



August 16, 2025

Eikev

22 Av, 5785

Our Private Physician

"Everything is in the hands of heaven with the exception of the common cold."

"You will be more blessed than all the nations." (Deut. 7:14-15)

This can either mean that there will not be a nation which is greater in stature than the Jewish nation, or it could mean: "you will enjoy certain blessings over and beyond those enjoyed by other nations." What are these blessings? "There will be none amongst you that are barren genetically." Beyond that, "if there is someone amongst you who has become barren through sickness, G-d will remove this sickness from you, etc." It will thus become common knowledge that you have been blessed by the Lord your G-d.



The words, "G-d will remove this sickness from you," may also be understood in conjunction with the teaching, "Everything is in the hands of Heaven with the exception of the common cold." (Ketuvot 30)

Inasmuch as the common cold is not a sickness decreed upon man as some form of retribution, G-d promises to remove it from Jews who suffer from it. Concerning other maladies which are in the nature of afflictions sent by G-d, the Torah promises that we will not fall victim to them at all if we keep G-d's commandments.

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Our verse also alerts us that one way of becoming aware of G-d's kindness is the fact that He cures Israel of sickness and disease. We should not presume that if we are free from disease this is due to the fact that at certain times it is natural to be in good health, that there simply are no infectious diseases around at such times. To teach us that this is not so, the Torah writes that G-d will not put upon us any of the diseases which were rampant in Egypt and of which we were aware. In other words, these diseases occurred in Egypt all the time. If the Israelites are not subject to these diseases, this is proof of G-d's special providence; it is not coincidence or a natural phenomenon.

In addition, G-d assures us that even when He afflicts our enemies with these infectious diseases, we will not catch their infections.

(from the Ohr HaChaim commentary by Rabbi Chaim (ben Moshe) ibn Attar from www.chabad.org)

Important Life Decisions

(V'Haya) And it will be, if you hearken to My commandments that I command you this day to love HASHEM, your G-d, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul... (Devarim 11:13)

The Talmud tells us that the expression "V'Haya" introduces a matter of SIMCHA, something to rejoice about, anticipation of good news. On the reverse side the Talmud posits the notion that, "VaYehi" is a foreboding, a warning that storm clouds are on the horizon, trouble is coming.

The Vilna Gaon explains why grammatically this makes sense. "Yehi" – "will be" is future tense. The letter VUV at the beginning reverses the tense from future to past, "and it was". The explanation is that there are some matters in life that are on the calendar, sitting there in the future like a dentist appointment, a court date, any invasive medical procedure and we wish it was over. The anticipation of it and the experience itself is so distressing that we would like it to be history. So, there it is, in the future tense, hauntingly present and we are looking forward to the time when it will have passed already.

"Haya" – "it was" is past tense and with a VUV in the beginning it is converted to the future, "and it will be". There are other types of experiences in life that are so pleasant and dear to us that long after they are over, we wish we could carry them forever into the future. That is why people hire photographers and videographers to a wedding or a Bar Mitzvah or any other happy occasion, so that we can bottle and hold on to some part of that delightful experience. That is why we don't hire a photographer to memorialize a root canal. We wish we could forget the extreme discomfort of one while the other we desire to cherish in perpetuity.

(continued on the other side)

Now, these are not just two ways of describing the situations and circumstances of our lives. They are really two choices and two distinct ways of living our lives. Stephen Covey explains something in his classic time management model that I have found this to be helpful and wonderfully true. It is possible to put everything we do into one of four categories.

1) Matters that are Important and Urgent: This can include all predicaments that suddenly rush to the head of the priority line, like medical emergencies, crises in personal relationships, notification of utilities being shut off, and anything else that must be taken care of immediately.

2) Matters that are Important but not Urgent: This involves studying Torah, exercising, paying bills, spending quality time with those near and dear and anything that, even though it is not pressing and necessary to be done right now, remains a positive and productive habit of doing, and builds and creates a life of accomplishment.

3) Matters Not important but Urgent: This is perhaps more common than we think. It may be prompted by getting a phone call in the middle of dinner, only to find out it's a telemarketer. Life is filled with and a day is often punctuated by untimely interruptions from people and things that add little import or value to our lives.

4) Matters not Important and not Urgent: How much time is spent or lost on silly games and mindless videos and in incessant prattle that only leave us feeling empty in the end, like eating a giant glob of cotton candy or drinking zero soda.

In which of these four is it most worthwhile to invest the time of our lives? I think every healthy minded individual can agree that number two is the place to be. The more time that is spent in three and four on matters not important, the more one is inviting the experience of number one where suddenly the important things become emergencies – "Vayehi".

How does one decide what is important? Begin with the end in mind, The last act is the first thought! That is how HASHEM made the world and that is how we shape our priorities. We imagine how we would like to be ultimately thought of and then that informs the values and actions we engage in when living our life.

It's been said, "Some people make things happen, some watch things happen, and some ask "What happened?" "V'Haya" is the happier way of making important life decisions.

(by Rabbi Label Lam from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

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

SHUL DIRECTORY	
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DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE	
Friday, 8/15 — 21 Av Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m. Shabbat, 8/16 — 22 Av Shacharit 9:00 a.m. Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:43 a.m. Minchah — 7:30 p.m. Shkiah — 8:00 p.m. Ma'ariv — 8:43 p.m. Sunday, 8/17 — 23 Av Shacharit — 8:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m. Monday, 8/18 — 24 Av Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m.	Tuesday, 8/19 — 25 Av Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m. Wednesday, 8/20 — 26 Av Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m. Tanya Shiur: 2 nd part of Tanya Shaar HaYichud V'Emunah which deals w/the nature of creation and the unity of Hashem — 8:20 p.m. Thursday, 8/21 — 27 Av Shacharit — 6:50 a.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:40 p.m. Friday, 8/22 — 28 Av Shacharit — 7:00 a.m. Shabbat Candles — 7:33 p.m. Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.