

# THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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

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In the Torah portion Shoftim we are commanded to treat trees with respect, for "Man is a tree of the field." What is the resemblance between the loftiest creature and lowly vegetation? The special quality of plants and trees lies in their attachment to the earth, the source from whence they derive their existence and nourishment. This is particularly true with regard to trees. Other plant life, such as grain, vegetables, etc., do not exist in such a continually attached state, for they soon wither and die. The fact that trees are able to withstand winter's frosts and summer's heat indicates that they have a particularly strong attachment to the earth, an attachment that enables them to endure difficult times and continue to bear fruit.

Man is a microcosm; just as the world as a whole is composed of inanimate matter, vegetable matter, animals and men, so too are these qualities to be found within each and every individual. A person's emotive traits are likened to vegetation, for they embody growth and development. And although intelligence grows as well, intellect also has an "animal" aspect in that it constantly undergoes movement and change, similar to an animal's ability to roam. Further, man's emotive traits tend to be self-limiting - a kind person is inevitably gentle, a severe person will almost always deal with others in a stern manner. For this reason too, the emotive traits are likened to vegetation. Comprehension, however, understands things as they truly are, not as he person wishes them to be. The conclusions drawn from a concept will vary according to the concept itself, leading sometimes to kindness and sometimes to severity. Just as in the macrocosm, vegetation is unique in its constant unification with its source, so too within man, the emotive powers are always attached to a person's essence. This also explains why emotional traits and tendencies are so powerful, and why it is so very difficult for a kind person to become severe, etc.

By likening man to "a tree in the field," the Torah is in effect telling us that the true test of an individual is not so much his intellectual qualities but his emotional ones; it is they that take the measure of the man. It follows that man's labor and toil with regard to self-improvement is to be directed more towards refining his emotional traits than towards refining his mind; perfecting and polishing one's emotive character has the greatest impact on a person's essence. In fact, refining one's emotive traits is deemed to be so important that intellectual comprehension is not considered complete if it does not affect one's emotions - "Know this day and take [this knowledge] unto your heart."

Just as this is so with regard to each individual, so too regarding the Jewish people as a whole: All Jews are descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, and as such are constantly attached to them and their qualities. The main qualities of the Patriarchs lay not so much in matters of intellect as in emotion, for Avraham epitomized kindness and love, Yitzchak severity and fear, Yaakov mercy and beauty - the three traits that encompass the emotional spectrum. These sterling qualities - the "trees of the field" - are the birthright of each and every Jew. They must merely be revealed, refined and developed to the greatest possible extent. (From: Wellsprings by Rabbi Sholom Wineberg, Based on Likkutei Sichos Vol. XXIV, pp. 115-119)

**"You shall appoint judges... in all your gates." (16:18)** In the homiletic explanation of this passage, "your gates" refers to our sensory orifices (our eyes, ears, nose and mouth) which are the gates between the person and all that surrounds him.

You should "appoint judges" on "all your gates," that all one's senses should be led by the "judges" of his soul, the intellect of the G-dly soul with which he learns Torah. The Torah should control the functioning of one's sensory powers. (Lubavitcher Rebbe)

**"Neither shall you set up for yourself any pillar (matzeiva), which the L-rd your G-d hates." (16:22)** The word "matzeiva" comes from the Hebrew root meaning constant, steady and permanent. Do not look at this world as an end unto itself, the Torah counsels. Regard it merely as a passageway to be navigated and a preparation for the World to Come. (Kedushat Levi) - www.ascent.org.il

## PIRKEI AVOS

**Learning more than One's Custom (Avos 6:5)** The 100th time a person reviews his studies is not essentially different from the preceding 99 times, and is not indicative of any extraordinary effort. However, the 101st time he reviews his studies indicates that a change has taken place in his soul, and therefore in the revelation of G-dliness in the world. From this point on, his Divine service is very different from the way it was previously. See "Tanya", chap. 15, and "Maskil Eitan" ad loc. (Pirkei Avos in the Light of Chassidus by Yekutiel Green) - www.ascent.org.il

## ELUL

### THE REBBE WRITES

*To the Sons and Daughters of Our People Israel, Everywhere, G-d bless you all!*

*Greeting and Blessing:*

*The month of Elul, bringing the current year to a close, is -- as is well known -- the Month of Divine Mercy and Grace. It is also the time for every Jew to make a soul-searching self-evaluation (cheshbon hanefesh) in regard to the outgoing year -- of all the achievements and failures and missed opportunities; it is the month of Teshuva (Repentance) -- regret for the past and good resolutions for the future, by way of preparation for the coming year, with a view to making certain that the new year will be a better one in every respect.*

*The auspicious nature of the month of Elul is explained by the Alter Rebbe, author of the Tanya and Shulchan Aruch, by means of the parable of the "King in the Field": When a king is about to return to his royal city, the inhabitants of the city go out to meet the king and to welcome him in the field. Then everyone who so wishes may come out to greet the king, and the king receives everyone graciously and shows a friendly face to everyone... Later on, when the king proceeds to the city, they follow... So in the month of Elul, G-d makes His countenance to shine on you, which refers to the emanation of the Thirteen Attributes, that it be in a manner of face to face.*

*Thus, the month of Elul is a time of (great responsibility as well as of) great opportunity, since this is the time of the year when G-d causes His Thirteen Attributes of Mercy to shine forth, making it possible for every Jew -- regardless of how the situation was in the past -- to attach oneself to G-d with heart and soul, in a way that induces action, expressed in a substantial increase (in quantity and quality) in the study of the Torah and in the fulfillment of its mitzvot.*

*May G-d grant that each and all of us should take the fullest advantage of this auspicious period in all that has been said above, And reflect with a soulful reflection, to the extent of it permeating and guiding the daily conduct, on the words of David, the Sweet Singer of the Songs of our People Israel, in the Psalm that we begin to recite on Rosh Chodesh Elul, twice daily: "G-d is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?... my oppressors and enemies have stumbled and fallen; if an army besiege me, my heart shall not fear... now my head is raised... teach me, O G-d, Your way... hope unto G-d, be strong and let your heart be fortified and hope unto G-d..."*

*And G-d our King since the days of old will work salvation in the midst of the earth, including that in the radiance of the countenance of the King the Source of Life everyone will be blessed with a good and sweet year, both materially and spiritually, With esteem and blessing for being "written and sealed for good, for a good and sweet year". (From: L'Chaim 5756, #431, Free Translation from Hebrew, Rosh Chodesh Elul, 5735 [1975])*

The Children of Israel are called eretz cheifetz,<sup>1</sup> for they possess numerous "precious articles"<sup>2</sup> in the love and fear of G-d, and in fine character traits. Bringing these traits to the surface depends entirely upon the individual stimulating them. It is clear that throughout the earth are well springs of living water; the difference between them is only that some are near the surface, others far. Everything therefore depends on the well-digger, his patience and perseverance.

Now since ratzon ("will") is a superior faculty that "issues decrees," rules over all the other faculties,\* and compels them to act according to its orders - it follows that the essential avoda is to arouse one's will to exercise its effect - both upon the person himself and upon others.

FOOTNOTES 1. "The desired Land." Malachi 3:12; see Iyar 17. 2. Heb. chafeitzim, ("articles"), related to cheifetz in the phrase eretz cheifetz. \*. See Translator's Notes, p. 118. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM, ELUL 2.)

*It is like a king who, before he enters the city, the people of the city go out to greet him in the field. There, everyone who so desires is permitted to meet him; he receives them all with a cheerful countenance and shows a smiling face to them all. And when he goes to the city, they follow him there. Later, however, after he enters his royal palace, none can enter into his presence except by appointment, and only special people and select individuals. So, too, by analogy, the month of Elul is when we meet G-d in the field...*

- Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi

**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 Monday -Thursday, Aug 12-15**

**DAILY MINYONIM**

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

**Mincha/Maariv: 7:45 PM**

**SHABBOS PARSHAS SHOFTIM**

*Aug. 9, 2002 – Elul 1, 5762*

**Candlelighting (Los Angeles): 7:28PM  
Friday Mincha: 7:45 PM  
Early Minyan: 6:10 PM**

**LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:34 AM**

**SHABBAT MORNING**

- Tanya 8:45 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent
- Pirkei Avos 6:30 PM
- Mincha 7:15 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 8:28 PM

**Yartzeits:** Krane Bas Esther Miriam - Elul 4, Yehudis Zelda Bas Krane – Elul 8.

**Happy Birthday** to Daniel Kohanof, Shimshon Mishael, Rebecca Molayem.

**Happy Anniversary** to Rabbi & Mrs. Ilulian, Shimshon & Dora Mishael.

**Mazel Tov** to Brad and Aimee Neufeld on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Josh.

*The Shul wishes condolences to Shelly Tannanbaum on the loss of her father Joe Bodenstein OBM - May she know of no more sorrow.*

**GOOD SHABBOS!**



**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**