

## Parshah in a Nutshell

Deuteronomy 26:1–29:8

Moses instructs the people of Israel: When you enter the land that G-d is giving to you as your eternal heritage, and you settle it and cultivate it, bring the first-ripened fruits (bikkurim) of your orchard to the Holy Temple, and declare your gratitude for all that G-d has done for you.

Our Parshah also includes the laws of the tithes given to the Levites and to the poor, and detailed instructions on how to proclaim the blessings and the curses on Mount Gerizim and Mount Eival—as discussed in the beginning of the Parshah of Re'eh. Moses reminds the people that they are G-d's chosen people, and that they, in turn, have chosen G-d.

The latter part of Ki Tavo consists of the Tochachah ("Rebuke"). After listing the blessings with which G-d will reward the people when they follow the laws of the Torah, Moses gives a long, harsh account of the bad things—illness, famine, poverty and exile—that shall befall them if they abandon G-d's commandments.

Moses concludes by telling the people that only today, forty years after their birth as a people, have they attained "a heart to know, eyes to see and ears to hear." ❖

### Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

*Adult education:*

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

*Youth Outreach:*

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

## Shabbos Schedule

### Parshas Ki Savo

#### Erev Shabbos – Aug. 31, 2018

Candle Lighting ..... 7:13 pm  
Mincha ..... 7:15 pm

#### Shabbos – Sep. 1, 2018

Shacharis ..... 9:30 am\*  
Torah Reading ..... 10:35 am  
Rabbi Neubort's Drasha ..... 11:10 am  
Kiddush ..... 12:10 pm  
Gemara (2-31 Summit Ave). Postponed  
Shalosh Seudos and Shiur ..... 6:15 pm  
Mincha ..... 7:15 pm  
Rabbi's Drasha ..... 7:35 pm  
Shabbos Ends ..... 8:11 pm

*\*Latest morning Shema is now 9:37 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

#### Weekday Schedule

##### Minyan

Slichos ..... 5:55 pm  
Shacharis ..... 6:15 am  
Mincha ..... 1:45 pm  
Maariv ..... 9:15 pm

##### Classes

Chassidus, Mon-Fri ..... 5:55 am  
Halachah, Mon-Fri ..... 1:40 pm  
Torah Studies ..... Mon. 7-8:00 pm  
Tuesday Talmud ..... 9:30-10:00 pm

### Kiddush

This week's kiddush is sponsored by the Shul.

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### Thank You to:

**Avi Lebovic for reading the Torah**

**Volunteers who help prepare, serve, and clean up Kiddush and Shalosh Seudos**

### Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, September 1  
Daylight Saving Time

Earliest Tallis ..... 5:25 AM  
Latest Morning Shema ..... 9:37 AM  
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) ... 1:30 PM  
Plag Hamincha ..... 6:11 PM  
Earliest Evening Shema ..... 7:58 PM

**Good Shabbos  
to all!**



## Chassidic Masters

*The 98 curses of the Rebuke prompt the question: Does G-d really “punish” us for our misdeeds, like a parent at his wits’ end as to what to do with a troublemaking child? Or is there some deeper current that moves beneath the tides of pain and suffering that sweep our world?*

## The Evolution of Evil

*By Yaakov Brawer*

*All affairs of this world are severe and evil, and wicked men prevail . . .” (Tanya, part 1, ch. 6)*

No one who is even minimally acquainted with world history, and marginally aware of current events, is likely to take issue with this assertion by the chassidic master Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi. Its stark accuracy underlies one of the most disturbing questions in the annals of religious thought. Why should, and how could, the world be this way? The cruelty, violence and pain that permeate earthly life present no difficulty at all for atheists, nihilists or pagans. Anyone else, however, must square such a world with a loving, merciful, just, all-wise Creator.

This most distressing and demanding challenge to religious faith is constantly nurtured by a seemingly endless progression of individual suffering and horrendous historical upheavals. It is the subject of an entire book of scripture, Job; more recently, it has been assigned its own special title, “theodicy,”

reflecting its pivotal status in modern religious philosophy.

For most of us, however, this classic quandary usually assumes a somewhat more prosaic form. Why do bad things happen to good people? Where was G-d during the Crusades, the Holocaust, the Hebron pogrom, etc.? How could G-d allow the Black Plague to happen? How can G-d tolerate, much less sustain, the likes of Hitler or Stalin?

There are no answers to these questions, and misguided attempts at explaining them away invariably result in embarrassed retreats, waffling, and covering oneself with obvious platitudes regarding G-d’s inscrutability. The subject is simply beyond us, and the questions are best left alone.

Chassidic teaching, however, does not leave them alone. Since the Torah is the foundation of all of existence, its inner facet, Chassidism, has the power to reveal G-dly purpose and grace within life’s harshest realities. There are indeed no ultimate “answers.” Chassidism, however, does not offer answers, but rather insights that recast the questions in a broader, more sophisticated context, and that reveal layers of meaning in life’s long chain of seemingly random insults.

### Brilliant Darkness

The question of earthly afflictions encompasses two dimensions: 1) the source and root of suffering, and 2) the form that suffering actually assumes in mundane life.

We can acquire insight into the first of these by examining the first blessing that introduces the morning recital of the Shema. The prayer blesses G-d “who forms light and creates darkness, who makes peace and creates all things.” The Hebrew word used here for “forms” is *yotzer*, and that for “creates” is *borei*. These two verbs allude to two specific stages, or spiritual worlds, in the chain of cause-and-effect that extends downward from the essence of divinity to culminate in the physical universe in which we live.

The verb *borei* refers to the world of *Beriah* (“creation”), whereas *yotzer* denotes the world of *Yetzirah* (“formation”). The world of *Beriah* is “higher” than that of *Yetzirah*, which is to say that it precedes *Yetzirah* in the sequential process of divine emanation, and is thus closer to the divine source, the *or ein sof* or “infinite light.” Furthermore, in the descent from *Beriah* to *Yetzirah*, the divine creative force or “light” is condensed, restricted and obscured, such that the light, or “soul,” of *Yetzirah* is only a dim reflection of that of *Beriah*.

*Beriah* is thus a lofty world of dazzling illumination, compared to which lowly *Yetzirah* is relatively nondescript. Why then, in the above blessing, is *Yetzirah* characterized by light, whereas *Beriah* is associated with darkness?

The question is best addressed through an analogy:

## **Chassidic Masters** (continued from previous page)

Newly minted academics often fall into a classic trap when they first begin to teach. They are determined to deliver lectures of such brilliance, profundity and eloquence that they will merit the adulation of their students, the admiration and recognition of their department chair, and the humble awe of their older colleagues. The outcome, of course is inevitably something else. They are indeed so brilliant, profound and eloquent that nobody can understand them, and they end up talking to themselves. The lectures are too deep and too densely packed with difficult material and advanced concepts. In short, the light is too abundant and too intense. Had the lecturer spoken in Swahili or remained silent altogether, it would have been all the same to the students, since they grasped nothing in any case. Thus, although there has truly been a great revelation of light, from the students' viewpoint there is nothing but darkness.

Similarly, the light of Beriah is so intense that it exceeds the capacities (the "vessels" in Kabbalistic-Chassidic terminology) of the lower realms to receive it, and it is therefore perceived as an absence of light—which is to say, darkness. In the transition from Beriah to Yetzirah, however, the light is reduced and veiled to the extent that it can be captured by the diminutive vessels of Yetzirah

and thus recognized and appreciated as illumination.

The inference to be drawn from this is that life's events that are rooted in the highest levels of divine beneficence necessarily transcend the capabilities of the created intellect, and are thus, most often, interpreted as an absence of good. Revealed good of a far lesser order, however, is enthusiastically embraced and mistakenly valued as the ultimate expression of divine kindness.

### **Light and Vessels**

Consider a parent who slaps the wrist of an eight-month-old child about to insert his finger in an electric socket. The slap is a form of communication. The parent wishes to convey to the child information essential to its very life, namely that the socket is charged with electricity of sufficient voltage to kill him should he succeed in inserting his finger. The problem is that this information or "light" infinitely transcends the intellectual capacities of the child. Eight-month-old children are incapable of relating to such advanced concepts as electricity, voltage or death.

In the case of an adult, the conceptual "light"—i.e., the information that a potential deadly electric shock awaits anyone who sticks his finger in a socket—is grasped, internalized and appreciated by the intellect. This assimilation of the light within the intellectual "vessels" of the mind elicits an appropriate emotional

response, alarm, which in turn evokes a determination to act. The end result is that the finger is withdrawn from the source of danger, and it is to this end that the entire process was initiated.

The mind of the child, however, can not absorb the "light," so that the communication necessary to remove him from harm must bypass his insufficient intellectual and emotional faculties and simply activate a withdrawal from the socket. Although, in this regard, the slap is most effective, the "skipped steps" result in an unbridgeable gap between the slap and the light that motivated it. Hence, despite the fact that the slap is literally a gift of life that originates in the highest level of parental love, the child experiences only the absence of light and interprets the slap as random, meaningless suffering.

These and similar analogies help us to appreciate that the afflictions which we necessarily experience as evil and harsh are, in fact, rooted in the most sublime level of divine wisdom and love.

However, while this line of inquiry sheds some light on the origin of earthly anguish, it does not address the enormous disparity between the lofty G-dly source of suffering and the dreadful, appalling forms that it assumes in this world. In the analogy above, for example, it is the parent him- or herself who administers the slap to the child.

## **Chassidic Masters** **(continued from previous page)**

Despite the inexplicable suffering, the child knows intuitively that the slap, delivered by his loving parent, does not express alienation or hostility; indeed, the parent comforts the child and wipes away the tears. In our case, however, it is nigh-on impossible to discern the hand of our loving Father in the strikes that we receive through the agency of such vile, satanic creatures as Stalin, Hitler, etc. The forces and circumstances that afflict us seem to have a life of their own.

### **Chessed and Gevurah**

The source of all mundane tribulations is the divine attribute of gevurah.

Gevurah, translated as strength, justice or severity, is one of the ten sefirot (attributes or faculties) through which the Almighty interacts with creation. As a particular expression of G-dliness, gevurah represents perfect goodness just as do the other sefirot such as wisdom, kindness and mercy. Contrary to our intuition, gevurah is as much an expression of G-d's love as is chessed ("kindness"). Indeed, it is gevurah that complements and perfects chessed.

However, as manifestations of gevurah extend downward through successively lower levels of creation, they assume the properties of the worlds through which they descend, and thus become progressively distorted and coarsened.

Ultimately, the influence of the divine attribute of gevurah is invested within, and gives rise to, what the Kabbalists call gevurot kashot—"harsh severities"—a medium in which divinity is concealed so deeply as to be completely unrecognizable. The cruel evils of this world, therefore, seem totally detached from any vestige of G-dly purpose, and they appear to exist and to function independently.

This apparent dissociation of worldly afflictions from their supernal source can be appreciated, to some extent, by means of an analogy. Consider a rabbinic court of wise and compassionate judges before whom stands an individual guilty of some heinous offense. The judges understand that in order to rectify the sin and to restore the spiritual integrity of the sinner's soul, lashes are required.

The judges abhor inflicting pain on anyone. Moreover, being extremely wise and learned, they could undoubtedly find a technicality on which to base an acquittal, thus saving the sinner from physical punishment and themselves from the anguish of causing physical suffering to another human. The judges realize, however, that a man's spiritual life is at stake, and their love and compassion motivate them to disregard their own feelings and to save the sinning soul before them by ordering lashes.

Thus far there is only love, compassion and understanding. It is not, however, the judges, but rather a court-appointed official who carries out the sentence.

This official was not privy to the judges' deliberations, and he knows nothing of the love, compassion and understanding which is the source and cause of the punishment. His job is to administer lashes, and he is only interested in the technical performance of his job. At this stage of the procedure, the judges are no longer a reality. The power and authority to dispense lashes, once the process has been initiated, falls to the official, who neither knows nor cares why he has been ordered to lash this particular individual.

In truth, the love and wisdom of the judges underlies the entire exercise. However, the traits that qualify men as judges render them uniquely unsuitable to administer lashes. Indeed, for the lashes to be effective and to thus achieve the desired result, namely the cleansing of a soul, they must be given by someone unimpeded by the refined sensibilities and the empathetic nature required to be a judge. Thus the ideal deputy through whom judges' prescription can be implemented is someone very different from the judges themselves.

Similarly, the divine attribute of gevurah, which is a particular manifestation of G-d's love and concern, of necessity appears removed from the very afflictions that it engenders. Were the hand of G-d perceivable in each of our travails, the authenticity of the ordeal would dissipate and our free will would be compromised, thus precluding the fierce inner struggle required for our intended spiritual rectification and growth.

## **Chassidic Masters** (continued from previous page)

In short, there could be no transforming spiritual crisis, and subsequently, no redemptive possibilities within the experience.

Thus, the earthly agents of suffering serve the crucial purpose of concealing the divine compassion at the core of the tribulations. In reality, however, they are nothing more than instruments of divine will, and they have no independent authority or autonomous existence.

### **Body and Soul**

This is all very fine. There remains, however, one serious problem. In the analogies presented above, the subjects survive and benefit from their suffering. The child, saved from electrocution, can now safely grow up to lead a productive life. The erstwhile transgressor, relieved of the burden of sin, is transformed into an upstanding, valuable member of society.

But what about those who do not survive the cure? How can Jews killed by Hitler, Arafat or the Black Plague possibly profit from the experience?

The answer is quite simple: The premise on which the question is based is incorrect. No Jews died, nor ever will die. The G-dly soul, which is the reality of a Jew, is immortal. Only the soul's body, which is to say, the Jew's circumstances, are subject to change.

The soul is capable of existing on a myriad of levels (this world, the Lower Garden of Eden, the Higher Garden of Eden, etc.). However, the soul itself, as an extension of pure G-dliness, is eternal and immutable. As far as the soul is concerned, the changing circumstances signify progressively loftier manifestations of its own essence.

Furthermore, a Jew's departure from this world is only temporary. The culmination of the soul's quest for ultimate self-realization is techiyat hamaitim, the resurrection of the dead.

Thus "death" is simply one of the many varieties of ephemeral earthly afflictions that a soul experiences in order to achieve elevation, perfection and ultimate joy

This is already abundantly apparent to those Jews who are, at present, unencumbered by a body. Although those of us currently residing in the physical world may have to wrestle with the problem of earthly suffering, souls see that no evil descends from on high. May the time soon arrive when this great truth is self-evident. ❖

### **Help make a Minyan once a Year – or once in a while in Paterson**

If you map out 510 East 27th Street/Corner of 12th Ave in Paterson it's really not that far from Fair Lawn or Elmwood Park. Visitors and Minyan-makers find it's worth the Shlep, even if you're just looking for a good Chulent. But most importantly, the seniors at Federation Apartments look forward to each Minyan! Here are upcoming opportunities to do a Mitzvah:

Sept. 1, Parshat Ki Savo -- Kiddush in honor of Ba'al Koreh Phil Kestenbuam

Rosh Hashanah Schedule: Monday, September 10 & Tuesday, September 11

Yom Kippur Schedule: Tuesday, September 18th 7:30p.m. Kol Nidre Services followed by Ma'ariv

Wednesday, September 19 – begin at 9:00a.m. (Yizkor approximately 11am)

Small groups walk from the Morlot and Broadway bridges at approx. 8:40. For more info, email: JerrySchranz@gmail.com or visit Paterson Shul on Facebook. ❖

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**Friendship Walk and Celebration**  
**Sunday, September 16, Votee Park, Teaneck**

**10:00 am Registration**  
**10:30 am Walk 11:00 am Fair**  
**[www.NJFriendshipWalk.com](http://www.NJFriendshipWalk.com)**

## Fair Lawn Orthodox Jewish Community Events

**Sept. 1** – Pre-Selichot Kumzitz, featuring music by Jon Lamm, Laizer Albert, & Baruch Harris. Light refreshments will be served. Darchei Noam, 11:30 PM to 12:56 AM. For more info, go to Kumzitz.  
<https://www.darcheinoam.com/event/5779/kumzitz>

**Sept. 4** – Love in the Time of Nach: Exploring Relationships in Neviim and Ketuvim, a women-only series of shiurim to be given by Rebetzin Chana Shestack. An Ahavat Achim series, to take place at the Shestack residence, 18-19 Saddle River Rd., Tuesday nights, 8:15 – 9:15 PM.

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### ***Embroidery Exhibition***

Needle Artist, Kay Fialkoff, will exhibit works on paper and fabric, featuring a series of embroidery masterworks titled *Prayers for the Earth*, at the Pine Gallery in the Maurice M. Pine Library in Fair Lawn. The address is [10-10 Fair Lawn Avenue](#).

The opening reception is Sunday, November 4, 2018, 2:30- 4:30 p.m. The exhibition will run through the end of December. Guided tours are available by appointment.

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## Haftorah in a Nutshell

*Isaiah 60:1-22*

This week's haftorah is the sixth of a series of seven "Haftarot of Consolation." These seven haftarot commence on the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av and continue until Rosh Hashanah.

In glowing terms the prophet recounts descriptions of what will unfold during the Redemption. Beginning with the resurrection of the dead and the ingathering of the exiles, continuing with the joy and abundance the Jewish people will then experience, as well as the gifts that will be brought to G-d from all of the nations of the world.

Finally, the Jewish nation will no longer be despised and derided, there will no longer be violence nor mourning, and G-d will shine His everlasting light on His people. ❖

### **Hayom Yom...**

**21 Elul**

*The Rebbe writes:*

Our first father, Avraham, as a result of his avoda with self-sacrifice to make G-d - the one G-d - widely known among all mankind, merited to bequeath to his descendants (to the end of all generations) pure faith in G-d and His Torah. Hence, every Jewish man and woman has the power and fortitude to offer his life for the holy Torah

### **Join us for the High Holidays, where all Jews feel at home.**

Our contemporary approach to tradition will leave you feeling uplifted and inspired.

The Days of Awe are rapidly approaching; now is the time to reserve (and pay for) your seats.

- Friendly Atmosphere
- All announcements and Sermons are in English
- Hebrew-English Prayer-Books

Seating is limited and will be sold on a first-come-first-served basis.

If you cannot afford to purchase a seat, please contact Rabbi

Neubort <https://www.flchabad.com/congregation/high-holidays/seating/>

ב"ה  
 נמלאה הארץ דעה אתה ה'  
 ANSHEI LUBAVITCH  
**BEIS MIDRASH**  
 בית מדרש לחסידות  
**L'CHASSIDUS**

**שיעורי חסידות • Shiurim**



**STUDY CHASSIDUS!**

Currently learning  
 יום טוב של ראש השנה (תרנ"ט)  
**DIVINE SPEECH**  
 by the Rebbe Rashab  
**Monday-Friday 5:55-6:10 AM**

**שיעורי הלכה • Halachah**

*Explore the Ins-and-Outs of Prayer*  
**Hilchos Tefillah**..... 1:40-1:45 PM  
 Monday-Thursday

**שיעורי • Tuesday Talmud**

גמרא  
**Tractate Sukkah**.....9:30-10:00 PM

**WANT TO LISTEN TO A CLASS ON-THE-GO?**  
 Text your WhatsApp number to 201-362-2712  
 to join the Torah Classes @ Anshei Group

**Shiur & Shalosh Seudos**

Sponsored by  
**Mr. Ira Frankel**

לעילוי נשמת  
 ידידיה חיים בן שלמה פנחס הלוי ע"ה  
 גאלדע בת אברהם יצחק אלטר ע"ה  
 יהושע העשיל בן אברהם מרדכי ע"ה  
 אסתר בת יעקב דוד ע"ה  
 ת.נ.צ.ב.ה.

**How to Cook Wine So  
 Jews Can Dine**

*Yayin Nesech and Yayin Mevushal*  
 Shabbos afternoon, 6:15 pm  
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**MONDAY EVENING TORAH STUDIES**

7:00-8:00 PM • Maariv at 9:15

September 3, 2018

**THE NEED TO BE NEEDY**

*Complacency is the Graveyard of Growth*

As we turn our eyes to a new year, the liturgy and practices of Rosh Hashanah emphasize time and again how needy, how humble, and how downtrodden we are. Why the depression? The story of an emigrating Babylonian sage seeking new heights gives us a lot of food for thought about our position in life—and what it takes to catapult to ever greater peaks.

September 17, 2018

**JEWS IN SHOES**

*Grounded Below, Turned Above*

Of course we need shoes. It's no fun walking barefoot over rocks or around the kitchen after that glass pitcher shatters. Shoes are just a part of life. But all of a sudden, when it comes to holy days, places, and times, shoes are literally flying off our feet. What's behind these mandated shoe removals?

**Pre-Selichos**

**Farbrengen**

Brighten your Selichos with  
 Chassidic inspiration and  
 song

**Motzaei Shabbos**

11:30 pm

Sponsored by

**Mr. Marc Zahrnest**

In honor of his birthday

**Selichos at 12:55 am**



**Wrestling with  
 Faith**

**Beginning October 21**

Most people, even the most devout, struggle with issues about God. We sit in the synagogue during the High Holidays and affirm the essentials of Judaism in theory, but when it comes to trusting God with our daily lives, we share a secret, painful fear that God isn't really looking out for us.

Many have been brought up under the assumption that mainstream science is incompatible with genuine Jewish faith—so when they see compelling evidence for biological evolution, for example, they feel forced to choose between science and their faith.

Wrestling with Faith was created for tackling questions like these, the “big issues” that keep people from intimate faith with God. In Wrestling with Faith, we acknowledge the often-unspoken doubts and questions that all people share—as we share their invitation for us to dig deeper for the answers.

In Wrestling with Faith, JLI offers a steady and inspiring voice to help us reaffirm and understand our faith in a world where nothing seems solid or permanent. Drawing upon 3,000 years of Jewish knowledge, as well as a storehouse of literary, psychological, and theological insights, the course examines the fears and doubts that challenge us. It is in these struggles to find meaning that the course lays out a path for belief in a world struggling to find faith; but perhaps more important, it helps us find our own rhythm within which to walk that path.

- Lesson 1** – Where's the evidence?
  - Lesson 2** – Does G-d really care?
  - Lesson 3** – Why do some Jewish practices seem primitive?
  - Lesson 4** – Why would a good G-d do bad stuff?
  - Lesson 5** – Do religious beliefs contradict scientific discoveries?
  - Lesson 6** – How can I enjoy a close relationship with G-d?
- FIND OUT MORE** by calling 201.362.2712. or email: [RabbiBergstein@FLChabad.com](mailto:RabbiBergstein@FLChabad.com)