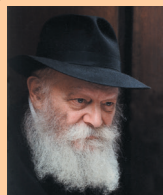


L'Chaim



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

We find ourselves now in the special weeks during which the "Seven Haftorah's of Consolation" are read. This week we read the third of the seven, taken from the Book of Isaiah.

The Avudraham, a Torah scholar who lived in the medieval times, explains that these seven haftorahs form a dialogue between the Jewish people and G-d.

In the first Haftorah, G-d tells the Prophets to console His people over the destruction: "Comfort, O comfort, My people."

The response of the Jewish nation in the second Haftorah is, "But Zion said, 'the Eternal has forsaken me.'"

The consolation of the prophets is not sufficient; the Jews want to be consoled by G-d Himself.

In the third Haftorah, the Prophets convey this message to G-d: "O you afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted" -- the comfort we offer Israel is not enough.

In the fourth Haftorah, G-d responds by saying, "I, even I, am He Who comforts you" -- I have heard your demand and I Myself will console you. Indeed, the fifth and sixth Haftorahs begin with the words, "Sing, O barren one, you that did not bear," and "Arise and illumine, for your light is come."

In the seventh and final Haftorah, the Jewish people delight in G-d's comfort: "I will greatly rejoice in the Eternal, my soul shall be joyful in my G-d."

This explanation, however, presents a problem. For Omniscient G-d certainly knew in advance that the Jewish people would not be satisfied with His Prophets' comforting.

Why, then, didn't G-d simply console them Himself, instead of waiting until they cried out? In truth, it was necessary for the Jewish people to reveal their desire to be consoled by G-d alone, for it expressed their realization that the destruction and exile were not visited upon them as a punishment, but rather, conceal a G-dly benevolence.

Chasidic philosophy explains that "no evil can come from Above." Hidden within the disastrous destruction of the Temple is an enormous good that could not have come down in a revealed and open manner. "G-d tries those whom He loves" -- G-d's most intense and inner love is expressed in His admonishments. In order for the great blessings hidden within to be uncovered, one must first understand that his suffering is not a curse, G-d forbid.

When a person views his troubles as punishment from Above, he cannot perceive the good that they contain. Accepting one's suffering with joy leads to the inner good being revealed in a way that even our fleshly eyes can discern.

G-d wanted the request for comfort to come from His children, to demonstrate that they understood that the destruction contained a higher good, one that He alone would show them.

"I, even I, am He Who comforts you" -- a consolation that will reach its culmination in the Final Redemption and the building of the Third Temple, speedily in our day.

Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, Vol. 19

Appreciate Your Blessings

By Rabbi Yossy Goldman

Who is wise, and who is foolish? Who is rich, and who is poor? Who is healthy, and who is sick? Not easy questions to answer. Everything is, of course, relative. More importantly, it all depends on our perspective.

Parshat Re'eh begins with the words: "See, I give you this day a blessing and a curse."¹ The Sages understand this to mean that how we see will determine what we see. Whether your life is a blessing or a curse can depend more on your own perspective than on the hard realities on the ground.

I think of the people of the Ukraine today. Those who are still living there and those who managed to get out with one or two suitcases in which to pack up all their life's possessions. What about our own great-grandparents who left Eastern Europe for the shores of the New World? Many of them came with not much more than the shirts on their backs, and they had to start from scratch just to survive. In comparison, our lives are an absolute breeze. Even those of us who may be suffering financial pressures are living lives of luxury compared to them.

A generous congregant had donated several boxes of minimally damaged jackets and asked me to distribute them to the needy as winter was approaching. I joined forces with a number of dedicated welfare workers, and one morning we announced that the jackets would be made available. Hundreds of people lined up outside and filed by, one by

one, to receive their jackets.

You think we made those poor people warm by giving them the jackets? We were the ones left with the very warm feeling of having helped bring comfort and cheer to our fellow human beings. And, boy, did that encounter give us perspective. Whatever problems we may be facing, we are absolutely affluent and privileged compared to thousands of cold, often homeless people.

I conclude by sharing a few lines I found by an unknown author. You may have come across these words before, but they are worth repeating because they certainly provide perspective.

"If you have food in your fridge, clothes on your back, a roof over your head, and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of the world.

"If you have money in the bank, your wallet, and some spare change, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

"If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the millions of people who will not survive this week.

We will all be far happier and realize how much we have to be grateful for, if we know how to see the blessing, rather than the curse. By developing perspective in life, we learn how to count our blessings. Only then do we realize how truly blessed we really are, and how truly happy we can be.

"See, I give you this day a blessing..."

SLICE OF LIFE

Guyana's 'Last Jew' Happily Dethroned, as Chabad's Roving Rabbis Build Community



Chabad's rabbinical students, Rabbis Mendel Zaklikovsky and Schneur Deren, spent eight days in the remote Caribbean nation

The first thing that hit them was the quiet. Georgetown, where Rabbis Mendel Zaklikovsky and Schneur Deren landed, is the capital of Guyana, one of the least densely populated countries on earth.

"It was a long drive from the airport to our rental," Zaklikovsky, 23, a New Jersey native, told Chabad.org. "We landed late at night. The streets were quiet, and we picked up a rental car and drove an hour to our accommodations, which was located near the U.S. embassy."

That area, Zaklikovsky describes, was key to their mission: locating Jews and connecting them with each other. The pair hung around the expat neighborhood speaking with diplomats, oil executives and farmers, building a network of Jewish contacts.

Unlike neighboring Suriname, Guyana never had an established Jewish community. From nearby St. Lucia in the eastern Caribbean, Rabbi Avromy Super, co-director of Chabad of St. Lucia with his wife, Sternie, oversees Chabad's activities in Guyana, visiting before major Jewish holidays, bringing Passover supplies and providing a Jewish connection in this isolated Jewish community.

To further Super's efforts, Merkos L'Inyonei Chinuch—the educational arm of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement—added Guyana to this year's roster of Chabad's storied Roving Rabbis program, which since 1943 sees hundreds of Chabad's rabbinical students fan across the globe

to reach isolated, remote and underserved Jewish communities.

Years of continued visits by the Roving Rabbis have often culminated with the placement of permanent Chabad emissaries.

Raphael Ades, an Israeli ex-pat living in Guyana since 1972, recalls visits from Rabbi Yossi Shuchat, today a Chabad emissary in Las Vegas, and an earlier visit from Yitzchak Nemes, a stamp dealer doing business in Guyana whom the Rebbe—Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson—personally instructed to find a Jew there.

Ades, who has been widely touted as Guyana's "Only Jew" in Jewish media outlets, is probably the Jew who has lived in the country the longest.

Ades followed his parents to Guyana, where they had a diamond business. Today, he's more involved in the tourism industry, organizing and leading tours throughout Guyana's nature.

'WE CAME TO FIND YOU'

On their first morning, the rabbis met a group of Israelis involved in cybersecurity and agriculture. The next day, they went to a farm to meet another one of the group who wasn't there the previous day.

The rabbis heard rumors of an Israeli-owned farm about three hours away, but nobody seemed to know who they were, or exactly where the farm was. With sparse information, the pair set out in their rental car to find the farm they weren't sure really existed. "We had no address, just a dirt road in the general area."

"Suddenly, a heavy rainstorm hit," Zaklikovsky reported. "Our car got stuck deep in the mud; our shoes were soaked, and the vehicle kept sinking. After 20 minutes, a van drove by. We flagged it down and explained that we were looking for a Jewish farm. The driver said, 'Oh, the dairy farm? I'll take you there in my van.' He happened to forget his lunch at home and came back—something he never normally does.

"We arrived at the site—no animals yet, just workers. The owner wasn't present, but the secretary there called him. She arranged for workers to help tow our car from where we'd abandoned it. As we were heading out, muddy and tired, a man pulled up. We shouted, "Shema Yisrael!" and he responded, "Hashem Echad!"

Shocked, he asked, "How did you find me?" We told him: "We're emissaries of the Rebbe. We came to find you." A self-proclaimed atheist, the fellow in the office engaged the rabbis in deep philosophical

discussion for hours.

While he arranged for their car to be fixed, the farm manager shared his one positive childhood experience with Judaism: a Shabbat retreat to Kfar Chabad, the Chassidic village near Lod, Israel, where he stayed at the home of a Chabad family and enjoyed the traditional Chassidic warmth, hospitality and joyful Judaism.

The rabbis gave him a charity box to keep in his office, and he placed a coin in it. As they were pulling out, the farmer ran over with one last word: "I am still in shock. How did you find me?!"



Nadav Weiss, also from Israel, moved to Guyana with his wife, Michal, and their three young children, just a year ago.

"I wasn't surprised to see Rabbi Super's Chabad active here," he says, underscoring Chabad's global footprint that is so ubiquitous it is often taken for granted. "I used to live in Nigeria and Ghana in West Africa and became familiar with Chabad there."

"In a way," Weiss says, "we became almost a Chabad House here."

Rabbi Super connected the Weiss family with other local Jews and sent them matzah to host a Passover seder, Chanukah menorahs for a Chanukah party, and they became the Jewish address in town.

For Shabbat, Zaklikovsky and Deren joined Weiss and a motley group of Jews from all over the world for a Friday-night meal.

"There's only so much Judaism I can bring to the table," says Weiss, "but the rabbis came with so much energy and wisdom, sharing inspiration from the Torah portion, singing traditional Shabbat songs. It was so good!"

That Friday night in Georgetown, Zaklikovsky, Deren, Weiss and the legendary Ades watched as history was made. "Our goal was to gather everyone we'd met for Shabbos. We hosted almost 15 people, including two Jews from Brussels who hadn't heard Shalom Aleichem sung in 40 years. It was a beautiful, emotional moment. Everyone shared a Jewish memory or story. Many of them didn't even know other Jews were living nearby."

And Ades? Despite being dethroned as Guyana's only Jew, he couldn't be happier: "I am quite satisfied, and G-d willing, this will continue to grow."

From Chabad.org

Teachers and educators from around the world gather for Jewish education conference - Kinus HaMechanchim



From remote cities and major Chabad communities alike, hundreds of educators converged on Stamford, Connecticut, each bringing the passion and responsibility that defines their important role.

"This gathering is an opportunity for educators to share insights and recharge their spirit and dedication," said Rabbi Mendy Kotlarsky, Executive Director of Merkos 302. "Our goal is to empower every educator so they can bring fresh inspiration and strength back to their critical Shlichus."

The main program unfolded at the Armon Hotel and Conference Center in Stamford, CT, where educators enjoyed workshops, farbrengens, and presentations focused on real-world educational impact. While each teacher carries the unique challenges of his classroom, they are united by a shared mission: giving the gift of a proper Jewish education to the next generation.

Ethics Chapter Five

There are seven things that characterize a boor, and seven that characterize a wise man.

A wise man does not speak before one who is greater than him in wisdom or age. He does not interrupt his fellow's words. He does not hasten to answer. His questions are on the subject and his answers to the point. He responds to first things first and to latter things later. Concerning what he did not hear, he says "I did not hear." He concedes to the truth. With the boor, the reverse of all these is the case.



IT HAPPENED ONCE

Rabbi Israel Salanter travelled a great deal, and whenever he passed a certain town, he stopped at the inn of a certain Reb Yitzchak, who was known to be a pious Jew. One day, being in that district, he went to Reb Yitzchak's inn.

Reb Israel sat down and ordered some food. Suddenly he noticed that there was a non-kosher salami on the counter. Reb Israel always tried to judge every person for the good, so he assumed that the innkeeper had purchased the meat by mistake or had been misled by an unscrupulous supplier.

He gently approached the innkeeper and said, "Reb Yitzchak, I want to make you aware that the salami on the counter isn't kosher."

Reb Israel was shocked when the innkeeper matter of factly replied, "Yes, I know, but I'm not so careful about the laws of kashrut these days." Reb Israel was amazed. "What has happened to you? You've always been a G-d-fearing man."

The innkeeper went on to explain what had induced him to change his ways. A certain guest at the inn who was a non-believer convinced the unlearned innkeeper that there was no G-d. "What did this person say to you to convince you of such a terrible falsehood?" Rabbi Israel asked.

"Well, the man took a piece of treif [non-kosher] meat in his hand and said, 'If there really is a G-d who cares what I eat, He will strike me dead when I eat this. But, you'll see that I can eat this salami and nothing will happen to me. That proves that there is no G-d.' And, Rabbi, with my own eyes I saw him eat the salami, and nothing happened! When I saw that he spoke the truth, I began eating treif meat, too, since I saw that what I eat makes no difference to G-d."

Rabbi Israel listened and thought for a while of how to approach this poor, ignorant man. As he sat deep in thought, the daughter of the innkeeper danced into the room waving a piece of paper high in the air.

"Father, Father, look. I was just awarded a certificate for my achievements as a pianist. I'm so happy!" The innkeeper beamed with pride, praising his daughter to everyone.

Reb Israel called the girl to his table and said to her: "I see that you have just received a prestigious certificate for your piano playing. I don't believe you're all that good. I would like you to prove it to me."

The girl was taken aback, and replied, "This certificate is proof of my expertise. I don't have to prove it to everyone who asks!" And she turned on her heels and angrily left the room.

Reb Israel called the innkeeper and said: "Your daughter is very rude. I simply asked her to play for me so I could judge for myself if she really is a competent pianist."

The father was embarrassed by the Rav's comment and he called his daughter back. She faced the rabbi and replied, "You're not being fair. I established my talent at school and I have the certificate to prove it. I certainly shouldn't be required to give a demonstration for anyone who asks."

"So, you see, my good man," the rabbi exclaimed. "Your daughter is clever. G-d could well answer you the same way. After He redeemed us from slavery, split the sea for us, performed countless miracles for us day in and day out, is it necessary for us to require that He prove Himself for every ignoramus like that salami eater who was your guest?"

The words of Reb Israel Salanter convinced the innkeeper, and he repented of his error at once.

Best wishes and happy birthday
to a dear friend of the L'chaim Publication

Yossi Malamud

Wishing you much continued success in all that you do

למעלה מן המשוער ובטוב הנראה והנלה

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On Ethics of the Fathers

"By ten Divine pronouncements was the world created" (Ethics of the Fathers 5:1)

The letters of the ten Divine pronouncements uttered by G-d give each and every creation its life-force and vitality, bringing it into being from nothingness. Every created entity, from the highest celestial spheres to the lowest inanimate stone, is sustained by the various combinations and joinings of the letters of these Ten Utterances. The Hebrew name of an object, therefore, indicates the life-force it contains and reflects its true inner essence. (**The Tanya**)

"There were ten generations from Adam to Noach, to inform us how great is His patience, for all those generations continued to anger Him, until He brought upon them the waters of the Flood" (Ethics 5:2)

In ancient days the Jewish people waged two different types of war--those in which they were commanded to completely destroy the enemy and his belongings, and those in which they were allowed to benefit from the spoils. On the spiritual front there are also two different types of evil which must be fought: That which is entirely evil and must be totally obliterated, and that which contains an element of good and thus the potential to be transformed and elevated to a higher level. The evil of the first ten generations of mankind was in the first category. G-d, therefore, sent the waters of the great Flood to utterly destroy and erase their depravity. The evil of the next ten generations, however, was of the second type, and was able to be corrected and elevated by Abraham. (*Lubavitcher Rebbe, Shlita*)

"With ten trials was Abraham our Father tested" (Ethics 5:3)

In general, G-d does not test a person in order to prove his faithfulness. Rather, when an individual overcomes the obstacles placed in his path, it strengthens his awareness and recognition of G-dliness. After successfully withstanding all ten trials, Abraham reached a level of perfection unattainable otherwise. (**Mili Dichasiduta**)

"Yehuda ben Tema said: Be bold as a leopard, light as an eagle, swift as a deer, and strong as a lion, to do the will of your Father in heaven" (Ethics 5:20)

Human beings have the capacity to learn much from animal behavior: "He teaches us through the beasts of the earth, and makes us wise through the birds of the sky," said Job.

If, when obeying the Torah, we are ridiculed, let us be as bold and fearless as the leopard. If we find ourselves in a milieu not conducive to the practice of the Jewish faith, let us flee like a deer to one that favors religious growth in observance. And if we see how shallow is the level of those around us in the practice of their religious heritage, let us rise as the eagle above the common level, on wings of perseverance and devotion. (*Ethics From Sinai*)



7:25 Candle Lighting Time

NY Metro Area

28 Av / August 22

Torah Portion Re'eh

Ethics Ch 5

Blessing of the new month of Elul

Shabbat ends **8:24 PM**