

LAMPLIGHTER

12 Tishrei
Parshas
Ha'azinu
1265
14 October
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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week's Torah portion, Ha'azinu, opens with Moses' words: "Listen, heaven, and I will speak; hear, earth, the words of my mouth." With these words Moses called upon heaven and earth to bear witness concerning his admonitions and exhortations to the Jewish people regarding their performance of Torah and mitzvot (the commandments).

The commentary Sifrei offers an explanation for Moses' selection of heaven and earth as witnesses. "Listen heaven" - because Torah was given from heaven; "hear earth" - because upon it the Jewish people stood when they accepted the Torah and said "All that G-d spoke we shall obey and hear."

Torah and mitzvot were given to us by G-d, Who is infinitely higher than heaven and earth. In seeking to exhort Israel to a greater degree of performance of Torah and mitzvot, it is logical to assume that this could be best accomplished by stressing the fact that Torah and mitzvot were given by G-d, rather than by focusing upon the point that Torah and mitzvot are connected to heaven and earth. Why, then, the emphasis on heaven and earth?

A Jew is expected to serve G-d on two levels: on one hand he is expected to serve G-d with pure and simple faith and with acceptance of the Heavenly Yoke - elements that derive from the soul's essence. On the other hand his service must permeate his internal powers of intellect and emotions so that they too understand and feel G-dliness. In practical terms this means that a Jew is to connect his soul's essence with his inner powers, so that not only does he serve G-d in thought, speech, and action out of a sense of simple faith, but he also comprehends G-dliness in his mind and loves and fears Him in his heart.

Moreover, a Jew is expected not only to serve G-d in the general and ongoing manner of regular Torah and mitzvot, he is also to serve Him through repentance - teshuva. This level of service, a level of service that emanates from the soul's essence and seeks the innermost aspect of G-dliness, must permeate the person's powers of intellect and emotion as well.

This is why when Moses desired to rouse the Jews to the service of Torah and mitzvot, whose performance was to be not only with pure faith but with the inner powers of intellect and emotion as well, he mentioned that Torah and mitzvot were given through heaven and earth.

Thus, he aroused within the Jewish nation their inner "heaven and earth," and the lesser powers of emotion, speech and action that are likened to and on the level of earth.

I'm Not Homeless

By Naftali Silberberg

Homelessness is one of the saddest social phenomena. No matter how destitute a person may be, home always provides a needed sense of security and belonging. In fact, the need for a home is so great that the Talmud says that "one who does not have a home isn't a person." Physically, perhaps one can survive without a home, but emotionally speaking, a home is the most basic human need.

Needless to say, homelessness isn't about where you may find yourself at a given moment. You can be at work, visiting with friends, stuck in traffic, or on vacation thousands of miles from home—it's not about where you are, but the knowledge that there's a little corner of the world you can call your own that gives you the peace of mind a home provides. (My mother often repeats the aphorism: "Home is the place that has to let you in when no one else will . . .") A place where you can let your guard down and act as you wish.

This, the Rebbe explains, is what is so special about the mitzvah of sukkah. Normally, we are connected to a particular mitzvah (and through the mitzvah, to the One who commanded the mitzvah) so long as we are actually involved in its execution. But sukkah is an exception. For seven days we are commanded to dwell in a sukkah; for seven days the holy shelter of the sukkah becomes our home. And as explained above, one's association to his or her home isn't restricted to the time spent therein. It is an ever-present connection.

For seven days we are intimately involved with a mitzvah, regardless of where we are or what we are doing. And it isn't a peripheral involvement—just as our relationship with our home is never peripheral, it is so basic to our identity.

Perhaps we can take the lesson of the sukkah a step further. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are just behind us. The theme of these holidays, as well as the preparatory month of Elul that preceded them, isteshuvah — usually translated as "repentance," but whose literal meaning is "return." After a year of wandering and drifting, we return. To our Father's embrace, to our truest home, to the place where we always belonged.

One thing I have requested of G-d, this I seek: That I may sit in the house of G-d all the days of my life, to behold the pleasantness of G-d . . . — Psalms 27:4

But another year now beckons us. Once again, we will be forced to leave home for an extended trip. A daunting prospect, a depressing thought for the individual who is now savouring his brief stay at home.

Enter the message of the sukkah. Once we've established where our true home is, we never lose our attachment to home, no matter where we are.

Come what may during this new year, no matter how far from home life's journey may take us, our internal GPS will always have its arrow pointing homeward. And that knowledge will provide us with serenity and security.

And we don't have to wait until the next Rosh Hashanah to return. Make some time to escape back home every day—whether it's morning prayers in the synagogue, or even the few seconds it takes to recite a blessing on an apple you are about to bite into. If that is the reassuring lesson we take from the holiday of Sukkot, no wonder it is the most joyous of holidays! Is there anything more uplifting than the knowledge that you are never homeless?

Slice of LIFE

Dancing with the Angels

by Rabbi Yossi Lew

A couple of year ago, I visited Poland as part of the "March of the Living," which takes high school juniors and seniors for a week to Poland to visit the horrors of the Holocaust (and then a week in Israel). We were in the shtetl (Jewish village) called Tykocin, not too far from Bialestock. We visited the still standing spectacular shul (synagogue). What distinguishes this refurbished shul is not just its beauty; it is its walls. The walls of this 400-year-old shul are decorated with words from the prayer book. The entire service to welcome the Sabbath is on the wall. Many other prayers, painted attractively, cover all four walls. Perhaps there were not that many books available in that time, certainly not in this remote shtetl, so they painted the words on the tall walls in paint that really lasts.

Just being present in a place where Jews came to pray for 400 years is extremely moving. After we prayed there, we were told a provoking and moving story about a survivor from a small shtetl who, on his deathbed, said he was looking forward to "tantzen mit di malachim" - dancing with the angels - after his passing.

When he was a youngster, the Nazis invaded his town during the festival of Sukkot (1939). All of the Jews in his town were ordered to assemble in the town's main square. Understanding that they were soon to leave town, the boy asked his father how they would be able to dance on the festival of Simchat Torah.

An SS guard overheard the boy's innocent question and said, "Tantzen? You want to dance?" With that he grabbed the boy together with three others, and made them dance in a circle. He then shot one of the kids through the head and told the other three to continue dancing or they would be shot too. He then shot another to death, and then another, leaving just that young man, the one who had asked about dancing. He ordered that young man to continue dancing alone. And so, arms stretched out to the air, the young man continued turning around in sheer terror, scarred forever. The Nazi beast then asked the boy, "With whom are you dancing?"

The boy replied: "Ich tantz mit di malachim!" (I am dancing with the angels.) Inexplicably, the Nazi let the boy live.

After surviving the Holocaust, this person would always find some time during the yearly dancing on Simchat Torah to dance on his own in the middle of the circle, just as he did as a boy in the town square. He called it the "malachim tantz." Now, on his deathbed, he was talking about how he would soon be dancing with the angels, this time for real.

After this story we all stood up and danced. We danced for the members of that shul whose final dance was brutally ended in gunfire or in gas, and who are now dancing with the angels. We danced because we were here in the name of those holy martyrs, while the vile beasts who sent them to heaven are in Purgatory.

And we danced because this is our response to that eternally damned villain, Hitler. The way I see it, there is nothing we could say or do that would be more powerful than to dance. For the eternal dance of the Jew is just that: no one

can, or will ever, succeed in making it stop.

During the Holocaust, heroism was not just exhibited in the Warsaw ghetto uprising or by the partisans. Their actions were worthwhile, their deeds are certainly worthy of recalling and preserving. However, no less impressive was the Jew who maintained his or her faith in the hellish conditions, or the Jew who with even less than the meager rations did not hesitate to fulfill another mitzva, or those who endangered their lives to wear tefillin, to pray, to study Torah, and to sing songs of belief like "Ani Maamin" (I believe...in the coming of Moshiach) on their way to the gas chambers. We must recall, never to forget, the heroism of those who maintained their Judaism and their belief in G-d through impossible conditions.

More and more stories like his are being revealed. Stories that leave one with incredible encouragement and inspiration to learn what Jewish people did under the worst circumstances in history. In a time when G-d was hiding His face, these Jews, many of them simple and plain folk, never stopped looking for Him.

It is over 70 years since the Holocaust. Survivors are diminishing in numbers. Third and fourth generation Jews are not hearing about the experiences of the Holocaust as part of their day-to-day life. If special measures are not taken to impart information on the Holocaust, the forthcoming generations will consider this recent event as part of a distant and far-off history.

These measures must be taken-up by parents and educators alike.

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ISSUE 1265

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Rabbi Yishmael taught: In the merit of three things, one of which is the mitzva (commandment) of Lulav, we will merit three things, the destruction of (the evil nature of) our enemies, the building of the Third Temple and the name of Moshiach.



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

Faith when Facing Tragedy

I was deeply grieved to hear of the passing of your father and I take this means of extending to you, your sisters and all the bereaved family my heartfelt sympathy.

May G-d comfort you among the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

It is the sacred custom of our people, in comforting the mourners at shivah, to say the above blessing of Nichum Avelim. This is not just a manner of phrase, but a true message of comfort which is contained in the significant inclusion of the mourners among the other mourners for Zion and Jerusalem.

Here we find the answer to a seemingly difficult question: inasmuch as the blessing of Nichum Avelim is given only during the period of Shivah, how can one comfort the mourner at a time when the grief is so fresh and acute? The consolation is to be found in the similitude between the mourner for a close departed and the mourners for Zion and Jerusalem.

For in mourning for the loss of the Beth Hamikosh and the glory of Jerusalem the Holy City, Jews have derived consolation from two sources. First, the Divine assurance through the medium of all our prophets that the Beth Hamikdosh will be rebuilt again and its glory will surpass anything in the past. Second, the fact that spiritually the Beth Hamikdosh was never destroyed and is still in existence through its influence and inspiration in our daily life. That is why the mention of Zion and Jerusalem is so frequent in all our prayers daily and on Shabbos and Yomtov.

The same is true in the case of a mourner for a dear departed. Here, too, the consolation is twofold: First, the Divine assurance through all the prophets that the dead will rise to a life infinitely more glorious than formerly. Second, the memory of the departed is everlasting through their good deeds and especially through the upbringing, influence and inspiration left with children to carry on the sacred traditions of the Torah and Old Israel in everyday life. Here is a continuous and everlasting bond between the departed and those left behind which no outside force can destroy.

May you not know of any sorrow in the future.

QUESTIONS FOR THE RABBI

Why is Jewish Law so Petty Minded?

Question: Why does the Jewish religion seem to obsess over insignificant details? How much matza do we have to eat, which spoon did I use for milk and which for meat, what is the right way to tie my shoelaces? It seems to me that this misses the bigger picture by focusing on minutiae. Is this nitpicking what Jews call spirituality?

(I actually already sent you this question over a week ago and didn't receive a reply. Could it be that you have finally been asked a question that you can't answer?!)

Answer: I never claimed to have all the answers. There are many questions that are beyond me. But it happens to be that I did answer your question, and you did get the answer. I sent a reply immediately. The fact that you didn't receive it is itself the answer to your question.

You see, I sent you a reply, but I wrote your email address leaving out the "dot" before the "com." I figured that you should still receive the email, because after all, it is only one little dot missing. I mean come on, it's not as if I wrote the wrong name or something drastic like that! Would anyone be so nitpicky as to differentiate between "yahoomcom" and "yahoo.com"? Isn't it a bit ridiculous that you didn't get my email just because of a little dot?

No, it's not ridiculous. Because the dot is not just a dot. It represents something. That dot has meaning far beyond the pixels on the screen that form it. To me it may seem insignificant, but that is simply due to my ignorance of the ways of the internet. All I know is that with the dot, the message gets to the right destination; without it, the message is lost to oblivion.

Jewish practices have infinite depth. Each nuance and detail contains a world of symbolism. And every dot counts. When they are performed with precision, a spiritual vibration is emailed throughout the universe, all the way to G-d's inbox.

If you want to understand the symbolism of the dot, study I.T.

If you want to understand the symbolism of Judaism, study it.

Rabbi Aron Moss

A WORD

from the Director

During the holiday of Sukkot we fulfill the mitzva of lulav and etrog by blessing and holding together the lulav (date palm), the hadas (myrtle), aravot (willow), and the etrog (citron). The mitzva is only considered fulfilled if all of the objects have been held together. From this mitzva we can learn about the importance of the unity of the Jewish people.

Why is it so important for these four species to be united? They represent different "categories" of Jews, one who learns Torah and does mitzvot, one who only learns Torah, one who only does mitzvot, and one who does neither.

And yet, all of these different "kinds" of Jews must be united.

All Jews are one. We are all members of the Jewish people, bound together by our Torah. Just as when the four species are separate they are incapable of being used to perform a mitzva, so too are we dependent on each other, on our unity, to fulfill our mission in this world.

Being united does not mean eradicating all differences so that we all think and act in the exact same way. Rather, G-d created each individual with his or her own specific character traits, strengths and weaknesses. True unity is revealed when people not only accept and tolerate each other's differences, but learn to find the goodness that is a part of every Jew, and uncover the lesson that can be learned from that person. This is the message of the lulav, etrog, hadasim and aravot, of all four species that we hold together and bless together. And just as we bless the species when they are held together, so too are we blessed by G-d when we, too, hold ourselves together and stand before Him as one.

As we celebrate the holiday of Sukkot, a holiday that is known as "the festival of our rejoicing," we ask G-d to grant us the greatest joy of all, with the arrival of Moshiach and the rebuilding of our Holy Temple, where we shall surely be able to fulfill the mitzva of "serving G-d with joy."

J. I. Gurtman

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

Everyone pitied us because Poppa was a shammos, often considered little more than the shul (synagogue) janitor, and we were still living on the "East Side" of Manhattan, the crowded world of "greenhorns" that young people tried to escape. Mornings, Poppa would rush to the Shearis Yisroel shul on Columbia Street, where his father had been shammos. He made the stove, prepared the prayer books and tidied up.

Unlike everyone else, Mamma saw nothing degrading in being a shammos. To her, cleaning a shul was no less meritorious than cleaning the Holy Temple; it was nothing short of a mitzva (commandment). To prove she really meant what she said, she shared Poppa's mitzva by washing down the ladies' room every Friday, in anticipation of the Sabbath. Even we children were included in the mitzva and assigned chores.

Columbia Street was a dilapidated dead end lined with shuls. On Shabbos and Yom Tov (Jewish holidays) it was filled with thronging crowds, coming to hear the famous cantors of the day, or to be briefed on the latest East Side gossip, or "simply" to pray. Of all the shuls on the block, Shearis Yisroel was perhaps the most impressive. A luxurious chandelier swayed from the domed ceiling; biblical murals covered the walls. It was only later that one saw that the chandelier was black, the walls peeling, and the floors warped.

On Simchas Torah the stoops and banisters of all the shuls would be overflowing with people, either unable to push into the already jammed buildings or out to catch a breath of air between the hakafos - dancing with the Torah. Children ran from shul to shul determined not to miss any of the dancing in any of them. Wherever you turned, there was laughter and friendship and the throbbing joy of holiday spirit.

Hakafos never started in Shearis Yisroel till Avrumele Koll arrived. Since his family had moved to Brooklyn, it meant an hour's walk for him to be able to celebrate with us, but he always came. He knew that we wouldn't start without him.

The Kolls had come from Israel during the 1929 Arab riots. But though they lived in the U.S., they never stopped talking about returning "home." Avrumele shared that "home" with us every Simchas Torah, when he reenacted what he remembered from his childhood in Jerusalem. When Avrumele did finally come, he was welcomed with shouts of happiness, and all the children rushed to get to him first. Climbing all over him, they chattered happily, asking questions while dragging him along. Everyone pushed into the shul. The street was suddenly empty.

Avrumele was pale and thin, with dark laughing eyes. It was suddenly very quiet. His voice seemed to come from long ago and far away. It suggested pain and longing. It seemed as though he reached for something from the depths of his soul. If you closed your eyes, you could actually feel yourself alone with him in the ruins of Jerusalem. A glow radiated from his eyes, his face. The poignancy of his tunes sent shivers up your arms. Everyone pressed closer.

Suddenly, with a great shout, he jumped to the top of the pot-bellied stove and started to dance. Avrumele was turning faster and faster. Hands and feet shot out in strange rhythms. He danced in movements so quick that everyone gasped. His body was inseparable from his song and his song was inseparable from his soul. He twisted and sputtered and exploded like a flame before extinction. Then he was silent. His arms fell. His body sagged. A long drawn-out groan escaped him. He collapsed in a heap on the stove.

All eyes were glued to the hypnotic form. Everyone stopped breathing. Slowly, in an agonizing, searching, straining gesture, Avrumele rose to one knee. The tune was now soft and whispered. His throat

snagged on the words. But as he got to his feet, a shower of dancing raindrops was released. They tinkled and gurgled. They hopped and skipped with glee. The song welled and thickened, became a swirling sea.

Children climbed to fathers' shoulders and hung onto woodwork to see better. Ladies stood on chairs, pulled down the curtain and leaned over the balcony. Round and round went Avrumele, while everyone stood gasping from the effort to keep up with him, exhausted from the strain not to miss a movement. But Avrumele had no intentions of stopping. On and on he went, taunting us, pulling us after him, daring us to match his holiday joy. His dance and song seemed never to end. Avrumele seemed never to tire.

When he finally did stop he flashed us all an embarrassed smile and jumped down from the stove. Poppa pushed through the crowd to bring Avrumele a glass of foaming beer, and then it was time for everyone to start dancing in the first hakafa.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

You shall draw water with joy (Isaiah 12:3)

Water is tasteless; wine has a wonderful flavor. Water is symbolic of our performance of mitzvot purely because G-d has so commanded us. Wine is symbolic of the pleasure that is derived from a rational comprehension of Torah and mitzvot (commandments). The commandment to pour water upon the altar - "You shall draw water with joy" - thus alludes to a Jew's unconditional obedience to G-d. At the same time, our total submissiveness to G-d engenders a feeling of joy - delight and gratitude in being able to carry out His will. When a Jew rejoices in the performance of a mitzva, he merits that his "water," his non-intellectual acceptance of G-d's will, is transformed into the "springs of salvation." For just as a spring is perpetually connected to its source, so too does he become perpetually bound to G-d, meriting salvation in all his endeavors.

(Likutei Sichot, vol 2)

Sukka Decorations

On the eve of Sukkot, Reb Chaim of Zanz told his sons that he needed several thousand rubles. As soon as they brought him the money that they had quickly borrowed from various wealthy householders, he distributed it all to the needy. As he entered his sukka that evening he said: "People are accustomed to decorate their sukkot with all kinds of pretty ornaments. But the beauty of my sukka is different: charity makes my sukka beautiful!"

Simchat Torah

On Simchat Torah, all the advocating angels rush to the defense of the Jewish people and berate the Satan. "How can you accuse such a wonderful nation as the Jews of any wrongdoing!" they cry. "Just look at them - men, women and children, going to their synagogues to rejoice with the holy Torah!" Hour after hour the angels describe the joyous dancing and the love even the smallest Jewish children show for the Torah as they kiss the scrolls, until the Satan slinks away in shame...

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMAN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS HA'AZINU • 12 TISHREI • 14 OCTOBER

FRIDAY NIGHT: CANDLE LIGHTING: 7.19 PM
MINCHA: 7.25 PM
KABBOLAS SHABBOS: 7.50 PM

SHABBOS DAY: LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA: 9.48 AM
SHACHARIS: 10.00 AM
MINCHA: 7.10 PM
SHABBOS ENDS: 8.18 PM

SUNDAY EREV SUKKOS: SHACHARIS: 8.00 AM/9.15 AM
CANDLE LIGHTING: 7.20 PM
MINCHA: 7.25 PM
MAARIV: 8.05 PM

MONDAY: SHACHARIS: 10.00 AM
1ST DAY SUKKOS MINCHA: 7.25 PM
MAARIV: 8.05 PM
CANDLE LIGHTING: after 8.20 PM

TUESDAY: SHACHARIS: 10.00 AM
2ND DAY SUKKOS MINCHA: 7.25 PM
YOM TOV ENDS/MAARIV: 8.21 PM

WEEKDAYS: SHACHARIS: 8.00/9.15 PM
MINCHA: 7.20 PM
MAARIV: 8.10 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING

	Shabbos October -		Sukkos October -		
	14th Begins	15th Ends	16th Begins	17th Begins	18th Ends
Melbourne	7:19	8:18	7:20	8:20*	8:21
Adelaide	7:11	8:09	7:13	8:11*	8:11
Brisbane	5:37	6:31	5:38	6:32*	6:33
Darwin	6:26	7:16	6:26	7:16*	7:16
Gold Coast	5:36	6:30	5:37	6:31*	6:32
Perth	6:10	7:06	6:11	7:07*	7:08
Sydney	6:50	7:47	6:51	7:48*	7:49
Canberra	6:59	7:57	7:01	7:59*	8:00
Launceston	7:14	8:15	7:16	8:18*	8:19
Auckland	7:18	8:17	7:20	8:19*	8:20
Wellington	7:23	8:25	7:25	8:27*	8:28
Hobart	7:15	8:18	7:17	8:20*	8:22
Byron Bay	6:36	7:30	6:37	7:31*	7:32

*Light after the prescribed time, from a pre-existing flame

