

# The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road  
Baltimore, MD 21209

[www.chabadshul.org](http://www.chabadshul.org)



January 4, 2025

VaYigash

4 Tevet, 5785

## Super Heroes

Everybody wants to be a superhero. And why not? In a way it's a wonderful fantasy. To have the power to save lives, to help people in distress, to stop villains and evil-doers, simply and effectively.

And how much fun it would be to be different, to have a super-power. Everyone has his or her favorite super-power. Super-strength. Super-speed. Super-senses: X-ray vision or super-hearing. Super-magnetism. Flight, soaring like a bird, but without wings.

Not every superhero has a super-power, an enhancement of a natural trait (strong becomes super-strong) or some ability people don't normally possess. Some superheroes have a device - a mystical ring, a rod of power, that sort of thing.

Other superheroes are "just" super-skilled. A martial arts expert to the nth degree. A brilliant detective who's also a superb athlete.

Yes, it would be nice to be a superhero, to have a special power and help save the world.

But in one sense we already are superheroes. All of us. We have a special power. More than one, actually. And when we use that super-power, we are helping hundreds and thousands and millions of people. We're also saving the world.

Our super-powers are the mitzvot (commandments) we do. Every time we do a mitzva, we help save worlds. Literally. To paraphrase Maimonides, the world hangs in the balance, and the next good deed can tip the scales to the meritorious, bringing redemption not only to the individual, but to the whole world.

Indeed, the effect of a mitzva reverberates through all the worlds and all the planes of existence, elevating them - and all of the creation within each world - to a higher awareness of G-dliness. It's a spiritual rescue.

Each mitzva has the power - the super-power - to affect a different aspect of existence - the existence of the individual and the existence of worlds.

Nor is the impact of a mitzva limited to the specific spiritual source, or even to the individual exercising his or her spiritual super power. Assistants and aides - sidekicks - get rescued along with you, the spiritual superhero. That is, anyone - Jew or non-Jew - who helps you do a mitzva, however indirect that help, is carried along. The grocer who sells you the kosher food; the delivery guy who brings the food to the grocer; the warehouse manager who assigns the delivery guy.

But if each of us emphasizes a particular mitzva - super-power - one that we do with extra effort - super-strength, we also all share one super-power, regardless. That's the power to transform selves into someone completely new. Through teshuva, repentance, we all have that transformative ability.

So the next time you feel inspired by a superhero or dream about having a super-power and saving the world - remember you already are a superhero, you already have a super-power, and you do in fact save not just one world, but many worlds - every time you do a mitzva.

*(by David YB Kaufmann obm from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>)*

## The Real Danger

In this week's Parashah, the Egyptian viceroy reveals that he is Yosef, and he encourages his brothers to bring their father Yaakov to Egypt to live out the years of famine there. As Yaakov is descending to Egypt, Hashem appears to Yaakov and says (46:3-4), "Have no fear of descending to Egypt, for I shall establish you as a great nation there. I shall descend with you to Egypt, and I shall also surely bring you up."

R' Chaim Druckman z"l (rabbi, Rosh Yeshiva, and Knesset member, who passed away this week at the age of 90) writes: Midrash Rabbah observes: "One says, 'Have no fear,' only to someone who is afraid." Of what was Yaakov afraid? From Hashem's words of reassurance, we see that Yaakov was afraid of two things, R' Druckman writes.

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First, Yaakov was afraid that his descendants would be annihilated physically in exile. To dispel this fear, Hashem told him, "I shall establish you as a great nation there." Second, Yaakov was afraid that his descendants would assimilate and experience spiritual destruction. In response, Hashem assured him, "I shall descend with you to Egypt, and I shall also surely bring you up."

It stands to reason, continues R' Druckman, that the spiritual concern was the primary one. We read (Vayikra 18:3), "Do not perform the acts of the land of Egypt in which you dwelled." Rashi z"l comments, "This tells us that the deeds of the Egyptians were more corrupt than those of all other nations, and that the district of Egypt in which Bnei Yisrael had resided was even more corrupt than the rest of Egypt." The danger that Jews will become comfortable in their exile, will assimilate into their corrupt surroundings, and will not want to be redeemed is the greatest danger of all. (Haggadah Shel Pesach La'zman Ha'zeh p.83)

(by Rabbi Shlomo Katz from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

**Kol Hanaarim** – every Friday evening during the winter at **7:15 p.m. in The Shul**. Cholent and other refreshments are served. Each session is 'topped off' at the end with a fascinating story. For any questions, please see Rabbi Itzkowitz.

Kiddush after davening this Shabbat is being tri-sponsored by:  
**Rabbi Smuel Kaplan** in memory of the yahrzeit of his mother  
**Sara bas Reb Nochum Yitzchock Pinson,**  
**Cantor Allan Berman** in memory of the yahrzeit his mother  
**Malka bas Avraham,** and  
**Michael Frank** in memory of the yahrzeit of his father  
**Ephraim Mordechai ben Shlomo.**



**Yahrzeits This Week:**

Allan Berman	9 Tevet - Wednesday night / Thursday	for mother	Malka bas Avraham
Michael Frank	9 Tevet - Wednesday night / Thursday	for father	Ephraim Mordechai ben Shlomo
Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan	10 Tevet - Thursday night / Friday	for mother	Sara bas Reb Nochum Yitzchock Pinson

**SHUL DIRECTORY**

<p><b>Rabbi:</b> Shmuel Kaplan . . . rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com</p> <p><b>Treasurer:</b> Michael Frank . . . shul.chabad@gmail.com</p> <p><b>Kiddush:</b> Reuven Frank . . . reuben.frank@siemens.com</p> <p><b>Website:</b> Shoshana Zakar . . . sue.zakar@gmail.com</p>	<p><b>Gabbaim:</b></p> <p>Yehudah Buchwalter . . . judahbuchwalter@verizon.net</p> <p>Allan Genut . . . . . agenut@gmail.com</p> <p><b>Bulletin:</b> Howard Kaplon . . . . . hkaplon@towson.edu</p>
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**DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE**

<p><b>Friday, 1/3 — 3 Tevet</b>          Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.          Shabbat Candles — 4:38 p.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:40 p.m.</p> <p><b>Shabbat, 1/4 — 4 Tevet</b>          Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.          Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:47 a.m.          Minchah — 4:25 p.m.          Shiur — after Minchah          Shkiah — 4:57 p.m.          Ma'ariv — 5:41 p.m.</p> <p><b>Sunday, 1/5 — 5 Tevet</b>          Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.          Minchah / Maariv — 4:45 p.m.</p> <p><b>Monday, 1/6 — 6 Tevet</b>          Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:45 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Tuesday, 1/7 — 7 Tevet</b>          Shacharit — 7:00 a.m..          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:45 p.m.</p> <p><b>Wednesday, 1/8 — 8 Tevet</b>          Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:45 p.m.          Tanya Shiur: 2<sup>nd</sup> part of Tanya Shaar HaYichud          V'Emunah which deals w/the nature of creation and          the unity of Hashem — 8:00 p.m.</p> <p><b>Thursday, 1/9 — 9 Tevet</b>          Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:45 p.m.</p> <p><b>Friday — Fast of 10 Tevet, 1/10 — 10 Tevet</b>          Fast Starts — 5:56 a.m.          Shacharit and S'lichot — 6:35 a.m.          Shabbat Candles — 4:45 p.m.          Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.          Fast Ends — 5:33 p.m.</p>
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