

# THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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Chabad of North Beverly Hills, 409 Foothill Rd. Beverly Hills, 90210

beverlyhillshabad.com

Rabbi Yosef Shusterman 310-271-9063

The opening verses of Nitzavim, the first of this week's two Torah portions, begin: "You are standing this day, all of you, before the L-rd your G-d, your heads, your tribes, your elders...all the men of Israel...from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water."

Concerning these verses, the Midrash states that the Jewish people is likened to a bundle of straw. Each one individually is weak and can be easily broken, but once the straw is gathered into a bundle it is impossible to make it bend. So too is it with the Jewish people. When we are bound together and stand united we are powerful in the face of our enemies. Indeed, Jewish unity is the vessel for containing G-d's blessing, as we say in our prayers, "Bless us, our Father, together as one."

In truth, there is no power in the world that can dominate the Jewish people. But if such is the case, how is it possible for any bad to befall them? This only occurs if the individual Jew causes a tiny rift in his bond with G-d that allows external factors to enter. It is this self-induced damage in the relationship between G-d and His people which brings about a lack of unity and makes the Jews vulnerable to harm. When peace and unity reign, the Jews are impervious to attack.

How does the tiny breach first emerge? When a Jew's attention to mitzvos are gradually left by the wayside.

Thus the first step in fortifying our spiritual defenses is to make sure that this initial fissure is never allowed to form. How? Through Jewish unity.

Human nature is such that a person is often unaware of his own shortcomings. "All sins are concealed by love." Indeed, our self-love prevents us from being objective. We cannot perceive even great flaws, how much more so the smaller ones. However, when Jews come together, each one can see the shortcomings of his neighbor. A good friend's gentle admonition can cause us to correct our ways, thereby strengthening our fortifications against the Evil Inclination.

This is one of the reasons the Mittler Rebbe (Rabbi Dov Ber, the second Chabad Rebbe) encouraged his followers to acquire a friend for this specific purpose: to encourage and inspire each other along the path of Torah and mitzvot. He explained that when two Jews unite to improve themselves and their relationship with G-d, their two G-dly souls are fighting only one Evil Inclination, and it is far easier to emerge victorious.

If this was true generations ago, how much more so is it applicable in our own times, when the darkness of exile has intensified.

By maintaining our Jewish unity we will remain invincible, as it states, "You are standing this day, all of you." (Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, Volume 2, L'Chaim 5757 #487) - lchaimweekly.org

**And the L-rd your G-d will circumcise your heart (Deut. 30:6)** Elsewhere in the Torah it states (Deut. 10:16), "And you shall circumcise the foreskin of your heart," i.e., that the individual Jew must perform the "circumcision" himself. How do we reconcile these two verses? The first stage of the "circumcision," i.e., removing the "obstruction" that separates the Jew from G-d, must be initiated by the individual. The second stage, however, of completely transforming the heart to good, can only be accomplished with G-d's help. (Ohel Torah, quoting the Kotzker Rebbe)(L'Chaim #637) – lchaimweekly.org

**"Gather the people together, men, women and children." (31:12)** Rashi asks: Why were the children included? To bring reward to the parents who brought them. G-d helps parents raise their children to be G-d-fearing and upright to the same degree that they put their efforts into the task. (Sefat Emet) – ascent.org.il

## TESHUVAH

**Immediate Exchange:** The intellect balks at the concept that repentance (from love) can transform deliberate sins to merits. Is it really possible in one moment to transform evil to good and darkness to light? However, we can gain some measure of understanding by an analogy to war.

It happens in war sometimes that in the course of battle one side captures an enemy tank, and if it is intact, it is included in the armor of the other side. Consider the transformation: just a moment ago it was in every sense an enemy tank; now, however, not only has it stopped menacing our side, it attacks the enemy and helps the war-effort. (Sichat 12 Tammuz 5727)

**To Repent With Joy:** Repentance, like all mitzvot, must be fulfilled with joy, even though it involves deep pain. Such an important mitzvah as repentance, moreover, which has the power to rectify faults in all the mitzvot, must certainly be fulfilled joyfully. Indeed, repentance itself is paradoxically compounded of both pain and joy: the sinner is able to return and cleave to G-d, and there is no joy greater than this.

Repentance, then, has two components: bitter regret for the past, and a joyful resolution for the future. (Likkutei Sichot, vol. 2, p. 389) (Excerpted from: Days Of Awe, Days Of Joy) – chabad.org

## All Yisroel Together

*The stature of the leader is the measure of the people. Without a unified nation, there is no King.*

*Once the Holy Ba'al Shem Tov was praying with a minyan of his closest disciples. The Ba'al Shem Tov used to pray at great length with intense dvekus, longing and yearning for his Creator. His disciple would finish their prayers much earlier and then wait, sometimes for hours, for the Rebbe to finish.*

*Once the Ba'al Shem Tov extended his prayers even longer than usual and the disciples grew weary of waiting. They decided each one to attend to whatever he had to do and then to gather again in the Shul an hour later. After an hour, they had all returned and they waited some more until the Ba'al Shem Tov had finished his prayer.*

*He then turned to them and accused, "You've created a great disunification in that you went out to attend to your private needs and left me here alone!" Then he told them the following parable.*

*It is known that the nature of birds is to migrate to the warm countries during the winter months. Once, the inhabitants of one of those countries spotted an unusually beautiful and unusual bird with feathers of every color in the universe, and he was perched at the crest of a very high and mighty tree that was impossible to climb. When the King of the land heard about the bird, he decided that he must capture it. He ordered many, many people to be brought to the forest where the tree was located. One was to stand on the shoulders of the other until they were able to reach the perch of the beautiful bird, and then to bring it to the King.*

*The procedure of reaching the heights of the tree was very arduous and time consuming. Some of those at the bottom of the human ladder lost sight of the task at hand. Weary and disgruntled with the amount of time it was taking, they began to disperse. It goes without saying that the whole ladder toppled to the ground, injuring those on the highest sections. The King wanted that his people should be banded together with a common purpose, but this time nothing was gained.*

*"It was good", concluded the Ba'al Shem Tov, "when you were bound together with me in my prayer. But when you disbanded, each going his own separate way, everything fell. What I had hoped to achieve, was lost." ( www.nishmas.org.il)*

When R. Moshe, son of the Ail ter Rebbe, was between eight and eleven years old, he was studying the passage in Gittin 67a lauding the virtues of the sages. There R. Shimon bar Yochai said, "Learn my midot." R. Moshe was in doubt about the meaning of that last word, since there is Rashi's interpretation, "my teachings," and the simple meaning, "traits of character."  
 At that moment the Ail ter Rebbe came in and said, in the chant he habitually used: "The Torah given us is all fine character-traits. Even the punishments there, are in truth acts of kindness and goodness. The two interpretations are one, and interdependent. There can be no fine character-traits without Torah; there can be no Torah without fine character." Exactly the same incident happened to the Tzemach Tzedek, when he was between eight and eleven. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM, ELUL 23.)

*As ugly as it is to gossip about another's uglier deeds, it is even a greater crime to pay attention to such gossip.*

*But it is hard to tell someone, "Quiet! I don't want to listen." So think about this:*

*There will be a time when an angel will wish to report on your doings here on earth. As a person behaves here below, so he is treated from above. If you have had the guts to respond this way, G-d will also say, "Quiet! I don't want to even listen!"*

-From the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe; rendered by Tzvi Freeman.

**PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES**

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Rosh Hashana (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Sukka (men)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chasidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

**There will be no classes Sunday-Friday Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>.**

**DAILY MINYONIM**

**Shacharis: Mon -Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM  
 Sunday: 9:00 AM**

**Mincha/Maariv: 7:20 PM**

**SELICHOS**

**SATURDAY NIGHT 1:00 AM  
 TUESDAY – FIRDAY 5:30 AM & 7:00 AM**

**MONDAY LABOR DAY**

**Shacharis: 7:30 AM & 9:00 AM  
 (Selichos: 7:00 AM & 8:30 AM)**

**SHABBOS PARSHAS  
 NITZAVIM-VAYELECH  
 Aug. 31, 2002 – Elul 23, 5762**

**Candlelighting (Los Angeles): 7:04PM  
 Friday Mincha: 7:20 PM  
 Early Minyan: 6:00 PM**

**LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:40 AM**

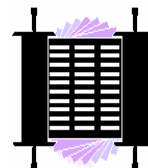
**SHABBAT MORNING**

- Tehillim 8:00 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen
- Pirkei Avos 6:10PM
- Mincha 6:55 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 8:04 PM

**Yartzeits:** Fredrich Blumenstein – Elul 25, Pesa Turner – Elul 25.

**Happy Birthday** to Jonathan Spira.

**Happy Anniversary** to Jeffry and Lori Meisel, and Mr. and Mrs. Chaim Katzir.



**A Sefer Torah is being written in memory of the fathers of Rabbi & Mrs. Shusterman.  
 Anyone who is interested in participating should contact Mendel Shusterman at (310) 497-2643**

**DON'T FORGET TO RESERVE YOUR SEATS FOR  
 ROSH HASHANA & YOM KIPPUR.**

**GOOD SHABBOS!**