more.

Enjoy the ride!

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

## All Included

In Parshas Eikev, Moshe Rabbeinu tell the Jews a fundamental command, "And now, Israel, what does Hashem, your G-d, demand of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d" (Chapter 10, verse 12).

All one has to do is fear Hashem and walk in His ways. Is that true? Is that really all Hashem asks of us? Shouldn't we also keep the rest of the Torah?

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**A few decades ago, Rav Moshe Feinstein was informed about a man who, after staying in the city during the week, would take the latest bus to the Catskill Mountains on Friday, arriving very close to the beginning of Shabbos. Rav Moshe remarked to him that he should be careful to take an earlier bus. The man did not listen. The next week, the bus was delayed during the trip, and he was stranded in a motel along the way for the entire Shabbos.**

**A student of Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l told him of this incident, and then remarked, "Rav Moshe performed a "mofeis" – a miracle!**

**Rav Yaakov responded, "If so, than I too performed a miracle! Once, before shul, I went to visit an ill congregant in his home. He was a diabetic, and his bedside nurse was about to give him an insulin injection. I noticed that he was a "goses" and near death, and the halacha forbids touching a person in such a state. I did not allow the nurse to give the injection.**

**On the way back from shul, the man was comatose, and they were waiting for an ambulance to take him to the hospital. The doctor later informed the family that had the nurse given him the insulin, he would have died!"**

My grandfather, Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l would quote Rav Chaim Volozhiner, the saintly student of the Gaon of Vilna, and founder of the famous "Volozhin Yeshiva," who answered this question. When a doctor takes blood from a patient, he can see much of what is going on in his or her body. He can tell if you have too much or too little cholesterol, platelets, blood sugar, and creatinine. Even some genetic diseases my show up as well. A blood test is a tube-size synopsis of a patient's entire body.

The same is with a person's neshama. Every person's neshama is a part of Hashem Himself. Hashem puts all of the components necessary to serve Him, into the neshama of every living being. Wisdom, willpower, good inclination, heart, and many more attributes are all built into our neshama. Sometimes, we may need to dig a little to find them, but they are there. A neshama is a miniature combination of all the components of the greatness of Hashem which man must utilize to serve Him.

One piece however, does not come in the package – Yiras Shomayim – Fear of Hashem. That is something we have to work on our entire life. Thus, Moshe Rabbeinu tells the Jews, "What does Hashem your G-d want from you?" He already gave you everything else. You have to work to gain one more attribute, "Only to fear Hashem, your G-d."

*(by Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky from Project Genesis at [www.torah.org](http://www.torah.org))*

**Yahrzeits This Week:**

Yitzchok Jakobi                      22 Av - Tuesday night / Wednesday                      for father                      David Michael Jakobi

**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](http://www.alephlearninginstitute.org) / email: [alephjli@gmail.com](mailto:alephjli@gmail.com)

**DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE**

**Friday 8/7 — 17 Av**  
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
 Candles — 7:52 p.m.  
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

**Shabbat, 8/8 — 18 Av**  
 Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.  
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:40 a.m.  
 Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 7:00 p.m.  
 Minchah — 7:40 p.m.  
 Ma'ariv — 8:54 p.m.

**Sunday, 8/9 — 19 Av**  
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.  
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:45 p.m.

**Monday, 8/10 — 20 Av**  
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.  
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:45 p.m.

**Tuesday, 8/11 — 21 Av**  
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:45 p.m.

**Wednesday, 8/12 — 22 Av**  
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:45 p.m.

**Thursday, 8/13 — 23 Av**  
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.  
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:45 p.m.

**Friday, 8/14 — 24 Av**  
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.  
 Candles — 7:43 p.m.  
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.