

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

Vol 6, # 34

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

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PIRKEI AVOS

David, King Of Israel, Who Learned From Achitophel Only Two Things

(Avos 6:3)

The Baal Shem Tov interpreted the phrase, "only two things," as follows. Generally, when one studies Torah, every concept leads to others, for learning is a self-reinforcing cycle. When, however, one learns from a wicked person like Achitophel, the information gained remains inert. Therefore, Achitophel's two teachings were solitary points of information; they did not have the potential to lead David to further knowledge.

One might ask: The ability of the Torah to bring about an ever-increasing flow of knowledge stems from its connection with G-d, since "the Torah and the Holy One, blessed be He, are one." Human conduct, no matter how base, cannot detract from the eternal truth and wisdom of G-d's word. Why then were Achitophel's teachings not fruitful?

In resolution, it can be explained that the bond between G-d and the Torah is not always apparent. It is therefore possible, heaven forbid, for a person to study and even teach Torah without regarding it as different from any other form of wisdom. When this happens, the growth potential within the Torah remains dormant. When, however, a person establishes a connection between the Torah and its G-dly source, the infinite potential surfaces.

Achitophel, a wicked man, taught Torah in a self-contained manner. But David in his humility surrendered himself to the infinite dimension of G-dliness within Achitophel's dry teachings. This enabled David to breathe life into all he studied, even the two concepts which he learned from Achitophel. (Sichos Motzoei Shabbos Parshas Bamidbar, 5739) (From In The Paths of Our Fathers by Rabbi Eliyahu Touger) – sichosinenglish.org

Playing G-d

Upon the passing of Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov in 1760, the center of Chassidic teaching shifted to the town of Mezheritch, home of the Baal Shem Tov's successor, the famed "Maggid," Rabbi DovBer.

Late one night, a group of the Maggid's disciples were discussing the state of the universe. "If G-d would entrust me with the running of His world," said one, "I would gather all the gold in the world and give it to the Jewish people, so that they should be able to serve the Almighty free of all material cares."

"If I were running the world," said another, "I would heal all the sick and banish all pain and suffering from the face of the earth."

"And I would eradicate the inclination for evil from the heart of man," said a third. "Then we would have a world that befits the goodness and perfection of its Creator."

The youngest of the Maggid's disciples, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, then spoke. "If I were in G-d's place," said he, "I would run the world exactly as He does." (Adapted from the teachings of the Rebbe by Yanki Tauber, From: Week in Review, Vol XI No 39 Bamidbar 5760) - meaningfullife.com

On This Date: Iyar 29 Passing of Samuel (877 BCE) ;

The prophet Samuel (931-877 BCE) was one of the most important figures in Jewish history; our sages describe him as the equivalent of "Moses and Aaron combined." Samuel was the last of the Shoftim ("Judges") who led the people of Israel in the four centuries between the passing of Joshua and the establishment of the monarchy, and the author of the biblical books of "Judges", "Samuel" and "Ruth"

Samuel was born in the year 2830 from creation (931 BCE) after his barren mother, Chanah (Hannah), prayed for a child at the Sanctuary at Shiloh and pledged, "O L-rd of hosts... If You will give Your maidservant a man child, I shall dedicate him to G-d all the days of his life..." (I Samuel 1:11). At age two, his mother brought him to Shiloh in fulfillment of her vow, where he was raised by Eli the High Priest; shortly thereafter, Samuel had his first prophetic communication (described in I Samuel 3). In 890 BCE, Samuel succeeded Eli as leader of the Jewish people.

After ten years under Samuel's guidance, the people approached him with the request, "Appoint for us a king... like all the nations around us." Samuel disapproved of their request, believing that the people of Israel should be subject only to G-d and not to any mortal king; but G-d instructed him to do as the people ask. Samuel then anointed (879 BCE) Saul as the first king of Israel. When Saul disobeyed G-d during the war on Amalek, Samuel proclaimed David the legitimate king in Saul's stead. Shortly thereafter, Samuel passed away at age 54 in his birthplace, Ramah, in the hills of Judah. – *chabad.org*

As this week's Torah portion, Bamidbar (literally "in the desert") suggests, the Torah was given to the Jewish people in an uninhabited wilderness.

A desert is a vast expanse of land to which all people have the same claim. A desert is not considered private property in the same way a house or a tract of habitable land can be bought and owned by individuals.

Likewise, the Torah does not belong to any one Jew, but is the eternal inheritance and possession of all. Thus each and every Jew is able (and obligated) to study the Torah and apply it to his daily life.

The desert is a place of dust, earth and shifting sands. Vegetation cannot grow there and it is devoid of inhabitants.

We, too, must strive to be as humble as the dust, as the Torah is incompatible with haughtiness and pride. Indeed, our Sages stated, "Who is he who upholds the Torah? One who makes himself as the desert."

In the desert, the most important necessities for sustaining life - water, food and clothes - are absent. There is no rainfall, and no edible plants or fruit-bearing trees. Obviously, there is no place to buy or make clothing either.

Throughout the 40 years of the Jewish people's sojourn through the desert they relied on the merit of tzadikim, righteous people, for these necessities. In the merit of Moses, G-d caused the manna to fall. In the merit of Miriam the Prophetess, Moses' sister, a well provided the Jews with drinking water. In the merit of Aaron the High Priest, Moses' brother, G-d protected the Jews from harm with the Clouds of Glory. These clouds also laundered their clothes, which grew along with them and always fit perfectly.

We learn from this that when it comes to learning Torah, all other concerns fall by the wayside. Our job is to study Torah and observe its mitzvot, while relying on G-d to provide us with our needs.

Lastly, the desert is a place of great danger. Wild animals roam about freely, and snakes and scorpions lurk under rocks and in crevices. Yet it was precisely there that G-d chose to reveal His holy Torah.

Until Moshiach comes and ushers in the Final Redemption (may it happen immediately), the Jew is likewise in a dangerous environment - exile. The "snake," the evil inclination, is constantly trying to entrap him and cause him to sin. Thus it is precisely during the exile that the Jew must strive to connect himself to the Torah, and to perform its commandments to the best of his ability. (Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Vol. 2, and Hitva'aduyot 5745, From: LChaim 5759, #568) – *lchaimweekly.org*

The ascent of the soul occurs three times daily, during the three times of davening. This is particularly true of the souls of tzadikim who "go from strength to strength." It is certain that at all times and in every sacred place they may be, they offer invocation and prayer on behalf of those who are bound to them and to their instructions, and who observe their instructions. They offer prayer in particular for their disciples and disciples' disciples, that G-d be their aid, material ly and spiritual ly. (From Rebbe's Hayom yom 29 iyar).

You might think that the more lowly the created being, the lower the spark it contains.

Just the opposite: Only the highest of sparks could descend to the lowest of places and retain their power to sustain a being.

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

PARTICIPATE IN DAILY CLASSES

Sunday 8:00 AM Gemara-Tractate
Rosh Hashana (men)

Monday 8:00 PM Chumash
(men and women)

Tuesday 8:00 PM Gemara-Tractate
Makos (men)

Wednesday 8:30 PM Halacha and Tanya
(women)

Thursday 10:00 AM Chassidus (women)

8:00 PM Class for Beverly Hills
Highschool Students

Daily 6:45 to 7:15 AM Chassidus

Between Mincha and
Maariv Halacha

There will be co classes next week on Wed. and Thurs., June 4-5.

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM

Sunday 9:00 AM

Mincha/Maariv: 8:00 PM

SHAVUOS 5763

Thursday Night, June 5th

The shul will be open the entire night of Shavuos for classes and learning. Refreshments will be served.

There will be an early minyan on Friday at 5:15 AM in addition to the regular minyan at 9:30 AM

***SHABBOS PARSHAS BAMIDBAR
Shabbos Mevorchim***

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 7:40 PM

Friday Mincha: 7:55 PM

Early Minyan: 6:20 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:17 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tehillim 8:00 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen**
- **Pirkei Avos 6:40 PM**
- **Mincha 7:25 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 8:40 PM**

Kiddush this week is being sponsored by Yariv Ben-Aharon and Eilat Kohn in honor of their upcoming marriage.

Happy Birthday to Elana Kornfeld & Miriam Mishael

Mazel Tov to Yariv Ben-Aharon and Eilat Kohn on their upcoming marriage.

GOOD SHABBOS!