The Society for Mishnah Study
Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah

Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah update

Provide eternal merit for those dear to you... through Mishnah study

5770

Mishnas Chayim: Weekly Parshah Study with a Twist


MISHNAS CHAYIM
משנת חיים
MISHNAH ON THE PARSHAH
Parshas Tzav 5769

The weekly Torah portion. A selection from the Mishnah. Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah's mission of providing merit for the souls of those who have passed on. In an unusual combination, CLM has commissioned a scholar of note to produce its weekly *Mishnas Chayim* newsletter, which is distributed in approximately 200 synagogues throughout the United States and Canada, including locations in Baltimore, Cleveland, Dallas, Montreal, Queens, Brooklyn, and Los Angeles. In addition, *Mishnas Chayim* is available free of charge from the Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah website (ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org); it can also be enjoyed as an audio presentation, delivered by Rabbi Mayer Erps, an accomplished public speaker and educator.

Now in its third cycle, each edition of *Mishnas Chayim* presents a Torah thought relating to the weekly Torah portion, which ties into a specific selection from the Mishnah. These fascinating pieces address such diverse topics as "Jewish History through the Eyes of our Sages," "The First Communists," and "Man's Superiority over Heavenly Angels." The pieces have universal appeal and are well received by scholars and laymen alike.

"The concept behind *Mishnas Chayim* is that people are always looking for something to learn or share about the weekly *sedrah*, and the Mishnaic sources are rich with material that can provide new insight into these topics," explains a spokesman from the offices of

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BETTER THAN A SEGULAH

The barbeque party had been a great success, as the backyard clearly attested. One by one, the families began to leave, thanking Bubby and Zaidy for the lovely gathering that had become a family tradition. One by one, the fathers and mothers filed out, holding sleeping infants in their arms and leading yawning toddlers by the hand. Everyone left with arms laden with offspring, gifts and leftover goodies.

Something more potent... that will finally be able to tip the scales in their merit

"Everyone," noted Elisheva in pain, "besides Dena and Yossi." Elisheva reflected on the plight of her eldest daughter, whose smile never left her lips during the lively family gathering, but whose heart must surely have been twisting in pain throughout. "Eleven years of marriage is so long," thought Elisheva, "and we've tried so many things as a *zechus* for them. We need something more than the *Tehillim, shmiras halashon*, and various *segulos* we've done. Something more potent, something powerful that will finally be able to tip the scales in their merit."

Elisheva gathered up the ketchup bottles, leftover pickles and a stack of dirty plates. She entered the house, wearily placed her load on the table and sank heavily into the couch. Absentmindedly, she picked up the Jewish periodical she had received in the mail that day. Flipping through the pages, the answer to her unspoken question nearly danced out at her: "Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah, Better Than a *Segulah*."

What could be more powerful than the merit of *limud haTorah* itself?

For the first time in a long time, Elisheva felt hope stirring within her. With new energy she got up and went to look for her husband. They had a lot to discuss.

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Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah
40 East Thirteenth Street
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A Practical Guide to Caring for our Departed Loved Ones

In our day of prolific publications, those grappling with loss have no dearth of sources to turn to for guidance. Some provide comfort and encouragement for those seeking solace. Some address the *halachic* concerns with which a mourner is confronted. And yet, Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah, in collaboration with Judaica Press, saw the need for another kind of publication. And so was born a book in a category all its own: *The Neshamah Should Have an Aliyah* by Rabbi Tzvi Hebel.

While the separation of death can be devastating and overwhelming, this groundbreaking book provides readers with the comfort that we *can* remain connected to those who are no longer in this world with us. And more – there is a great deal that we can do here to benefit our dear ones in the Next World.

"The book focuses on a certain endeavor, an endeavor whose benefits are so multi-faceted and far-reaching to all involved. For the living, it is rewarding, comforting, stabilizing, purposeful – and, of course, a tremendous mitzvah. And for the *neshamos*, it is happiness, blessing, and everlasting life," explains Rabbi Hebel.

This is a most appropriate publication from Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah, which has enabled so many to reach out to those who have passed on. The book highlights the reality that while a mourner's grief is very real and very deep, the deceased is actually dealing with his own grief – grief of a very different nature; this grief stems from the difficult experience of judgment and final accounting for his deeds and from the harsh realization that having left this world of physical deeds, he can longer perform *mitzvos* and raise himself through his own actions.

Once we are cognizant of this reality, we can take action and mitigate – even alleviate – the pain of the deceased. The message is crucial and comforting: so long as there are those in this world who are motivated to help, it is never too late for those who have passed on.

"Rabbi Hebel's book touched me in a most profound way; I find myself turning back to it time and again for its sensitive yet practical approach. The greatest comfort at a time of loss is the knowledge that there *is* more we can do," says Mrs. Bonnie Evans of Silver Spring, Maryland.

Rabbi Hebel, an accomplished scholar, takes the reader through the many options and opportunities available to those who hold this connection dear. In his lucid, eloquent manner, Rabbi Hebel presents a most comprehensive and practical guide.

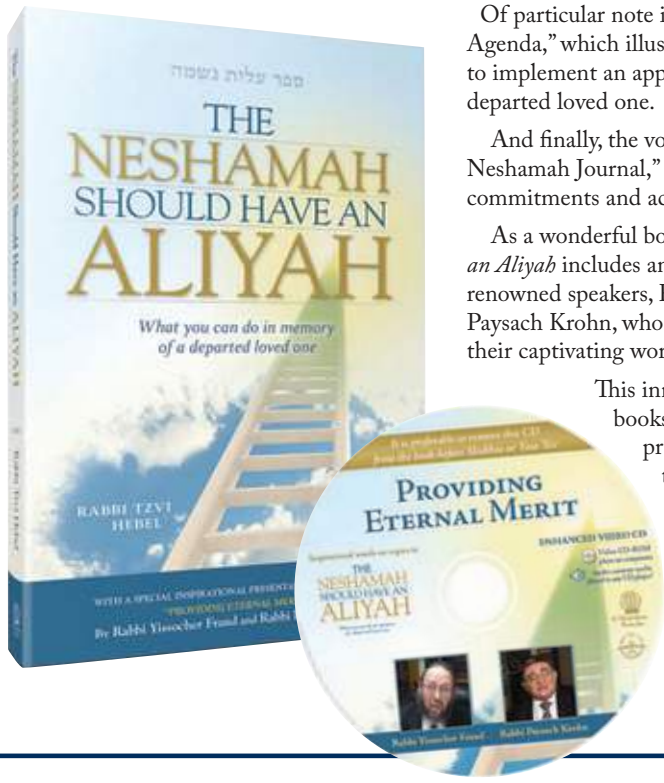
A variety of *aliyah* opportunities are explored:

- Torah learning, in particular, that of Mishnah study;
- The performance of acts of charity and kindness;
- The merits to be attained through prayer – reciting Kaddish, leading the prayers, and more;
- Specific memorials to the deceased;
- Appropriate activities for the day of a *yahrtzeit*.

Each section includes not only explanation of the matter at hand, but also a quick-glance summary, as well as resources to allow for practical implementation of a determined course of action.

"Rabbi Hebel's book touched me in a most profound way"

Also included in this volume is a listing of Mishnah chapters (with English translation and elucidation) for each letter of the *aleph-beis*, to allow for Mishnah study corresponding to a deceased person's Hebrew name.



Of particular note is the book's "Sample Family Meeting Agenda," which illustrates how a family can mobilize to implement an appropriate program in memory of a departed loved one.

And finally, the volume ends with an innovative "Aliyas Neshamah Journal," in which a person can track his commitments and accomplishments.

As a wonderful bonus, *The Neshamah Should Have an Aliyah* includes an audiovisual CD of two world-renowned speakers, Rabbi Yissocher Frand and Rabbi Paysach Krohn, who address the matter at hand with their captivating words.

This innovative addition to every Jewish bookshelf has earned the approbation and praise of prominent Torah scholars in the United States and Israel.

To obtain a copy of *The Neshamah Should Have an Aliyah* visit the Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah website at ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org or call 732-364-7029.



Rabbi Moshe Haikins reciting the Hadran prayer at the siyum sponsored in memory of Rabbi Jacob Joseph

Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah Holds Siyum on Shishah Sidrei Mishnah for Yahrtzeit of Rabbi Jacob Joseph

Thursday, July 16, 2009, the 24th day of the Hebrew month of Tammuz, marked the 107th *yahrtzeit* of New York City's first Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Jacob Joseph, who passed away in the year 1902 at the age of 59. In honor of the *yahrtzeit*, an anonymous donor sponsored the completion of the entire *Shishah Sidrei Mishnah* through Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah's Mishnah Study Program.

The *siyum*, which was followed by a *seudah* (meal), was held at Congregation Yekusiel Mordechai Mishkholtz and was attended by a sizable crowd, including all those who participated in the learning program.

Rabbi Moshe Haikins, Founder and President of Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah, recited the Hadran Prayer, after which he spoke about Rabbi Jacob Joseph, a great Torah scholar for whom RJJ, one of New York's first yeshivahs, was named.

Rabbi Joseph arrived in America in 1888 after being hired for the position of Chief Rabbi by the newly formed Association of American Orthodox Hebrew Congregations. Although he tried to raise the level of religious observance in America, his efforts were met with much opposition and bore little fruit. Rabbi Haikins pointed out that although in many ways Rabbi Jacob Joseph was ahead of his time, the Jewish community today owes him a great deal of gratitude for his groundbreaking efforts toward establishing widespread mitzvah observance in America.

(Yated Ne'eman, July 16, 2009. Reprinted with permission.)

Mishnas Chayim: Weekly Parshah Study with a Twist *(Continued from page 1)*

Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah. "We designed this publication to be accessible to those with less background, and at the same time, still offer something new to those who are well-versed in the commentaries."

Each edition of *Mishnas Chayim* is presented as a separate, double-sided, full color publication. Its easy-to-read and appealing format are the perfect medium for a quick read or to allow for congregants to take it home to share with family and friends. The weekly Torah thoughts offer a potpourri of ideas, something that can always be shared and discussed with the family at the Shabbos table. They are peppered with stories and parables derived from such diverse sources as the Mishnah, Talmud, early commentaries such as Rashi and Rambam, Torah greats of the last generation such as the Chofetz Chayim and the Chazon Ish, and scholars of today. Sources are included in the text of the article for those who wish to do further research on a topic.

"Could I please subscribe to your Mishnas Chayim...?"

Readers' responses vary from comments and questions on the topics presented to the oft-repeated request to be added to our list of subscribers. "Could I please subscribe to your *Mishnas Chayim* bulletin? I've been reading it at the Beth Avraham Yoseph, in Toronto. Please leave more copies; it's a fantastic publication," wrote Mr. Simon Lehman.

Mishnas Chayim also affords readers the opportunity to perform a unique *chesed*: each weekly edition includes the name of a Jew who has passed away with no one to learn Torah on behalf of his or her *neshamah;* by learning the piece, readers earn merit for this person's soul.

Sponsorship of the *Mishnas Chayim* publication is a wonderful way to give the merit of the widespread Torah learning it engenders to the soul of a dear departed one. For more information about sponsorship opportunities, or to bring *Mishnas Chayim* to your *shul*, contact Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah at 732-364-7029 or at ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org.



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Originally founded as a society to help *aveilim* finish *mishnayos* in memory of a loved one, Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah has branched out in innovative ways. "The *zechus* of *limud haTorah* is so great," explains a member of Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah's staff. "And the inspiration behind our new services comes from the observation that if the merit of Torah learning is so beneficial for those who have passed on, why not harness that power for the living as well?"

And so was born the "Times of Challenge" division of Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah. No longer viewed as a service designed solely for Mishnah study for *aveilim*, people all across the globe are realizing the immense merit of direct *limud haTorah* for all sorts of challenging situations in life.

Whether it is good health, a *shidduch*, the blessing of children or financial success that one is seeking, what greater source of *berachah* is there than the eternal source of *berachah* – Torah itself? A *segulah* is wonderful," explains Rabbi Moshe Haikins, Founder and President of Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah, "but when all is said and done, if it doesn't 'work,' what is one left with? However, with this, no matter what, the tremendous merit of Torah learning and supporting Torah scholars remains a *zechus* for the supporter forever."

Indeed, that *zechus* is inestimable. Besides for the actual learning itself, there is also the merit of supporting Torah scholars. Unquestionably, a win-win situation.

For more information and various sponsorship opportunities, contact Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah at 732-364-7029 or at ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org.

Having a daughter who has been in shidduchim for more years than I care to think about, Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah's ad caught my eye; their "Better than a Segulah" campaign struck me as a different kind (albeit very appropriate) of hishtadlus.

At that point, my daughter was going out with a fine young man; the match certainly seemed like it had potential. I decided to sponsor forty days of Torah study as a zechus for her, in the hope that if this was her destined match, everything would go smoothly. Within two weeks of the limud, the shidduch went through, and my daughter at last became a kallah.

I want to thank Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah for bringing this opportunity my way. May the zechus of Torah continue to carry us through life's challenges.

L.T., Brooklyn, NY

Participants dancing at a siyum in honor of the completion of Shas Gemara by Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah





Grant the eternal merit of Torah to a dear departed one by sponsoring a program of Mishnah or Gemara study through Chevrah Lomdei Mishnah.

For more information, call 732-364-7029 or visit our website at ChevrahLomdeiMishnah.org

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