



IT HAPPENED ONCE

In the city of Berditchev a very wealthy man, regarded by all as a miser, died. When famed Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev heard of the man's passing, he was grieved and said he would attend the funeral.

When the news spread that Reb Levi Yitzchok would come, never was there such a crowd as attended the funeral of this richman. Yet, no one could understand why Reb Levi Yitzchok was showing so much respect for the dead miser.

After the funeral, Reb Levi Yitzchok said, "Nobody really knew this man as I did. He had a noble character that I discovered through three separate incidents when he came to me." And he told the following stories:

A wine merchant who acted as agent for other merchants was going on his usual purchasing trip when he suddenly discovered that his money was missing.

When he realized his terrible situation, he fainted. A doctor was called and managed to revive him. But, as soon as the agent regained consciousness and remembered his great loss, he fell into another swoon.

A Jew suddenly stepped forward from the crowd and declared that he had found the missing bag of money. Everyone was delighted and the agent revived miraculously!

"Some time later," related Reb Levi Yitzchok, "two Jews came to see me. One was the man who was just buried. The second Jew claimed that he, in fact, had found the wine agent's money but could not resist the temptation to keep it. However, when he found out that someone had given away such a large sum of money in order to save a man's life, his conscience troubled him. He had repented and was now eager to repay the money.

But the first man (whose funeral was just held) refused to accept the money, saying he did not want to give up the mitzva of saving the agent's life.

"And my verdict," said Reb Levi Yitzchok, "was that he was not obliged to accept the money if he did not wish to. The man who had repented would have to find some other way of making amends."



There was a Jew who was unsuccessful in business and could not support his family. He decided that he would go away to try his luck somewhere else. He told his wife that this same rich man had engaged him to do business in a certain city and that she should go to collect part of his salary each Thursday at the rich man's place of business. The wife didn't know that this "arrangement" was her husband's invention.

On the first Thursday she presented herself at the office and demanded her husband's salary. The rich man overheard her conversation with his secretary and said, "She is quite right. Pay her the money each Thursday. Sorry, I forgot to tell you about this arrangement sooner."

Time passed and when the husband returned home, after having been very successful, he found that his wife had managed well on the "salary" she drew every week. With that, the husband went off to see the rich man, thanked him for his good-heartedness and tried to repay him. But the rich man would not hear of it.

The case was brought before Reb Levi Yitzchok. "My verdict was that the husband could not compel the rich man to accept the money."



A certain man in great financial difficulties came to this rich man and asked for a loan.

"Who will be your guarantor in case you cannot repay the loan?" he asked.

The only guarantor I can offer you is the Alm-ghty" he answered.

"Very good," said the rich man. "You could not have chosen a more reliable guarantor."

Sometime later, the man came to return the money he had borrowed.

"Your Guarantor repaid me the loan through an unexpected profit," said the rich man. "So, you see, you don't owe me anything."

The grateful Jew insisted that the case be brought before me," said Reb Levi Yitzchok. "This time, too, I said that the rich man could not be compelled to accept money which he did not want."

"So you see, my friends," concluded Reb Levi Yitzchok, "that the deceased was not mean or miserly. He just preferred giving charity anonymously. And that way of giving charity is the highest form of charity-giving. The man who has just been buried was truly a great, saintly Jew."

From "The Storyteller"

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

On the weekly Torah Portion

Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth (Deut. 32:1)

Why did Moses address the heavens and earth? Because G-d had already likened the Children of Israel to these things.

G-d said to Abraham: "Look up into the heavens and count the stars...so shall your seed be." G-d also promised, "And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth." (Sifri)

Of the Rock that bore you were you unmindful, and you forgot the G-d Who bore you (Deut. 32:10)

When G-d created man He gave him the gift of being "unmindful"--the ability to forget and allow time to heal the wounds which would befall him in this world. But, G-d claims, what did you do with this gift? You misused it, and forgot about Me! (Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk)

He was corrupted; the blemish is not to his children (Deut. 32:5)

No matter how corrupt and degraded a person may be, he always wants better for his children. He does not want them to continue in his sorry ways...

(Rabbi Yonasan Eibeshutz)

And G-d saw and He was angry, because of the provoking of His sons and daughters (Deut. 32:19)

G-d's wrath is aroused when He sees the "provocation of His sons and daughters," that is, ill-feeling and controversy between one Jew and his fellow. Such behavior brings down G-d's anger upon His children.

(Rabbi Moshe Pollak)



6:14 Candle Lighting Time

from a pre-existing flame
NY Metro Area

2 Tishrei / October 4
Torah Portion Ha'azinu
Shabbat Shuva
Shabbat ends 7:11 PM



1843

2 Tishrei, 5785

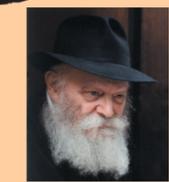
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The Weekly Publication
for Every Jewish Person

נוסד תור ימי השלושים

Dedicated to the memory of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson

"To You I lifted up my eyes, You Who dwell in heaven" (Psalm 123:1)



LIVING WITH THE REBBE

from the teachings of the Rebbe
on the Torah portion

The name Shabbat Shuva is taken from the opening words of this week's haftora, "Shuva Yisrael - Return, O Israel." The second name, Shabbat Teshuva, is derived from the fact that this Shabbat falls out in the middle of the Aseret Yemei Teshuva, the Ten Days of Repentance. This name is also associated with the haftora, as its central theme is returning to G-d.

The two names of this Shabbat reveal a timely lesson.

The phrase "Shuva - Return" is grammatically a command. G-d commands us to return to Him in repentance.

Teshuva, by contrast, is a noun denoting the action itself, the actual return to G-d.

The word "Shuva" relates more to the One who issues the command than the person being addressed. It implies a situation in which the command has already been issued, but not yet carried out. The command itself imparts a certain measure of strength, but does not ensure that it will necessarily be fulfilled in the future.

"Teshuva," on the other hand, implies that the action has already been taken, i.e., that the teshuva has already been done. But if that were the case, why would we continue to refer to this Shabbat as Shabbat Teshuva?

The answer is that the act of teshuva consists of both the command to return to G-d and its subsequent implementation.

Shuva teaches us that even after a Jew has done teshuva, he still needs to work on himself. No matter how much teshuva a person has done, it is always possible to rise higher; hence the directive, "Return, O Israel unto the L-rd your G-d." Thus it is understood that there is always room for improvement, for an even deeper and more infinite level of teshuva, as G-d Himself is Infinite and without limitations.

This, then, is the lesson of Shabbat Shuva: A Jew must never content himself with whatever spiritual accomplishments he has already attained. He must never think that, because he has worked on himself a whole week, he is now entitled to "rest" because it is Shabbat. No, today is Shabbat Shuva! Even after one has done teshuva, more work is required. For the service of teshuva is continual and without end.

Adapted from Hitva'aduyot 5744, Volume 1

The Rainmaker

By Rabbi Lazer Gurkow

Before his passing, Moses composed a beautiful song of lilted poetry. "May the heavens listen as I speak / And may the earth hearken to my words / May my teaching flow like rain / And may my words drip like dew."

The Midrash offers the following homily: "Israel requested that their inspiration flow like rain, to which G-d replied, 'No, not like rain. Better that it should drip like dew.'" What is the difference? Both are moist and both can be seen on the ground.

The difference is in the origin. Rain is formed when moisture from below evaporates and rises into the atmosphere. Dew is formed here on earth, when warmer vapors come in contact with cooler surfaces.

OSCILLATING SOULS

Souls oscillate between the lower spiritual planes, which are further from G-d, and the higher spiritual planes, which are closer to G-d.

Like the waters upon the surface of earth, we are often content with life here below where we are spiritually distant from G-d. Tossed about upon waves of whim, we often focus on the body rather than the soul. But eventually we too feel the need to ascend.

It is then that our minds turn to G-d and we remember our spiritual void. We pine for a more meaningful existence. Our enthusiasm for our material lifestyle evaporates and we rise to a higher, more spiritual plane. From this vantage point we look back

with dismay and form clouds of remorse in the higher atmosphere.

But these clouds must not be permitted to linger. Beads of inspiration must form within our heart and precipitate a torrential outpouring of love for G-d and inspire us to observe the Torah and mitzvot.

SPONTANEOUS DESIRES, CONSCIOUS RESPONSE

Like raindrops that form from evaporated waters below, so did Moses ask G-d to accept our penitence, raise us to a higher plane and precipitate within us an outpouring of love for G-d.

G-d replied that inspiration would instead drip like dew.

Dew forms on the surface below and does not require its vapors to rise. G-d was saying that He would work to inspire our souls "down below," independently of the choices we make.

We suddenly experience a need to attend a service at a synagogue or to join a Torah class, to light Shabbat candles or to donate to charity. These desires appear spontaneously; they are not stimulated by anything we see or hear.

G-d stimulates the desire but leaves the implementation to us. We can either confine ourselves to a single inspiration, or we can utilize this inspiration to stimulate further inspiration for additional mitzvot.

In other words, we can either make rain or wait for the next dew.

Let's choose to make rain.

Dedicated by Itchy & Shaina Glassner
in honor of our children, Mendel, Motti, Esther and Sholom
לגמור חתימה טובה שנה טובה ומתוקה

