

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road

Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



December 11, 2021

VaYigash

7 Tevet, 5782

Bundle Up!

In the northern part of the northern hemisphere, people are bundling up! Sweater, warm socks, gloves, boots, hat, scarf, coat. In winter weather we make a mental checklist of what to wear when going outdoors to keep warm. Even if we ourselves would go out less prepared against the elements, we wouldn't consider letting a child in our care venture outside without enough clothing and accessories to keep him well-protected.

In the same way, say our Sages, G-d makes sure to give us the garments necessary to withstand even the most fearsome elements. "G-d doesn't put more on a person's shoulders than he can carry," Judaism teaches. Somewhere, sometimes buried very deep within the person, is the ability to weather any storm he or she might encounter. After all, G-d, the ultimate parent after whom all other parents are modeled, would not let His children go out in "sub-zero weather" clad inappropriately!

It can take tremendous courage to summon the strength that is within in order to overcome challenges or obstacles. Many a time, it seems easier to withdraw and admit defeat. "I'm just not cut out for this," we cry, surrendering hopelessly. But if we retreat, we will never know the taste of victory won against all odds.

In "the old country," some say, it was easier to be a Jew. Jews were not totally accepted in non-Jewish circles and lived in their own little ghettos. Anti-Semitism was a constant reminder to our grandparents or great-grandparents that they were Jews. Life was simpler and people were more simple-minded. In those "unenlightened" times, they relied on religion because they were ignorant, the thinking goes. The storms our grandparents' weathered were much more physical and material than are ours today. Yet they drew on an inner strength and overcame them all the same. They were hungry, beaten, mocked and ridiculed. But because they didn't give up, the myth still persists that it was easier to be a Jew in the old country.

Being a Jew today, in a society where success is measured by the number and model of cars in the garage, is tough. We grapple with real questions that are made even more difficult because we have been totally accepted in non-Jewish circles and no longer live in Jewish ghettos. Can our children be successful doctors, lawyers or business people if we send them to a Jewish school? What will my friends or business associates think if I don't eat out with them in restaurants? If I close down my store every Sabbath, how can it not affect business? How can I admit to myself and others that I believe in G-d (for in his heart of hearts, every Jew believes in G-d) when everyone else believes in the infallibility of science?

These are very real questions, very difficult questions, because they deal with our own self-images and perceptions. But G-d has imbued us with the strength to answer these questions and overcome any obstacles that honest answers might present. It would be easier to say, "I'm just not cut out for this." But nobody ever said life is easy.

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

No Surprises!

For Jacob's brothers, this is the week of their "big reveal." They suddenly learn that the viceroy of Egypt, the one who had taken their brother Shimon (Simeon) captive, forced them to bring their brother Binyamin (Benjamin), and then seized Binyamin instead — is none other than their brother Yosef (Joseph), whom they had sold into slavery decades earlier.

Joseph's brothers were stunned, completely at a loss for words. The Midrash compares their experience to every man's day of judgement: "Joseph was the youngest of the brothers and they couldn't answer him ... When G-d rebukes each person, there will certainly be nothing to answer. (MR 93:10)"

Recall that Joseph was sold by his brothers to Egyptian merchants, and they covered up their actions by falsely reporting to their father Yaakov (Jacob) that he had been tragically killed in the wild. Now, when Yosef revealed his true identity, they were in the midst of rescuing Benjamin from the viceroy, arguing it was unjust and merciless to seize their father's only son from Rachel. This was the ultimate reprimand, for 20 years prior they were just as merciless when returning to their father without his son Joseph.

The Hebrew word for rebuke is "Tochacha," which is more accurately translated as "showing, demonstrating the truth." It's nearly impossible for us to see the truth in ourselves, unclouded by our own biases. When we are critiqued or reprimanded by someone else, we have the opportunity to see the unadulterated truth as seen by others. True "Tochacha" reveals to us the ultimate truth about ourselves.

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Joseph's brothers couldn't see the truth about themselves, until they saw their errant behavior revealed in Yosef, the viceroy standing before them. They accused the viceroy of wrongdoing, only to recognize that that precise wrongdoing had indeed been done — by they themselves. The only crime was their own.

The Talmudic sage Shmuel said "Kol HaPosel B'Mumo Posel (Kiddushin 70b)" which essentially means, "All who accuse others, accuse from their own faults." This is the secret to finding the truth in ourselves, without having it revealed to us by others. Before you accuse someone of dishonesty, ask yourself, "How am I dishonest?" If you feel your neighbor is being inconsiderate, ask, "How have I been inconsiderate?" With this method of self discovery we can live true to our own values, and proudly stand before G-d knowing we have been true to Him. No more surprises! (Based on Bais HaLevi al HaTorah).

(by Rabbi Mordechai Dixler from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Community Information of Interest

December 11: Two Last Years before Oslo: Israel and the Jewish People 1988-1992. Lecture by Rabbi Dovid Katz. *Bad Chemistry: The Bush Administration and The State of Israel 1988-1992* Part 1. This lecture will begin at 8:00 p.m. and be held at the Congregation Shomrei Emunah. Also this lecture will be available on Rabbi Katz's YouTube site Moitze Shabbat – December 18.

December 20: The Power of Faith and Trust Through Challenges with Reb Sholom Mordechai Rubashkin. A lecture and book signing for men and women at Bnai Jacon-Shaarei Zion from 7 to 9 p.m. \$15 per person. Early bird special by December 7 is \$25 per couple. A Farbrengen for men only starting at 9:30 p.m. at Yeshivas Lubavitch. For reservations visit www.alephlearninginstitute.org For information call 443-220-9124.

Kol Hanaarim– Father and Son Learning – every Friday evening during the winter at 7:45 to 8:30 p.m. in The Shul. Chulent and other refreshments are served. Each session is 'topped off' at the end with a fascinating story. For any questions, please see Rabbi Itzkowitz.

Yahrzeits Next Week:

Allan Berman	9 Tevet - Sunday night / Monday	for mother	Malka bas Avraham
Michael Frank	9 Tevet - Sunday night / Monday	for father	Ephraim Mordechai ben Shlomo
Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan	10 Tevet - Monday night / Tuesday	for mother	Sara bas Reb Nochum Yitzchock Pinson
Howard Elbaum	11 Tevet - Tuesday night / Wednesday	for brother	Yaacov Kopel ben Avraham Menachem

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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 12/10 — 6 Tevet
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Shabbat Candles — 4:25 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Shabbat, 12/11 — 7 Tevet
 Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
 Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:36 a.m.
 Minchah — 4:15 p.m.
 Ma'ariv— 5:28 p.m.

Sunday, 12/12 — 8 Tevet
 Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m. — 1st Floor
 Father and Son Learning — 6:00 p.m.

Monday, 12/13 — 9 Tevet
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m. — 2nd Floor

Tuesday — Fast of 10th of Tevet, 12/14 — 10 Tevet
 Fast Begins — 5:48 a.m.
 Shacharit & S'lichot — 6:35 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:15 p.m. — 1st Floor
 Fast Ends — 5:15 p.m.

Wednesday, 12/15 — 11 Tevet
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m. — 2nd Floor

Thursday, 12/16 — 12 Tevet
 Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m. — 2nd Floor
 Chavrusa Learning with Chabad Yeshiva — 8 to 10 p.m.

Friday, 12/17 — 13 Tevet
 Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
 Shabbat Candles — 4:26 p.m.
 Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.