

intricacies of a project make you lose sight of the goal you are trying to achieve at the end of the day.

A good question to ask is not “How am I doing?” but, rather, “What am I doing?” In other words, be focused on what you are trying to achieve. This is more vital in life than in a passing business project that is here today and gone tomorrow. The myriads of distractions life has to offer should not confuse you. You are here to perform.

Says the *Mesillat Yesharim*: “A person must have a clear picture of his or her duty in this world.” People are born to make the world a better place than it was on their birth days. They can create many novel products that make life easier for others. They can start organizations that will help hundreds, and eventually thousands, of individuals. They can achieve success by self-improvement and growth in their adherence to the instructions of the Torah. They can also change the world by really helping even one other person see the light.

Ask yourself, “What am I doing here?” – and you will find a way to reach the purpose for which you were created. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

### Spiritual Organs

“If a person eats a piece of bread, the body’s digestive system distributes the nourishment throughout the body. Not only that, the digestive system transforms that piece of bread into thousands of new substances that are entirely different from the original. Those substances are then separated into miniscule packages and delivered by the bloodstream to those organs that need them.”

We all need strengthening in an area of spirituality. Prayers are caught by the heavens, causing Hashem to deliver it to the Spiritual Organs that require the most nourishment. It could be faith, gratitude, appreciation, prayer etc... (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller’s teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

### Customer Service

The day of my good friend’s wedding arrived, and a bunch of us, his *chevrah* from *yeshivah*, went together to the wedding. Although I danced with my heart full of joy, something was nagging at me. I kept remembering the waiter at our table. His courteous, efficient service contrasted with his sorry-looking appearance. His hair was poorly cut, and his old clothes didn’t fit right, either. His teeth were crooked – I think one or two were missing. The thing that bothered me particularly was that he looked about the same age as my friends and I were. I really felt bad for him.

The festivities were drawing to a close, and the waiters were clearing and folding the tables. I saw a man dressed in a nice suit walking around giving the waiters instructions. I figured he was the manager of the hall or the caterer, and it occurred to me that telling the boss how pleased I was with my waiter’s service might help the waiter. Who knows, I thought, maybe the boss will give him a raise.

I went over to the man in the suit and, pointing to my table, I told him that my waiter had provided excellent service. The man turned very serious and pulled me aside. “Please tell me the truth about the waiter, because my impression is that he’s slow and inefficient. In fact, I was planning to fire him tomorrow.”

You can imagine how I felt. “Believe me,” I answered, “I’m not a friend of his, and not a neighbor or a cousin. This is the first time I’ve ever seen him, and I don’t owe him a thing. He did an excellent job tonight, and I just wanted to tell you that.”

The man looked me over, trying to decide if I was telling the truth. Finally he said, “You are truly a messenger from Above. If not for you, he would have been out of a job tomorrow.” (When the Time is Right)

*The Lorraine Gammal A"H Edition*

לְעִילּוֹי נִשְׁמַת לְאָה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד

## **Congregation Magen Abraham**

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444

West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764

(732) 870-2225



שַׁבָּת כִּי־תָבוֹא \* SHABBAT KITABO

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 60:1-22

**SEPTEMBER 20-21, 2018 21 ELUL 5778**

Friday Shir Hashirim/Minhah: <b>6:30 pm</b>	Shaharit: <b>5:42, 6:40, 8:10, 8:45, 9:00</b>
Candlelighting: <b>6:39 pm</b>	Morning Shema by: <b>9:00 am</b>
Evening Shema after: <b>7:37 pm</b>	Minhah Gedolah: <b>1:30 pm</b>
	Shabbat Classes: <b>5:15 pm</b>
	Shabbat Minhah: <b>6:15 pm</b>
	Shabbat Ends: <b>7:35 pm (R"Y 8:07 pm)</b>
	Weekday Minhah: <b>4:05, 6:30 pm</b>

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

**This bulletin is dedicated by the Betesh family**

**in loving memory of Nat Betesh** לְעִילּוֹי נִשְׁמַת נָתָן בֶּן שָׂרָה

**Mabrook to Lenny & Brooke Selama on the marriage of their son, Jack, to Arlette Nsiri.**

### A Message from our Rabbi

“תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־עַבַּדְתָּ אֶת־ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְטוֹב לֵבָב מִרַב כָּל”  
“...Because you did not serve Hashem your G-d with joy and goodness of the heart.” (Debarim 28:47)

The verse describes how our failing to serve Hashem with joy will bring terrible anguish on the Jewish people. Why is this so important? The answer is that sometimes a person is in a stressful or difficult situation. That situation that he is in is the will of the Creator. The person sometimes fails to realize that this is the will of Hashem and that it is, by definition, a good situation. Everything from Hashem is good; it might be difficult but it is not bad. He should have joy just for the knowledge that we live through this situation and thereby are fulfilling the will of the Almighty.

Rabbi Moshe Kormornick tells a true story that illustrates this concept, that it is truly possible to serve Hashem in every circumstance that we find ourselves in.

Under one of the cruel regimes that imprisoned Jews for practicing their religion, two prominent Rebbes were taken from their *Bet Midrash* and thrown into a prison cell. They shared a small, dark room with only each other and a bucket of waste still full from the previous “tenants” for company. At the sight of his prison cell, one of the Rebbes began to cry, “I’m not crying because we are in jail. I know that Divine

Providence led me here, and everything Hashem does is for the best. I am crying because I have yet to pray *Minhah*, and now that there is a smelly bucket of waste in the cell, I am forbidden to pray. How can I serve Hashem if I can't even pray?"

The other Rebbe smiled and responded, "Just as you serve Hashem by doing His will and praying *Minhah* every day, now you are doing His will by not praying *Minhah*, but you are serving Hashem in just the same way!"

After hearing that, the Rebbe who had not yet prayed rose with tears of joy. He grasped his friend's hands and together they sang and danced around the bucket of waste, ecstatic at the thought of serving Hashem according to His will.

Hearing all the commotion, the prison guards approached the cell and witnessed the bizarre scene of two prominent Rabbis dancing and rejoicing around a bucket of waste. Not wanting the Rebbes to have any kind of pleasure, they stormed the prison cell and removed the bucket, delighted at having deprived the Rebbes of their source of joy. As soon as the guards left, the Rebbe who had not yet prayed turned toward Jerusalem and prayed *Minhah*, once again delighted to serve Hashem in the best possible way! Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

### How Thankful We'd Be

"And he brought us to this place and He gave to us this land flowing with milk and honey...and now I am bringing the first fruit of the land that Hashem has given to me..." (*Debarim* 26:1-10)

The person who brings his *bikurim* - first fruits - to the *Bet Hamikdash* used to make a lengthy declaration, which can be boiled down to one giant word, "GRATITUDE." Little children can define it. Why does the Torah make a formal exercise out of what is fundamental and self-evident?

I was with a group of visiting Yeshiva students at a Shabbat meal seated next to Rabbi Yosef Grossman. He had just offered to pour some seltzer in the empty cup of a boy sitting nearby. The boy held up his hand and declared, "I'm good!"

Rabbi Grossman shared with me an interesting linguistic observation that the old time classic answer to someone offering something used to be "no thank you." Nowadays people say, "I'm good." What is the difference between the two expressions? One acknowledges a giver and the other is all about the recipient.

Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler writes that at any point a person is either a giver or a taker. Either the selfish animal soul is dominating and animating his actions, or his G-dly soul which can see well beyond itself. It's hard to tell from the outside which is active. A person can be giving in a given situation and looking for something in return, and therefore his act is really a self-involved deed. On the other hand a person can be receiving something and performing a selfless act of giving. How so?

Giving someone else a chance to give to you is also an act of giving. Rav Dessler asks how someone who finds themselves in a receiving mode can express their G-dly desire to give? He answers that the sign of a giver in a receiving situation is, that they seek ways to express their gratitude.

David *HaMelech* asked rhetorically, "How can I repay You Hashem for all You have done for me!?" There is no concrete answer to that question. Essentially it's a posture of gratitude. The Alter from Kelm, Simcha Zissel adds rocket fuel to this equation. Just in case what Hashem has done for us personally is not enough, he sees in this "all" You have done for me, a broader perspective. The *Mishnah* in *Sanhedrin* states, "A person has an obligation to say that the whole world was created **for me!**" So when King David said these words and when we echo his sentiments we can have in

mind that the entirety of creation large and small, ancient and modern- **all** was for made **for me**. That deepens the debt of gratitude endlessly.

Rabbi Miller advised that in that last *Minhah* of the year, right before the first *Arbit* of the New Year on Rosh Hashanah it is well worthwhile to thank Hashem for what He has given you this year before expecting more the next year. I found this to be an electrifying experience the last few years I tried, and it only makes perfect sense. My daughter shared with me a strong motivational line, "What if you woke up tomorrow with only those things you thanked Hashem for today?" Let us now expand that. "What if you woke up next year with only those things you thanked Hashem for this year." Not one of us would say, "I'm good!" Wow - how thankful we'd be!? (Rabbi Label Lam)

### Forever and Ever

There is a very interesting comment from the *Maharil* Diskin on the *pasuk* "All these curses will come upon you and pursue you and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you will not have listened to the voice of Hashem, your G-d, to observe His commandments and His decrees that He commanded you." [*Debarim* 28:45] The next *pasuk* continues: "They will be in you as a sign and as a wonder, and in your offspring, forever and ever." [ibid. 28:46]

The *Maharal* Diskin is taken aback by the apparently shocking implication of this curse – a curse which is destined to last "forever and ever." The *Maharal* Diskin says it is not to be understood as the words seem to literally mean - that the curses will stay with our offspring forever. The *pasuk* is not predicting the demise of *Klal Yisrael*. Rather, it must be read in conjunction with the following *pasuk*. It means that the curses which come upon us will be due to the fact that we did not keep the Torah in a meaningful way such that the commandments will remain with our offspring forever.

The *misvot* we do are supposed to make an impression on our children. If we see that they are not making a positive impression on our children and wish to know why not, we need to look no further than the next *pasuk*: It is "because you did not serve Hashem, your G-d, with gladness and with goodness of heart, out of an abundance of everything (*b'simchah u'btov lev, m'rov kol*)." *Misvot* need to be performed with joy and enthusiasm. In this way, our children will be caught up in our passion and emotion and realize how important it is for them to make *misvot* part of their own lives as well. When our children see what a Pesah means to us and what a Succot means to us and they see how meaningful they are to our lives, then their observance of the commandments will be "a sign and a wonder forever and ever" as well.

When our *misvah* performance does not make that impression on our children, when we do not worship Hashem in joy, and when we only "go through the motions" of *misvah* observance, our children will not be impressed. Merely "going through the motions" may suffice to keep a person going, but our children will find it to be an empty experience which will not inspire them to continue in our ways. That is what this *pasuk* is saying. If we want *misvot* to make the impression they are supposed to make, they need to be done *b'simchah u'btov lev, m'rov kol*. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

### What Are You Doing?

"Why are you adding that graph to your report?" Sarah asked Rivkah.

"Well, I thought the buyer might want to know about that aspect of our proposal," replied the frazzled, deadline-pressured employee.

"I think it will confuse the issue, and it won't help you sell your plan," replied the well-meaning manager.

Sometimes you can get lost in the details. Too much attention paid to the