



# The Chabad Weekly

Vol. 27 Issue 48



**Candlelighting**  
(Los Angeles)

**6:53 PM**

**Friday Mincha:**  
**7:10 PM**

**Early Mincha: 5:50 PM**

**LATEST SHEMA: 9:41 AM**

## SHABBAT SCHEDULE

- **Tanya** **8:45 AM**
- **Shacharis** **7:30 AM**  
**9:30 AM**  
(followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Fabrengen)
- **Jacob MM Graff Pirkei Avos Class** **6:00 PM**  
(Chapt. 1)
- **Mincha** **6:45 PM**  
(Followed by Seuda Shlishit)
- **Maariv** **7:45 PM**
- **Shabbat ends** **7:53 PM**

## Announcements:

**Kiddush** is sponsored by Peggy Guenoun in honor of her birthday.

**Seuda Shlishit** is sponsored by Dr. Aharon Farzam and Family in memory of the yartzheit of his grandmother, Saltanat Esther bas Dina.

**Happy Birthday** to Shimshon Misha'el, Peggy Guenoun, Shoshana Ganjian and Chana Ebrahimpour.

**Yartzheits:** Moshe Kirshenbaum - Elul 5, Leo Presser - Elul 8, Moones Bral - Leveddin - Elul 9.

**Happy Anniversary** to Shimshon and Dora Misha'el.

**GOOD SHABBOS!**

## Parshas Shoftim

Friday, Elul 3, 5784 / Sept 6, 2024

This week's Torah portion, Shoftim, opens with the mitzva: "Judges and officers you shall place at all your gates."

The Torah is eternal; so too are all its commandments. Appointing "judges and officers" thus applies in every age and in all locations, and contains a practical directive for our daily lives.

Every Jew is an entire world, a microcosm of the greater world at large. And just as the world is divided into regions and cities, so too may the individual Jew be said to inhabit various "cities" in which he lives and acts. These "cities" are the thoughts we think, the words we speak, and the deeds and actions we perform.

As with every city, the domains of thought, speech and deed are protected by gates; indeed, it is a mitzva to install them at their entrance. A gate is a portal, a doorway through which all who wish to enter the city must pass. A gate can be opened and closed; when it is firmly shut, no one can intrude.

The Torah's instruction to appoint "judges and officers" at the gates of our individual "cities" is directed to all Jews, young and old. Furthermore, all Jews are endowed with the ability to carry out the command successfully.

When a Jew is aroused to

perform good deeds, he must open his "gate" as wide as it will go. But if, G-d forbid, his "city" is in danger of invasion by the Evil Inclination, he must shut the "gate" immediately and refuse it access.

How do we lead a G-dly life? How is it possible to carry out G-d's will? By properly utilizing the limbs and organs with which we are blessed.

A Jew's eyes can be used for reading Jewish books in which is written G-d's laws about how to conduct our lives. Our ears can be used to listen the counsel of our teachers and to hear only words that are appropriate; our nose, to breathe the pure air of Torah and mitzvot, in a wholesome environment where we can breathe freely. Similarly, a Jew's mouth can open to accept kosher food and drink, and to speak words of respect and love.

And who is the "judge" who makes these decisions? The "judge" is our intellect, our capacity for rational thought; the "officer" within us makes sure that the "judge's" decisions are enforced.

When we all make the right judgments and obey the Torah's commands, we will merit, with G-d's help, the appointment of the "judges and officers" of the Sanhedrin of the Third Holy Temple, and the complete Redemption with Moshiach, may it be now!

Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, Volume 14 (L'Chaim #1335)

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*Sometimes - simply because Elul and the High Holidays occur with yearly dependability - we don't pay enough attention to a very radical concept in Judaism.*

*During the month of Elul a Jew is supposed to stop what he's doing, honestly and objectively assess his spiritual condition, and take whatever steps are necessary to improve it. But how much can an older, set-in-his-ways person really change?*

*Realistically speaking, each of us has his own strengths and weaknesses, things we are willing to do and things that are just not for us. Aside from minor adjustments, aren't we destined to remain basically the same till 120?*

*To this, Judaism responds with a resounding "No!" You too can change and do teshuva, the Torah tells us, regardless of your experience or maturity. Whatever happened before is past history. No door is closed, no bad habits so ingrained that they cannot be overcome. A Jew always has the potential to draw nearer to G-d, and during the month of Elul, is granted special powers from Above to assist him.*

*This principle, that a Jew is a perpetual "work in progress" and that it's never too late to improve, is the result of the unique nature of the Jewish soul. The Jewish soul is eternal, unlimited by any boundaries. Nothing can stand in the way of a Jew's sincere desire to be close to G-d - neither logic, emotion, environment or inclination. The moment he resolves to change course ever slightly (in the right direction) he becomes invincible.*

*Each day of his life, a Jew has the capacity to revolutionize his existence and imbue it with ever-increasing holiness. It's just easier during Elul, when our hearts are naturally aroused to doing teshuva and spurred on by G-d's greater proximity among us.*

(From: L'Chaim #1036) - lchaimweekly.org

## ZOOM CLASSES:

**Monday 8:30 PM**

*Parshas Hashavua*

**Wednesday 8:30 PM**

*Halacha & Tanya*

**Daily Mon. - Fri: 6:45 AM**

*Torah Ohr (In Shul)*

*Please visit*

[www.rabbishusterman.com](http://www.rabbishusterman.com)  
where you can access over  
3000 of Rabbi Shusterman's  
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Torah and more.

## Daily Minyonim

**Weekday Shacharis:**  
6:00 AM & 7:30 AM

**Sunday Shacharis:**  
7:00 AM & 9:00 AM

**Mincha/Maariv:**  
7:05 PM

### "The world stands upon three things" (Avos 1:2)

The word for "world" in Hebrew is 'olam', which is cognate to the word 'helem' -

'concealment'. The world was created in such a way that G-liness is buried and concealed within it. Only by removing the concealment will the light of G-dliness hidden within it be revealed.

Every person is obligated to say, "The world (ha'olam) was created for me." Do not read this as "the world," but "the concealment" (ha'helem). Every person has the mission and obligation to remove the concealment through the service of G-d.

How does he do this? Regarding this, Shimon HaTzaddik used to say: "The world stands upon three things..." The concealment remains until removed by three things - Torah, Divine service, and acts of kindness. Then the inner light is revealed.

(Rebbe Harayatz, Ma'amaram 5700, p.160)

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## Story of the Week:

### JOBLESS, TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS OLD, AND SINGLE

[Keep in perspective that this story was written sixteen years ago. - yt]

Sara is a vivacious, upbeat young woman who knows where she's going and how she's getting there. But if you had met her a few years ago, you wouldn't have gotten the same impression.

"I was born in Canada and spent my earliest years there," begins Sara. "When I was still very young, my parents started to become more involved in Judaism and eventually became fully Torah observant. Within a few years, they decided to move to Israel.

"We moved to a settlement in the Shomron. My four siblings and I went to religious schools in the settlement." Sara continued in the local schools until she reached high school age. "As we didn't have a high school in our settlement, I began attending a religious high school in Petach Tikvah. The other students there were also from 'Religious-Zionist' background."

Although religious girls in Israel can be exempt from regular army service, amongst the Religious-Zionists, girls are encouraged to fulfill "Sheirut L'Umi" (National Service). At the end of high school, most of Sara's friends chose to do Sheirut L'Umi. "By that time, I had become a bit of a non-conformist, and I decided to do regular army service. To be honest," Sara says with a smile, "I just wanted to be able to have an excuse to trade in my skirts for pants!"

Sara's parents were less than happy with her decision to do regular army service. Nor was Sara prepared for life in the non-religious world of the army. Unfortunately, her observance of mitzvot (commandments) quickly waned. By the end of her first year in the army, Sara stopped going home for Shabbat and spent weekends off with friends.

When she finished her three-year army service, she no longer retained any semblance of a religious lifestyle. She decided to move to Tel Aviv, where she managed to find a job as a manager in a security company. "My time was divided between work and home, with not much else in between. I was working 16 hours a day."

But a few years of the work/sleep/work cycle made Sara realize that she needed more meaning in her life. So she decided that she would become a police officer! She served for a few years in the most crime-ridden area of Tel Aviv until she got a notice in the mail that would eventually be the push to help her find true meaning in her life.

"As a police officer, I received a draft notice to help the Israeli forces in the 'Disengagement,' the expelling of Jewish families from their homes in Gush Katif. This hit me hard; even though I was no longer religious, I had a strong love of Israel. I knew I would not be able to evacuate my fellow Jews from their homes. I was told by my superiors that I had two choices: either to serve or to go to jail for disregarding a direct order."

Sara chose a third option. "I moved to Canada, to live with my grandmother. But the reality of my life quickly hit me. I was jobless, 27-years-old and single. Plus, when I arrived in Canada, I hardly knew anyone.

"I began by asking some people where I could find fellow Israelis. I was told that the best place to start was the Chabad House for Israelis in Montreal called MADA." There Sara met many young Israelis who, like her, were not particularly religious but were looking for a "home away from home."

Sara attended events periodically at MADA, though she didn't change her lifestyle very much. She did, however, become close with Reut and Barak Hetsroni, staff members (and more) at the MADA Center. She eventually decided to spend a Shabbat with the Hetsronis, who turned out to be Chabad representatives, and to observe the entire Shabbat.

"From the minute we lit the candles until the Havdala ceremony at the end of Shabbat, I just could not stop crying! As a former police officer in the toughest area of Tel Aviv, I wasn't one to cry. Nor could I figure out why I was crying. But it finally occurred to me that I was crying because I had restarted my journey for real to find true meaning in my life."

Sara quit her job that required her to work on Shabbat and started teaching at the Lubavitch girls elementary school in Montreal, Beth Rivkah. "I taught 5th grade. I was in charge of praying with them every day and I taught them Hebrew language and Prophets. I did this for six months and loved every day of it."

"Reut encouraged me to attend Machon Chana Women's Institute in Brooklyn, a seminary primarily for young women who had not grown up in observant homes. But I wasn't ready to leave my comfort zone."

Throughout the summer, Sara received many job offers in Montreal and in Israel. She also wanted to finish her university studies. She discussed the various options with a woman in Montreal whom she had met through her teaching in Beth Rivkah and whom she had begun to consider her "mentor."

"She told me that of all of the options there was one I had not considered but that she really believed was best for me - to become a student at Machon Chana. I decided to follow her advice and moved to New York a few weeks later."

Before leaving Montreal, Sara went to say "goodbye" to her grandmother. "My grandmother handed me a dollar bill from the Lubavitcher Rebbe and said that it was for me."

"She explained that 30 years earlier she had joined a group of people from Montreal who were traveling to the Rebbe. The Rebbe had distributed to the group dollar bills that they were to give to charity. (In general, people kept the dollar from the Rebbe and gave a dollar or more from their own money to charity.) The Rebbe handed my grandmother three dollars: One for herself, a second for her husband, and a third one, explaining it was for her granddaughter who would need it one day."

"I think this is the right time," my grandmother told me."

Sara nods her head. Yes, this was the right time and Machon Chana is the right place.

Source: Revised and supplemented by Yerachmiel Tilles from an article by Yehudis Cohen on LChaimWeekly.org (#1011). Yehudis Cohen is the long-time excellent editor-in-chief of the weekly four-page Chabad publication, L'Chaim..

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## PARSHA INSIGHTS

**Judges and officers you must appoint for yourself in all your gates (Deut. 16:18)**

"In each and every city," comments Rashi. The Talmud goes even further, explaining that "city" may also be understood to mean the individual person, who is called the "small city." In order for a person's Good Inclination to be victorious and to rule, one must have the assistance of "judges and officers." The "judge" part of a person's spiritual make-up first looks into the Code of Jewish Law to see if a certain act is permissible or not according to the Torah. If the Evil Inclination afterwards balks at fulfilling G-d's command, the "officers" come to the rescue to force the individual into compliance. "Man's Good Inclination must always be in a state of anger against the Evil Inclination," states the Talmud.

(The Rebbe)(L'Chaim #1588) - lchaimweekly.org

## Hayom Yom - Elul 4

The order of birchot haTorah: 1 With the tallit touch the beginning and ending of the reading, kiss the tallit where it touched the Torah, roll up the Torah, turn your face slightly to the right, say the b'racha, open the Torah and read.

In describing the unique qualities of humankind, four terms are used: Adam refers to the quality of mind and intellect; ish to the quality of heart and emotion; enosh, weakness in either intellect or emotion or both; gever, who overcomes inner weakness and removes obstacles and hindrances to the attainment of an intellectual or emotional quality. I.e. gever works upon enosh to elevate him to the plane of ish or adam.

Since it is possible to turn enosh into ish or adam, it is obvious that enosh already possesses the qualities found in ish and adam.