

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road

Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



February 26, 2022

VaYakhel — Parshat Shekalim — Shabbat M'vorchim

25 Adar A, 5782

A Voyage Into Space

Many decades ago a noted scientist delivered a lecture at a Space Science Conference on the broader aspects of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Program in the USA. Among other things, the lecturer drew a parallel between the problems which will face space explorers in the future and our current conditions on earth.

Using a hypothetical manned voyage to the nearest star, Alpha Centauri, as an example, he emphasized the remarkable engineering, biological and sociological problems that would be encountered during the execution of this enterprise. Since the star is 4.3 light years away, a space ship travelling at 1,000 miles per second would require more than 800 years to get there and another 800 years to get back. Any original crew we launched would not survive for even a fraction of the mission's duration. Instead, we would have to "man" the capsule with men and women who would have children who would carry on the mission and would, themselves have children, and so forth for 1,600 years. Ultimately, after many generations, the remote progeny of the original crew would complete the mission.

This interstellar spaceship would have to be completely self-sustaining and self-supporting. The lecturer pointed out that the engineering and technical problems are only one side of the coin. In the space-ship, the crew would have to learn to tolerate each other, generation after generation. They would have to learn, and learn quickly, that you don't blow up only part of a spaceship.

And then the speaker touched on a key topic: Would the fiftieth generation, after a thousand years, still share the aspirations of their pilgrim fathers who set out from earth so long ago? How, indeed, can you convey to a generation still unborn the basic information about where they came from, where they are going, how to get there and how to get back?

One of the scientists stood up, and to my surprise and delight, declared: "If we could figure out how the Jews have managed to survive these thousands of years we'd have our answer!"

To a Jew this story is no mere fantastic flight of imagination. Over three thousand years ago, at Mount Sinai, we were launched with specific instructions and suitable maps. For more than a hundred generations we knew where we came from, where we were going, why we were travelling, who was the Project Officer, and how to get back. And we had no real difficulty in transmitting this intelligence - unbroken from generation to generation - because the Torah, our Divine log book, not only contains cosmic guidance about the overall mission (and how to resolve sociological and political problems, how to approach the technical question of physical survival and well-being), but also contains the very directions about how it should be transmitted to young and old.

And despite all problems, philosophies, explanations and rationalizations, this log book has met the only real criterion of the empirical scientists - it worked. Our presence demonstrates that it worked.

But somehow, not too long ago, a generation of "astronauts" arose who decided that they could write a better log book. They thought the original was old-fashioned and too restraining, and too complicated and irrelevant to the problems of modern times. They lost their "fix" on the celestial reference points. They know something is wrong, but cannot pinpoint the malfunction and cannot get back on course.

There are some left - and their numbers are growing - who use the log book and can compute the original trajectory. They communicate with The Immortal Monitor and persevere in getting the vehicle and its inhabitants back on course. It is the privilege and responsibility of all of us to become familiarized again with this program, especially since we near the completion of the "Mission" - with the coming of Moshiach.

A former Fulbright scholar and a pioneer in exobiology, the late Professor Velvl Greene spent years working for NASA searching for life on Mars.

(by Dr. Velvl Greene from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)

Take an Accounting

In this week's double Parashah, the construction of the Mishkan is completed. Parashat Pekudei opens: "These are the accountings of the Mishkan, the Mishkan of Testimony, which were reckoned at Moshe's bidding." The Sages say that the accounting was actually taken from Moshe! Why, asks R' Moshe Gruenwald z"l (died 1853-1911; rabbi of Khust, Hungary), was an accounting required from Moshe?

R' Gruenwald explains: The purpose of the accounting was to teach us a lesson. Many commentaries explain how the various parts of the Mishkan and its furnishing allude to different parts of the human body and to different human traits. Thus, the accounting that Moshe gave regarding the Mishkan teaches us to take an accounting of ourselves—of our body parts and character traits. Are we using our physical organs and our abilities as intended?

In a similar vein, R' Gruenwald asks: Why do we reckon according to a lunar calendar (as commanded in the extra reading this week known as "Parashat Ha'chodesh")? After all, the sun is more distinguished! He answers: Because we can learn a lesson in proper behavior from the moon. Every month, the moon waxes and wanes. So, too, we must undergo cycles of growth and contraction. Periodically, preferably every day, man must humble himself and reflect on what he has accomplished. Then he must grow some more and begin the cycle anew. (Arugat Ha'bosem)

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

Community Information of Interest

February 26: Two Last Years before Oslo: Israel and the Jewish People 1988-1992. Lecture by Rabbi Dovid Katz. *Life After Gedolim : State of the Union? Diaspora Jewry and Jewish Culture in the 80s and Early 90s.* This lecture will begin at 8:15 p.m. and be held at the Congregation Shomrei Emunah. Also this lecture will be available on Rabbi Katz's YouTube site Moitze Shabbat – March 4, 2022.

Matzah order are done **ONLY** online at www.chabadshul.org. The cost is \$32 per pound.
Deadline for ordering Matzah this year is **Thursday, March 16, 2022 – Erev Purim.**



The Shul is looking to hire a (young) woman to assume responsibility to structure and supervise the children's groups. If you are interested or know of someone, please contact the Rav.

SHUL DIRECTORY

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday,, 2/25 — 24 Adar א
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Shabbat Candles — 5:36 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:35 p.m.

Shabbat, 2/26 — 25 Adar א
 Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:29 a.m.
 Minchah — 5:25 p.m.
 Ma'ariv— 6:36 p.m.

Sunday, 2/27 — 26 Adar א
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:45 p.m.
 Father and Son Learning — 6:15 p.m.

Monday, 2/28 — 27 Adar א
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:45 p.m.

Tuesday, 3/1 — 28 Adar א
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:45 p.m.

Wednesday, 3/2 — 29 Adar א
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:45 p.m.

Thursday — Rosh Chodesh Adar א, 3/3 — 30 Adar א
 Shacharit — 6:40 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:45 p.m.

Friday — Rosh Chodesh Adar א, 3/4 — 1 Adar א
 Shacharit — 6:40 a.m.
 Shabbat Candles — 5:44 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 5:45 p.m.