

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



March 13, 2021

VaYakhel-Pekudei— Parshat HaChodesh — Shabat M'vorchim

29 Adar, 5781

A Rose is a Rose

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." "A rose is a rose is a rose." These two quotes are basically true, except when it comes to a rose, for instance, that somehow grows in the middle of a cornfield. For then, at least to the farmer, it's not a rose but a weed. And if it has lots of sharp, prickly thorns, it might be even worse than that!

The idea that something can be good, or positive, or appreciated in one situation but considered bad, or negative, or not respected in another is not only applicable to roses.

For instance, the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneersohn, made the following powerful statement: "In material matters one should always look at one whose situation is lower than one's own, and thank G-d for His kindness. In spiritual matters one should always look at one who is higher than oneself, and plead with G-d to grant him the intelligence to learn from the other, and the ability and strength to rise higher."

Sounds like something your mother told you when you were a kid and wanted everything you saw in the toy store, or at least the same bike your next-door-neighbor had: "You can look up or you can look down," she might have told you. Her admonition and the Previous Rebbe's advice are sane counsel for these days of consumerism and kids-who-have-everythingism, aren't they?

It's important, however, to notice the Rebbe's emphasis on when you look up and when you look down. In material matters you should look at those who have less, and then you will be satisfied with what you have. But in spiritual matters you should look for guidance and direction toward those who have managed to develop and refine themselves and their relationship with the Divine more than yourself.

These thoughts are echoed in the response of Rabbi Shneur Zalman, the founder of Chabad-Lubavitch philosophy, to a young genius, famed for his intellectual gifts. But he takes them one step further: "Spiritual and physical are antithetical in their very essence," he told the student. "A superior quality in the physical is a deficiency in the spiritual. In material matters, one who is "satisfied with his lot" is an individual of the highest quality. A person possessing this trait can attain the highest levels. In spiritual matters, however, to be satisfied with one's lot is the worst deficiency, and leads, G-d forbid, to descent and falling."

A rose is a rose is a rose, except when it's a weed.

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

A Separated Shabbos, Together

In this week's reading, Moshe gathers the people together — and talks to them about Shabbos. "For 6 days you will do your labor, and the seventh will be holy for you, a Sabbath of Sabbaths to G-d... And you will not pass a fire through all your settlements on the Sabbath Day" [35:2-3]

In most of the world, at present, our special mitzvah is to not gather with others, but to stay in our homes. Why? In order that we not pass a deadly fire through our settlements...

As always, a challenge offers an opportunity — and in this quarantined Shabbos there are several.

First and foremost, time with family is a precious thing. News reports claim that hundreds of people emerged from quarantine in China — and ran to divorce court. Spending weeks together was too much for them to bear.

On the other hand, someone told me that he and his wife had caught several social media posts from people who said with no sports to watch on TV, they ended up having a conversation with the very nice person on the other couch... who turned out to be married to them. While it's terrible that it took a global virus for them to rediscover their spouses, it's certainly a positive outcome.

(continued on the other side)

When it comes to Shabbos, this week, we are all together, separately. What do I mean? It doesn't matter if you have a synagogue down the block, or if the nearest one is miles away. Either way, you have no reason to leave the house. The entire Shabbos is about you and whomever you are with, in self-imposed quarantine.

If you have never done Shabbos before, and thought you needed to be with others in a different neighborhood, here is your chance. If you decide to make Shabbos at home, you're doing what everybody else is doing, in communities all over the globe.

So, whatever your situation, I would like you to consider making this a special Shabbos. Prepare food in advance, bake challos (there are many recipes online), plug in a hot water urn or put a kettle on the stove, and you're ready to make Shabbos like the rest of us. And let's be honest, 25 hours without coronavirus news will be very good for the soul! Just be sure you have lots of reading material (printing Divrei Torah from our website will help).

To whatever extent we make this Shabbos special, it will be a tremendous merit for all of us as we face the challenge of COVID-19. But honestly, I have a personal reason to ask you to consider this, as well.

The son of a neighbor is becoming a Bar Mitzvah, and he will be unable to celebrate in his family's synagogue, as it, like all others in the area, is closed. He always impressed me as a serious young man, even when the family moved in a few years ago. I imagine he was very well prepared to read the Torah this week, and I'm sure he's very disappointed.

If you would consider doing something special this Shabbos, whether to light candles Friday night, to make a special meal with your family, to study some of the laws of Shabbos at the meal, sing Lecha Dodi with your family, or simply to observe the full Shabbos, uninterrupted — whatever it might be, I'm sure this young man would be delighted to learn that you did this in honor of his Bar Mitzvah, and because we are all facing this challenge together.

May we share many happy occasions — in person!

(by Rabbi Yaakov Menken from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)



Rabbi Kaplan is holding a weekly Thursday evening (8:30pm) online shiur on the Shaar HaBitachon section of Chovos Halivavos. Shaar HaBitachon has been effective in giving strength and encouragement to people facing difficult and challenging situations in everyday life. What a perfect topic, presented by a gifted teacher, for these times. This online shiur is open to anyone who would like to attend and can be joined at: <https://cutt.ly/join-shiur>

Sale of Chometz forms are **ONLY** available online at www.chabadshul.org.
Deadline for giving these filled-in forms to Rabbi Kaplan is **Thursday, March 25, 2021.**



Yahrzeits This Week:

Mitch Mayer 2 Nisan - Sunday night / Monday for father Israel ben Meir

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE322996

Friday, 3/12 — 28 Adar

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Shabbat Candles — 5:53 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:55 p.m.

Shabbat, 3/13— 29 Adar

Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:16 a.m.
 Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 5:10 p.m.
 Minchah — 5:40 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 6:54 p.m.

Sunday — Rosh Chodesh Nisan, 3/14 — 1 Nisan

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

Monday, 3/15 — 2 Nisan

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.



Tuesday, 3/16 — 3 Nisan

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, 3/17 — 4 Nisan

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, 3/18 — 5 Nisan

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Friday, 3/19 — 6 Nisan

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Shabbat Candles — 7:00 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.