

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

Vol 6, #46

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

beverlyhillshabad.com

Rabbi Yosef Shusterman 310-271-9063

"Cleave to Him"

We are told in the Torah Portion Re'eh, "Follow G-d your Lord, fear Him, observe His commandments, hearken to His voice, serve Him and cleave to Him." On the words "cleave to Him," Rashi explains: "Cleave to His ways, perform acts of loving kindness, bury the dead, visit the sick, just as G-d has done."

Rashi's comment must be understood: Since, according to Rashi, the verse means to tell us that we should cleave to G-d's ways and act as He does, why doesn't the verse explicitly state "cleave to His ways" rather than "cleave to Him?"

Moreover, since the command to cleave to G-d's ways is stated as "cleave to Him," it is understandable that the ultimate unity with G-d is accomplished specifically through following G-d's example and performing acts of loving kindness.

In other words, the highest form of cleaving to G-d can only be accomplished through these latter actions, and not by performing the actions and commandments referred to earlier when the verse declared "obey His commandments."

This, too, must be understood: All mitzvos bring about an attachment between man and G-d; what greater attachment is achieved by doing those things that fall under the heading of "cleaving to G-d"?

G-d commanded us to perform Mitzvos, and we perform them because we are so obligated. It therefore follows that the attachment achieved by performing mitzvos is one in which the performer is continuously aware of his own self; it is he who is becoming attached to G-d through his performance.

This is not so with regard to "cleaving to G-d." Although "cleaving to G-d" begins as the result of a command, the performance, completion, and totality of the command involves the total loss of any sense of self, for the person is wholly engulfed within Him - he cleaves to Him.

The difference between mitzvos in general and performing those actions that result in "cleaving to Him" is thus the difference between "attachment to G-d" and "cleaving to G-d": "Attachment to G-d" - the state achieved through the regular performance of Torah and mitzvos - is similar to attaching two separate objects one to another and tying them together. Even after the objects have become bound together, they are still viewed as two things. "Cleaving to G-d," however, is so strong a form of unification that there are no two separate entities - they are truly one.

We thus understand that the same act - extending a loan for example - when performed with the intent of "cleaving to G-d" is infinitely greater than the same act performed as a separate mitzvah; the latter lacks total loss of self and only attains attachment - not cleaving - to G-d.

This also explains why the verse states "cleave to Him." Although this requires "cleaving to His ways," no action is specified, for the intent here is not to speak of the act itself - "His ways" - but the result of the act; when one is so at one with G-d, following in His ways will come as a matter of course.

Thus it is told of the Alter Rebbe that on Fridays towards evening he would automatically fall asleep, since it was then a time of sleep Above.[3] I.e., his cleaving to G-d was so intense that the proper actions - "ways" - followed spontaneously.

Acting in such an unprompted and unpremeditated manner in consonance with G-d's desires reveals the tremendous degree of innate cleaving that a Jewish soul has to G-d. When the Torah commands us to "cleave to G-d," it empowers all of us to reveal our latent qualities. (Based on Likkutei Sichos Vol. XIV, pp. 53-63.) - sichosinenglish.org

See, I give you today a blessing and a curse (11:26) See, I give you today the blessing and its transmutation. (Yonatan ben Uziel's [Aramaic] translation of the verse)

"See" -- Moses is giving the Children of Israel the power of sight -- to perceive that the true nature of evil is nothing more than a transmutation and distortion of the Divine good. When evil is thus seen, it can be transformed into the good that it essentially is. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe) - chabad.org

This Shabbat we bless the month of Elul. In Elul we prepare for the upcoming High Holidays by blowing the shofar each morning, having our mezuzot and tefilin checked to make sure they are still fit, being more careful about keeping kosher and saying special selichot (penitential prayers) toward the end of the month.

Why do we do all of this in the month of Elul? Can't it wait until we're closer to Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur? Most of us "work" better under pressure anyway!

These questions can be explained by a beautiful parable:

Once each year, a very mighty king leaves his palace, his guards, his finery, and goes out into the field to meet with his subjects.

In the field, the people can ask of the king anything they wish. They do not need to wait in long lines, go through security checks, be announced ceremoniously. They can speak with him without hesitation.

However, once the king returns to his palace, his subjects will once again have to go through all kinds of protocol to meet with him. So, of course, his subjects make the most of the opportunity.

During the month of Elul, G-d is "in the field." We don't need to go through all kinds of red tape to reach Him. We need only come out to meet Him, as it were, with a humble heart, and He will listen to us. He will accept our repentance and consider our requests most carefully.

The King will soon be in the field. Make sure not to miss this opportunity. (L'Chaim 5762, #730) - lchaimweekly.org

PIRKI AVOS

"Swearing in vain." (5:9)

QUESTION: The Gemara (Shavu'ot 39a) says the entire world trembled when Hashem said, "You shall not take the name of G-d, your G-d, in vain." What message was the Torah conveying that caused the entire world to tremble?

ANSWER: A story is told of a group of brothers who came to America and went into business together. A few years later they arranged for their parents to emigrate. The father was a pious, G-d fearing Jew, with a beard, peiyot, and Chassidic garb. After a short time, the father shaved off his beard and peiyot and traded his Chassidic garb for modern attire. Puzzled by their father's behavior, the brothers consulted his Rabbi.

When the Rabbi asked the father why he changed so drastically, he told him the following, "My sons have a large meat market. They had me sit at a table in the market, and when people saw me, it encouraged them to make their purchases with confidence that everything is kosher. However, I soon realized that the meat they were selling was not kosher and that they were using me to deceive the public. Therefore, I decided to shave off my beard and peiyot, so that my beard, i.e. Yiddishkeit, should not help them sell non-kosher meat."

Unfortunately, throughout history, the nations of the world have persecuted and tortured the Jew, with the excuse that they were doing it for the "sake of Heaven (G-d)." They have claimed that Jews are to be blamed for society's problems and deserve oppression. Also, among Jews themselves, it is common for one to hurt another while claiming that it is a "mitzvah."

Hashem's command "Do not mention My name in vain," in a sense means "Do not exploit My 'name' " - Torah and religion - as a means of justification for your iniquities. Do not attempt to cover them up with a veil of righteousness and virtue."

This poignant Divine message put a shiver through everyone, and the entire world trembled in fear. (From: VeDibarta Bam by Rabbi Moshe Bogomilsky)

My father writes in a letter: "I heard in the name of our holy fathers the Rebbe'im, that al so1 when a daughter is born we are to say the words "to Torah," (May her parents bring her up to Torah, to marriage and to good deeds. p. 186). This is based on the statement by our Sages (Berachot 17a), "How do women earn merit?2 By seeing to it that their chil dren go to study Torah, that their husbands go to the Study Hall and by awaiting (their husbands' return, etc.>"). (From Rebbe's Hayom yom 25 menachem av).

We stand poised at the threshold of a spiritual revolution, a world filled with Divine knowledge, the time of Moshiach. A single good deed on your part can transform the world.

- The Rebbe

PARTICIPATE IN DAILY CLASSES

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

Monday 8:30 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 Halacha
Mincha and
Maariv

There will be no class on Wednesday August 29th.

DAILY MINYONIM:

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

Sunday 9:00 AM

Mincha/Maariv: 7:30 PM

*SHABBOS PARSHAS RE'EH
Shabbos Mevorchim
August 24, 2003*

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 7:16M

Friday Mincha: 7:30PM

Early Minyan: 6:00M

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:37 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tehillim 8:00 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by
Kiddush & Cholent**
- **Pirkei Avos 6:15 PM**
- **Mincha 7:00 PM followed by
Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 8:16 PM**

Seudah Shlishit is being sponsored by the Kotlarsky family - a Sheva Berochos in honor of Yitzy and Mimi's wedding.

Yartzeits: Sara Mareyna – Av 26, Yosef Bodenstein – Av 27, Evelyn Sternlight – Av 27, Laura Siegel – Elul 1.

Happy Birthday to Chani Mintz, Bracha Illulian, Miriam Meisel, Raymonde Pazuelo & Shmuel Sulami.

Mazal Tov to Rabbi and Mrs. Dovid Sulami on the Upshernish of their son Shmuel.

Mazal Tov to Yitzy and Mimi Kotlar on their marriage

GOOD SHABBOS!