

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



August 20, 2022

Eikev – Shabbat M'vorchim

23 Av, 5782

Baby Steps

Have you ever watched a baby as she works toward upward mobility? At just a few months old, she's squirming around inch by inch. Months later, she's raising herself onto her hands and knees, rocking back and forth as she gets used to the new position and height. But her arms and legs aren't very strong and she plops down every once in a while, bumping her little nose or chin. But, don't worry, she'll be up again soon to try it again.

Months pass. Tentatively, she pulls herself up to a standing position using furniture and other objects as leverage. Even more cautiously she lets go for a few seconds and smiles, as if saying, "Look, no hands!" Oops, there she goes, plopping down once more, only to stand up again a few minutes later and repeat the whole exercise.

Soon she'll be cruising along the furniture. Weeks later she'll be taking a step, unaided, from one piece of furniture to the next.

When she's much more confident, she'll try two and three steps, each time plopping down. But she'll get back up again. Then six or seven steps before plopping down. Then ten wobbly steps, then plop.

A baby's approach to learning a new skill, such as walking, is the approach Judaism demands of us when even we are learning a new mitzva-skill, whether a mitzva between oneself and G-d or the interpersonal mitzvot between one person and another.

In general, we seek out experiences which enhance personal growth when there is a feeling of dissatisfaction with our present state. This is a good sign, for it indicates vitality and an urge to rise and improve oneself.

Unlike babies, however, many of us stop trying or slack off if we "fall," i.e., the attempt was not met with immediate success.

Today, when so much of our lives are measured in nanoseconds, we half expect to be able to eradicate a bad habit or master a new mitzva instantly. And when that doesn't happen, despondency or inertia can set in.

A little voice inside says, "Why bother, you'll fall back into your old routine anyway," or "You'll fall flat on your face trying and everyone will see." The little voice will use every means to prevent us from carrying out our good intentions of self-improvement and advancing in Jewish observance. An otherwise highly successful person can be paralyzed by that little voice, certain that he will fail miserably and that others will note his failure.

The misleading voice should be ignored. For, as Chasidism explains, the attempt itself is valued and esteemed by G-d. Only people who never try never make mistakes or fall short.

The next time we have the opportunity to learn something new or are presented with an obstacle that needs to be overcome, we should remind ourselves to take "baby steps." It's not just a matter of going slowly. More importantly, it means getting back up even if you've plopped down or fallen flat on your face.

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

What's in a Blessing?

In this week's Parashah, we are taught the Mitzvah of Birkat Ha'mazon / "Bentching" after eating. R' Moshe Yechiel Epstein z"l (1889-1971; Ozharover Rebbe in New York and Tel Aviv) writes: A blessing, in general, and Birkat Ha'mazon, in particular, involves both accepting the yoke of Heaven as well as praying for G-d's continued beneficence. He explains:

Because reciting a blessing involves accepting the yoke of Heaven, our Sages (Tosefta, end of Berachot) describe reciting blessings as "performing Mitzvot." Indeed, the word "Mitzvah" means "something we are commanded to do." When one does something he is commanded to do, he, in effect, accepts upon himself the yoke of the one who commanded him to do that thing—in this case, Hashem.

(continued on the other side)

He continues: When Pharaoh commanded Bnei Yisrael to leave Egypt, he said (Shmot 12:32), "You shall bless me." The Aramaic translation Onkelos renders this: "You shall pray for me." Rashi z"l, as well, explains: "Pharaoh was a firstborn, and he wanted Moshe to pray that he not die in the plague." Thus, we find that the term "Berachah" can mean "to pray."

We read (Shmot 23:25), "You shall worship Hashem, your Elokim, and He will bless your bread and your water ..." The Gemara (Berachot 48b) states: Do not read, "He will bless," but rather, "You shall bless." At first glance, the Gemara's comment seems directly contrary to the P'shat of the verse. However, writes the Ozharover Rebbe, if we understand that our own recitation of blessings leads Hashem to continue providing for us, then there is no contradiction. (Be'er Moshe p268)

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




Sponsorships are available for two flower displays on the Bima during each of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Succot. Please consider sponsoring the flowers in honor or in memory of someone. Please email Allan Genut at agenut@gmail.com to make arrangements.

Mr. Nate Gertner is co-sponsoring Kiddush this Shabbat
in honor of on **his marriage to Dr. A Gertner.**
Mazal Tov!

Mr. And Mrs. Tzvi Friedman are co-sponsoring Kiddush this Shabbat
in honor of **the birth of a baby girl.**
Mazal Tov to them and all the boys!





"The Book of Jewish Knowledge" edited by Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan is
now available to order online at myjli.com/catalog/product/bojk/

Yahrzeits This Week:			
Rabbi Fred Lewin	25 Av - Sunday night / Monday	for father	Shmuel ben Yoel

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE	
<p>Friday, 8/19 — 22 Av Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Shabbat, 8/20 — 23 Av Shacharit — 9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:44 a.m. Minchah — 7:25 p.m. Shiur: <i>Overcoming Folly</i> — after Minchah Ma'ariv — 8:39 p.m.</p> <p>Sunday, 8/21 — 24 Av Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.</p> <p>Monday, 8/22 — 25 Av Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.</p>	<p>Tuesday, 8/23 — 26 Av Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday, 8/24 — 27 Av Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday, 8/25 — 28 Av Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:35 p.m.</p> <p>Friday, 8/26 — 29 Av Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Shabbat Candles — 7:28 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.</p>