

The Shul

at the Lubavitch Center

6701 Old Pimlico Road
Baltimore, MD 21209

www.chabadshul.org



December 14, 2024

VaYishlach

13 Kislev, 5785

The Kiss

Twenty years after fleeing to Charan to escape the wrath of his brother Esau, Jacob headed back to Israel. The Torah describes in great detail how Jacob, with much trepidation, prepared for the meeting: he sent gifts to his brother, he prayed and he prepared for battle.

There was a lot at stake at this meeting. Jacob and Esau had very different personalities and embodied very different energies. Esau was a “man of the field,” an energetic hunter who loved the challenge and thrill of trapping game, and who craved sensual pleasures. Jacob, on the other hand, was a man who strived to “dwell in tents,” immersed in study and in quest of enlightenment, far removed from the chaos of the natural world.

Isaac hoped to elevate Esau’s energy and passion by blessing Esau. Rebecca understood that blessing Esau with abundant material success would not elevate him to a higher spiritual plane, but rather, it would cement Esau’s investment in a materialistic lifestyle. Rebecca understood that only if Jacob would receive the blessing of material success would Esau be elevated and influenced. For only Jacob’s intense spirituality had the power to inspire Esau, by demonstrating how the material blessings could serve the spiritual and the transcendent.



Twenty years after Jacob stole the blessing, he was about to meet Esau once more. There was much at stake, not only for Jacob and his family, but for all of the cosmos. Would the brothers embrace? Would Esau’s energy and materialistic desires reconcile with Jacob’s spirituality? Or would Esau and Jacob, matter and spirit, be at war forever?

The moment finally arrived. The Torah describes the fateful meeting between the brothers: “And Esau ran toward him and embraced him, and he fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.”

To our great surprise, and perhaps to the great surprise of the brothers themselves, both Jacob and Esau understood their need for one another. They discovered deep feelings toward one another. They realized that they shared the same source and the same father.

The brothers then parted ways. The bond of love and compassion that had been established between them was still fragile. They realized that in order for them to settle together in harmony, more work would be required. Only in the Messianic era will the world experience the wholeness of the restored relationship between Esau and Jacob, between matter and spirit, between body and soul.

Until then, it is up to us to foster this relationship, to nurture it and allow it to prosper and grow.

Looking back at Esau’s fateful kiss that reestablished the bond with Jacob, Rashi, quoting the Midrash, comments:

“And kissed him” (וישקהוּ): Dots are placed above the letters of this word. There is controversy concerning this matter in a Baraita ... Some interpret the dots to mean that he did not kiss him wholeheartedly. Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai said: It is a well-known tradition that Esau hated Jacob, but his compassion was moved at that time, and he kissed him wholeheartedly.

These two opinions represent two stages in the fusion of the material and spiritual. At first, the bond is not wholehearted. The materialistic part of us would prefer to live a life unburdened by the discipline of spirituality and meaning. The selfish part of us would prefer to push back and reject the search for meaning. The first step is to create a kiss, an embrace, that is not yet wholehearted. Eventually, over time, and with practice, the bond, the kiss, will become wholehearted. For the material itself will come to realize the beauty of harmony.

(by Menachem Feldman from www.chabad.com/)

Jewish History

Passing of Maggid (1772)

Rabbi DovBer, known as "The Maggid of Mezeritch", was the disciple of, and successor to, the founder of Chassidism, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov. Rabbi DovBer led the Chassidic movement from 1761 until his passing on Kislev 19, 1772.

Liberation of R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1798)

On the 19th of Kislev of the year 5559 from creation (1798), Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi – a leading disciple of Rabbi DovBer of Mezeritch (see previous entry) and the founder of Chabad Chassidism – was released from his imprisonment in the Peter-Paul fortress in Petersburg, where he was held for 53 days on charges that his teachings threatened the imperial authority of the Czar. More than a personal liberation, this was a watershed event in the history of Chassidism heralding a new era in the revelation of the "inner soul" of Torah, and is celebrated to this day as "The Rosh Hashanah of Chassidism."

(from www.chabad.com/)



The Shul has two Sifrei Torah that are undergoing restoration. Also, The Shul's HVAC system is over 25 years old, has failed twice last summer, and is on its last half-of-leg.

The cost of these two projects is approximately \$46,000.

Please donate to these projects as best as you can. You may send a check to the Shul, or give your donation directly to the Rav or to Michael Frank – Shul Treasurer.

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.



'The Rav's Friday Night Hashkafa Q&A Shiur for Men'
will take place **Friday night – December 20nd**
at 8:00 p.m. and will be held at
the home of **Mr. Rafi and Mrs. Mikki Wassner**,
at 2308 Winterwood Road. (Down Smith Ave. Left on Pebble Brook – 1 block past Edenvale.
Far-right corner of Pebble Brook and Winterwood.)
Questions can be submitted in advance to rabbikaplan@chabadmd.com.

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 12/13 – 12 Kislev

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Candles — 4:25 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:25 p.m.

Shabbat, 12/14 – 13 Kislev

Shacharit – 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:38 a.m.
Minchah — 4:15 p.m.
Shiur — after Minchah
Shkiah — 4:44 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 5:28 p.m.

Sunday, 12/15 – 14 Kislev

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Minchah / Maariv — 4:30 p.m.

Monday, 12/16 – 15 Kislev

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, 12/17 – 16 Kislev

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m..
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 12/18 – 17 Kislev

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.
Tanya Shiur: 2nd part of Tanya Shaar HaYichud
V'Emunah which deals w/the nature of creation and
the unity of Hashem — 8:00 p.m.

Thursday, 12/19 – 18 Kislev

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Friday, 12/20 – 19 Kislev

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Candles — 4:28 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.