

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



March 20, 2021

VaYikra

7 Nisan, 5781

How Much Do We See?

Perhaps you've heard the story or read the poem about the six blind men and the elephant? Six blind men went to "see" an elephant in order to determine what it was. They intended to compare it to other objects in their experience, and so be able to define and explain it.

The first blind man touched the side of the elephant and, feeling how solid and vertical it was, declared the elephant was like a wall.

The second one grabbed the tusk, and declared, as vociferously as the first, that the elephant was like a spear.

The third one, standing nearby, reached out and took hold of the trunk. "Ah ha!" he said. "The elephant is like a snake."

The fourth, impatient and eager to verify for himself what the elephant was, leaned forward and grasped the knee. "It's clear the elephant is like a tree."

The fifth with outstretched hands felt up and down the ear. "The elephant is like a fan," he said.

The sixth one groped about until he caught the tail. "The elephant most resembles a rope."

The poem ends with an observation that "though each was partly in the right, all were in the wrong."

The analogy to our attempts to explain spirituality, mitzvot (commandments), religious experience, and the deep questions of theology - Job's question, for instance - is obvious. Like the blind men in the parable, we can only sense a part of the whole.

Erroneously, we project the part that we can "see" - or touch - onto the rest, assuming the whole is like the part. That's not only a logical fallacy, it's a theological one.

We ourselves have a sense of identity, of wholeness - a one-ness to who we are. And yet, we present many different facets to the world. Sometimes we are like a spear, sometimes like a wall, sometimes like a tree, etc. And each facet also reflects our experience, what we make of ourselves.

And yet, in some ways, we hardly know ourselves. There's more to each of us than meets the eye.

If in a spiritual (and emotional) sense we - finite and fallible - are too big to get our hands around the whole thing, too deep to see all the way through. How much more so the universe in all its complexity?

And yet, the universe too is finite.

Often when discussing "religious matters," we act like the blind men, without knowing we're blind.

We try to explain the inexplicable - the suffering of the innocent, for example - and conclude religion is a wall against which we can only bang our heads. Or we encounter an individual who misuses religion, hiding his misdeeds behind a mitzva, and decide religion is a snake, not to be trusted. Or in a time of crisis, when we need a lifeline, we grab ahold of religion like a rope, and decide it's only good for emergencies.

In each case, we have an insight, but by limiting the spiritual to our perception, we are profoundly wrong.

G-dliness, Judaism, must be experienced. Of course we have to study and question - intellectual inquiry is part of the experience - but it's the doing that gives us a true knowledge, a true understanding, a true relationship with G-d.

And a relationship defies description or categorization. After all, love is blind.

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

"He called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him from the Ohel Mo'ed / Tent of Meeting, saying." (1:1)

At the end of last week's Parashah, we read (Shmot 40:35), "Moshe could not enter the Ohel Mo'ed, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of Hashem filled the Mishkan/ Tabernacle."

R' Shlomo Kluger z"l (1785-1869; rabbi of Brody, Galicia) asks: What was the purpose of placing the cloud over the Mishkan preventing Moshe from entering, only to then call Moshe into the cloud? If Hashem had not blocked entry into the Mishkan with a cloud, He would not have needed to invite Moshe inside!

R' Kluger explains: Hashem did this because Moshe felt bad that he had not donated anything to the Mishkan. By blocking entry to the Mishkan and then allowing only Moshe inside, Hashem demonstrated how beloved Moshe was to Him. This explains, as well, why our verse notes that Hashem spoke to Moshe "from the Ohel Mo'ed." It means that Hashem spoke to Moshe because of Moshe's feelings about the Ohel Mo'ed. (Chochmat Ha'Torah: Vayikra p.84)

(by Rabbi Shlomo Katz from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

	<p>Rabbi Kaplan is holding a weekly Thursday evening (8:30 pm) 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</p>
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<p>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.</p>	
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Yahrzeits This Week:			
Rabbi Fred Lewin	11 Nisan - Tuesday night / Wednesday	for mother	Bosya bas Aryeh Lev

SHUL DIRECTORY	
<p>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</p>	<p>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 / email: alephjli@gmail.com</p>

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE	
<p>Friday, 3/19 — 6 Nisan Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Shabbat Candles — 7:00 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Shabbat, 3/20— 7 Nisan Shacharit — 9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 10:10 a.m. Beitzah Gemora Shiur — 5:50 p.m. Minchah — 6:50 p.m. Ma'ariv — 8:01 p.m.</p> <p>Sunday, 3/21 — 8 Nisan Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:05 p.m.</p> <p>Monday, 3/22 — 9 Nisan Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:05 p.m.</p>	<p>Tuesday, 3/23 — 10 Nisan Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:05 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday, 3/24 — 11 Nisan Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:05 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday — Tannis b'Chorim, 3/25 — 12 Nisan Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:05 p.m. Bedikat Chometz — after 7:51 p.m.</p> <p>Friday, 3/26 — 13 Nisan Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Last Sell and Burn Chometz — 12:09 p.m. Shabbat Candles — 7:07 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p>