

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

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November 7, 2020

VaYera

20 Cheshvan, 5781

Just A Little Reminder

We've come a long way from tying strings around our fingers as reminders that we have to do something important. Modern technology has brought us bells in our cars so we remember to put on our seat belts; watches and computers that can be set to chime if we mustn't forget to make an important phone call or be at an appointment; voice mail and email where we can leave messages when we're away from our desks to be accessed anytime, anywhere.

Of course, long before the onset of every holiday or celebration, card shops remind us of the upcoming special day and enjoin us not to forget anyone.

Smart phones and Outlook calendars have replaced PDAs and "old-fashioned" paper calendars as the way to keep track of where we need to be and what we need to do at any given moment

Throughout the year, we also come across reminders of Jewish holidays and, by extension, our Jewishness. From the local supermarket's ad promoting honey, gefilte fish and Shabbat candles around Rosh Hashana, to American Greetings' and Hallmark's attempt to get us "in the spirit" before Chanuka, commercialism sporadically reminds us of our Judaism.

But with weeks since the High Holidays and over a month until Chanuka, we can all use a daily reminder, at the very least, of our Jewishness.

Jewish reminders, a.k.a. mitzvot (commandments), come in all shapes and sizes. Daily mitzvot can take literally a second or as long as you like. But, in keeping with our fast-paced lives and the quick reminders modern technology and consumerism afford us, we'll mention just a few moment-taking mitzvot that can be done on a daily basis and will enhance our Jewish living.

Consider:

- Putting a coin daily in a tzedaka box (except on Shabbat and Jewish holidays).
- Touching or kissing the mezuzah on your front door before leaving or entering your home.
- Saying the Shema prayer before retiring at night.
- Reciting a blessing before sipping that coffee or gulping down the Snapple, or spring water (The blessing is "Baruch Ata Ado-ni Elo-haynu Melech Haolam, Shehakol N'hiya Bidvaro - Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the Universe, by whose word everything came into being").
- Listening to a pre-recorded Torah class. They last anywhere from 3 minutes to 30 and you can call your closest Chabad-Lubavitch Center to find out your local number.
- Taking a moment to contemplate the blessings and good you have in your life and thanking G-d for them.
- Doing a good deed or kind act specifically to bring the Redemption.

We shouldn't wait until we're so inundated by non-Jewish symbols or holidays that we establish Jewish bells, chimes or messages as a reaction to the onslaught. And, of course, Jewish reminders don't have to be limited to those times during the year when the more external reminders are absent.

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

Clear Goal

Avraham was greatly distressed by the prospect of banishing his son Yishmael from his home, but was commanded by G-d to follow the advice of Sarah, his wife, whose prophecy was superior to his own. "So Avraham awoke early in the morning, took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar." (Beraishis/Genesis 21:14)

The Chofetz Chaim notes that in this episode the Torah reveals to us the enthusiasm and alacrity of Avraham to fulfill the desire of G-d. His personal difficulty with the situation notwithstanding, he utilized great energy and self motivation, not to simply complete his mission, but to do so with a swiftness and eagerness that demonstrated a complete subscription to the Divine will.

(continued on the other side)

Mesilas Yesharim explains that man's ultimate goal is an eternity of deriving humanly incomprehensible pleasure from the splendor of G-d's Presence; toward that end we are given a lifetime to develop our G-d consciousness, to utilize the mitzvos (Divine commandments) to refine our spiritual palate so we may truly enjoy that ultimate pleasure.

Obviously, as mere mortals of flesh and blood, there is great challenge in dedicating a lifetime to striving for an intangible, incomprehensible pleasure. We find ourselves able to forsake inestimable hours of sleep and part with vast sums of money to develop the potential of our children; our image of what we desire our children to be is sufficiently tangible to negate the sense of sacrifice. But for the indefinable World to Come, such sacrifice is, for many, not simple, and, for many more, not happening.

But for our Patriarch Avraham, who independently discovered monotheism and whose spiritual mettle had already been forged by passing eight Divinely orchestrated challenges to his faith, G-d's love and splendor were tangibly evident. While the act of Yishmael's expulsion was extremely painful, his keen comprehension of the generation and fortification of his relationship with the Divine compelled him to grab this opportunity for growth.

As his grandchildren, our spiritual DNA contains the ability to follow suit. It may take a lifetime to become true connoisseurs of spirituality, but – as Avraham understood – that is a paltry investment for an eternity of ecstasy.

(by Rabbi Pinchas Avruch from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Strawberry-Banana Smoothie

Ingredients:

- 10 frozen strawberries
- 1 very overripe banana (not frozen)
- ½ cup milk (dairy, almond, soy, etc.)
- Optional: 1 tbsp. chia seeds/flaxseed/wheat germ

Directions:

Put frozen strawberries, banana and milk in a blender. Pulse until smooth. If you want to add some flavor and texture, gently stir in some chia seeds, flaxseed or wheat germ before eating.

(by Miriam Szokovski at www.chabad.org)

Yahrzeits This Week:

Sara Itzkowitz	20 Cheshvan - Friday night / Shabbat	for mother	Toba bas R' Dov Rimler
Mitch Mayer	25 Cheshvan - Wednesday night / Thursday	for mother	Freda bas Yaakov

SHUL DIRECTORY

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 11/6 — 19 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 7:00
 Candles — 4:40 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Shabbat, 11/7 — 20 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:13 a.m.
 Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 3:55 p.m.
 Minchah — 4:25 p.m.
 Ma'ariv — 5:41 p.m.

Sunday, 11/8 — 21 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Monday, 11/9 — 22 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Tuesday, 11/10 — 23 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Wednesday, 11/11 — 24 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 7:00a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Thursday, 11/12 — 25 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.

Friday, 11/13 — 26 Cheshvan
 Shacharit — 7:00
 Candles — 4:34 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:35 p.m.