"Open my eyes so that I may see the **wonders** of Your Torah"

בס"ד

Wonders

Weekly Magazine of the Shiurim and Farbrengens
of HaRav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

Issue 204

Shabbat Devarim-Chazon 5786 ❁ July 17-18, 2026

שַׁבָּת דְּבָרִים-חֲזוֹן ❁ ג-ד אָב תשפ"ו



After the prayer, the Ari said to the man: "Tell me, what is written in this book?" The man replied: "What can I say, for God has withheld honor from me. I am among the anussim, and seeing that everyone around me was praying from a book, I took this one out of embarrassment. I do not know what is written in it."

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The Lubavitcher Rebbe to Rav Ginsburgh, Elul 5741

"…It would be proper to publish your classes in book form. With blessings for success…"



Wonders

An anthology from the shiurim and farbrengens
of Harav **Yitzchak Ginsburgh**

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THE THREE WEEKS
WHAT A MISTAKE

On Shabbat Mattot — which always falls during the days of The Three Weeks, in which we mourn the destruction of the Temple — we read of the anger of Moses and of the error that came in its wake. In the note before us there is a contemplation of how the anger and error of "the man of God" have a root in the Name Elokim (אֱלֹקִים), the attribute of judgment that punishes the sinners — something that found special expression in the destruction of the Temple. A short and sharp contemplation — with a sweetening at its end — for the days of mourning over the destruction.

THE ERROR OF "THE MAN OF GOD"

"One who comes to anger comes to error"[1] (בָּא לִכְלָל כַּעַס בָּא לִכְלָל טָעוּת). This statement was said of Moses, "the choicest of mankind."[2] The error is "an error in judgment [*shikul hada'at*]."[3] Anger removes the *da'at*, the mind (Moses is the *da'at* of the totality of the souls of Israel[4]).

Now, Moses is "the man of God [*Elokim*]"[5] — "from his midpoint downward, he is 'man,' and from his midpoint upward, he is '*Elokim*.'"[6] Anger comes from "his midpoint downward," from his "man" aspect, and this relates to the fact that "man" (אִישׁ) is cognate with "fire"[7] (אֵשׁ) and is therefore prone to anger.[8]

Yet the Zohar[9] interprets his "man" aspect in "the man of God" as "the husband of the Queen" (בַּעְלָהּ דְּמַטְרוֹנִיתָא). Thus, the "man" aspect in Moses is the husband, the bestower, and "the *Elokim*" aspect is his queen, his woman who receives from the man. The "queen" or woman here designates the *sefirah* of kingdom, the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence), also known as the Congregation of Israel (*Knesset Yisrael*), which receives from the *sefirah* of foundation, which is above her. Accordingly, it would seem that it is the *Elokim* aspect of Moses that is prone to anger for *Elokim* is the attribute of judgment,[10] from which the *sefirah* of kingdom is constructed[11] following the rule that "the law [judgment] of the kingdom is law" (דִּינָא דְּמַלְכוּתָא דִּינָא).[12]

1. *Sifrei*, Numbers 31:21.
2. See Maimonides' Commentary on the Mishnah on Perek Chelek, in the seventh principle (and in the introduction to the Beit Yosef).
3. *Sanhedrin* 6a; 33a.
4. *Sha'ar HaPesukim, Shemot*.
5. Deuteronomy 33:1; Joshua 14:6; Psalms 90:1; Ezra 3:2; 1 Chronicles 23:14; 2 Chronicles 30:16.
6. *Devarim Rabbah* 11:4.
7. See Radak's *Sefer HaShorashim*, *s.v.* אישׁ.
8. See *Sotah* 17a; *Yayin Mesame'ach*, vol. 4, *sha'ar* 6, in the teaching "*Esh MiMayim*" ("Fire from Water").
9. *Zohar* 1:6b.
10. See *Bereishit Rabbah* 12:15 (cited in Rashi's commentary on Genesis 1:1); *Rabbeinu Bachya* on Genesis 2:4.
11. *Eitz Chaim* 25:2; *Ibid*. 34; *Ta'amei HaMitzvot*, *Beha'alotecha*; *Siddur im Dach*, *s.v. Barukh Merachem al HaAretz*.
12. *Bava Kama* 113a.

HOW TO RECTIFY THE SINNER?

In any event, we learn from this that the rule that "one who comes to anger comes to error" holds also with regard to "*Elokim*" in the plain sense. What is the "error" of *Elokim*? The error, so to speak, is that He punishes the one with whom He is angry!

And should you say that the punishment is in essence a rectification (and not vengeance[13]), we shall reply: our master the Ba'al Shem Tov taught us[14] that there is another way to rectify the sinner — not the way of "the left hand pushes away", through punishment, but rather precisely the way of "the right hand draws [the other] near"[15] — to draw the sinner ever closer; for example, to appoint him as an important minister in the government. Precisely through this drawing-near of the sinner, he will come to recognize the greatness of the King, "*Havayah*, the God of Israel, is King"[16] (הוי׳ אֱלקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֶלֶךְ), and will surrender before Him. Then he will rejoice and weep as one — the perfection of man's Divine service in general and of the service of repentance to God in particular: "weeping is lodged in my heart on this side, and joy is lodged in my heart on that side"[17] (בְּכִיָה תְּקִיעָא בְּלִבָּאי מִסְטְרָא דְּא וְחֶדְוָה תְּקִיעָא בְּלִבָּאי מִסְטְרָא דְּא). To be "lodged" means a firm fixing of the mind upon the greatness of God,[18] upon His kindness, and upon His abundant mercies.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

Now note that the value of, "one who comes to anger comes to error" (**בָּא לִכְלַל כַּעַס בָּא לִכְלַל טָעוּת**) is the same as "the Holy Temple" (**בֵּית הַמִקְדָּשׁ**). What a mistake it was to destroy the Temple (out of anger[19])!

And should you say that the destruction was of the sort where one "razing in order to rebuild"[20] a better building,[21] we shall reply: even into the First and Second Temples (and even into the Tabernacle of Moses—his handiwork is eternal[22]) — which were constructed by human effort[23] — God could have brought down, in "fire from heaven," the supernal Temple,[24] vesting it like a soul in a body within the physical building.[25] Then, by the supernal revelation emanating from this upgraded Temple all would return to God with a whole heart.

But there is none among us who knows what the profound intention of God is.[26]

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13. *Hilchot Shabbat* 2:3 (and elsewhere); *Brit HaLevi*, ch. 1; *Shem MiShmuel*, *Ki Teitzei* 5677, *s.v. "BaMidrash Rabbah Shale'ach Teshalach"*; *Beit HaLevi*, vol. 3, *derush* 13.
14. *Keter Shem Tov* (Kehot edition), §108.
15. *Sotah* 47a; *Sanhedrin* 107b; *Zohar* 3:177b.
16. *Musaf* for *Rosh Hashanah*.
17. Based on *Zohar* 3:75a. *Tanya*, ch. 34 and *Iggeret HaTeshuvah*, ch. 11.
18. A common locution in Chassidic teachings. See, for example, *Or HaTorah*, *Bereishit*, vol. 4, p. 691b.
19. See Jeremiah 7:20 and 32:31. Lamentations 2:1.
20. *Shabbat* 31b.
21. See *Likkutei Sichot*, vol. 29, for *Parashat Devarim-Chazon*, §5.
22. See *Sotah* 9a.
23. *Zohar* 3:221a.
24. *Rashi* on *Sukkah* 41a; *Rosh Hashanah* 30a; *Menachot* 68a. *Tosafot* on *Shevuot* 15b, *s.v. "Ein"* (in the name of the *Tanchuma* — see *Tanchuma*, *Ki Tissa* 13; *Pekudei* 11; and *Tanchuma* Buber, *Bereishit* 17). And so is implied in *Zohar* 3:221a (and see also 1:21a; 1:28a; 2:59a; 2:108a).
25. See *Malbim* on Ezra 6:16 (and the sources cited in *El Givat HaLevonah*, ch. 5, §7).
26. Based on Psalms 74:9.

How is it that the terrible length of the bitter exile is worthwhile for us, in order to elevate all of humanity, together with all the mineral, vegetable, animal, and speaking [creatures], to see the revelation of His very essence, in the future to come,[27] when the entire world will be a Temple — a dwelling place in the lower realms[28] for the Holy Blessed One.

27. Isaiah 40:5.
28. *Tanchuma*, *Naso* 16. *Tanya* ch. 36.

THE UVECHEIN: APPLIED TORAH

- Anger comes from "his midpoint downward, he is a man" and man (אִישׁ) is cognate with fire (אֵשׁ) and thus prone to anger.
- What is the "error" of God? That He punishes the one with whom He is angry!
- "One who comes to anger comes to error" (**בָּא לִכְלַל כַּעַס בָּא לִכְלַל טָעוּת**) is numerically equal to the Temple (**בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ**), 861 — what an error, to destroy the Temple (out of anger)!

STORY

RABBI ISAAC LURIA: HIGH-INTENSITY TORAH TRAINING

Rabbi Yitzchak Luria Ashkenazi (the Ari) was born in Jerusalem in the year 5294 (1534) to his father Rabbi Shlomo, of the renowned Luria family, and to his mother, daughter of the Francis family of Jerusalem. In his youth his father passed away, and he moved with his mother to Egypt, to the home of his uncle. There he studied under Rabbi Betzalel Ashkenazi, author of the Shitah Mekubetzet, and under the Radbaz. During his years in Egypt, he immersed himself deeply in the holy Book of Zohar, merited a revelation of Elijah the Prophet, and uncovered a new and profound system in Kabbalah. At Elijah's instruction he made aliyah to Tzfat in his final years. Over the course of three years, he taught his system to a select group of students, many of whom had been like the Ari himself, disciples of his predecessor, Rabbi Moses Corovero. Among them were Rabbi Yisrael Sarug and Rabbi Joseph Ibn Tabul. His primary disciple though was Rabbi Chaim Vital, whom the Ari selected to write an official version of his teachings. Rabbi Chaim Vital's titled the volume containing his teacher's core principles Eitz Chaim (The Tree of Life).

The Ari, of blessed memory, departed this world on the 5th of Menachem Av, 5332 (1572), at the age of thirty-eight, and was interred in Tzfat, adjacent to Rabbi Moses Cordovero. He was greatly blessed in that his Kabbalah was accepted with great respect by all parts of the Jewish people, who continue to study it to this very day.

In his youth, before he had yet plumbed the depths of Kabbalistic wisdom, the holy Ari sat one day in the synagogue at prayer, and beside him sat another man. The Ari glanced over and noticed a book in the man's hand. He looked more closely and perceived within it sublime mysteries. After the prayer, the Ari said to the man: "Tell me, what is written in this book?" The man replied: "What can I say, for God has withheld honor from me. I am among the *anussim* (forced conversos to Christianity, who kept their Judaism in secret), and seeing that everyone around me was praying from a book, I took this one out of embarrassment. I do not know what is written in it." The Ari said to him: "If so, sell me this book, and I will give you a siddur in exchange." The man replied: "Am I so lacking in funds that I would sell you the book for money? I have but

one request of you: ask your father-in-law to waive the customs duty I owe, and in return I will give you the book." Since the holy Ari greatly desired the book, he prevailed upon his father-in-law, who indeed agreed to waive the duty.

In exchange, the Ari received the book, and he would study it together with the Zohar with every fiber of his strength, through fasting and mortification. Thus, he merited that each night he would be told in a dream whether he had correctly understood the words of the Zohar or not. At times he was told that his understanding was correct, but was not the intent of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the Mishnaic sage whose teachings it contains. At other times he was told that if he wished to grasp a certain passage, he would need to undertake further mortifications — and so he would. Perceiving this, he went and secluded himself in a small hut on the bank of the Nile for six years, studying by day and by night in holiness and purity, until he merited that each night his soul was taken on high and he was asked in which heavenly academy he wished to study and from whom he wished to learn; wherever he wished, he was brought. Awesome secrets were transmitted to him, and in the morning he would not forget a single thing and would reveal what he had received to his students. He likewise merited *ru'ach hakodesh*, and at times Elijah the Prophet would appear to him and teach him the hidden dimensions of Torah.

His student Rabbi Avraham HaLevi, of blessed memory, related that once, on the Shabbat of Parashat Balak, he came to visit the Ari and found him sleeping his afternoon sleep. He noticed that the Ari's lips were moving in his slumber. Rabbi Avraham drew close and inclined his ear toward the Ari's mouth to hear what he was saying. At that moment the Ari awoke and found him standing beside him. He said: "What are you doing here?" Rabbi Avraham replied: "May the master forgive me. I saw that his honored lips were moving, and I leaned in to hear what the Rabbi was saying." The Ari said to him: "Whenever I sleep, my soul ascends on high through pathways and channels known to me. The ministering angels come to receive my soul and bring me before the great angel Metat, the minister of the interior in heaven. He asks me to which heavenly academy I wish to go, and in those academies mysteries of Torah are transmitted to me that were never heard even in the time of the sages of the Mishnah." Rabbi Avraham said: "Will the master not reveal to me what he was taught just now?" The Ari smiled and said: "I call heaven and earth to witness: even if I would expound without pause for eighty consecutive years, I could not fully relate all that I had learned this time in the Torah portion of Balam and the donkey."

"Wherein lies your greatness?" Rabbi Chaim Vital once asked his teacher the Ari. "Surely I and other Kabbalists have also labored in the Torah of Kabbalah, yet we have not attained what you have." The Ari replied that the matter depends entirely upon the intensity of one's toil. "If you could truly measure," he said, "the intensity of my labor in Kabbalah, you would not compare your toil to mine."

What can we learn from this story? One might dismiss it with a general remark about the importance of effort and toil in the service of God. But if we sharpen our gaze, much is revealed, all of it necessary for us as well when we approach our own service of God.

First, the toil the Ari demanded of himself may be divided into two: toil in study through the investment of many hours and intense mental effort, and toil of purification and repentance expressed through fasting and mortification. Indeed, in the Tanya as well, we learn of two forms of toil in contemplation: toil of the flesh (known as *yegi'at basar*) and toil of the soul (known as *yegi'at hanefesh*). Toil of the flesh is self-nullification through heartfelt thoughts of repentance from the depths of the heart, which are the ultimate purpose and inner motivation behind the Ari's mortifications as well. Toil of the soul is prolonged contemplation of Divine content, in complete concentration sustained over a lengthy period. The Ari and the Tanya teach us that toil in Torah without toil in repentance — and likewise its reverse — will not yield the desired result.

Second, once we understand what true toil requires, we must reflect: what qualities bring a person to labor with such intensity? In both the story and the teaching cited here, the Ari's immense submission and self-nullification before the Torah are unmistakable. These qualities caused him to feel that no effort was too great to merit it, and that to truly merit it he must also purify himself by repenting and undergoing mortification. The Ari drew the immeasurable power of his toil, which was truly beyond all reckoning from the total devotion and profound humility he felt before the Torah.

We should note an additional teaching of the Ari. He once related that all his accomplishments came to him through the joy of performing *mitzvot*. The relationship between this and his reply to Rabbi Chaim Vital is bound up in the secret of "Understanding [*binah*] extends as far as acknowledgment [*hod*]." *Binah*, whose inner dimension is joy, extends itself and empowers the *sefirah* of *Hod*, whose essence is devotion and submission.

In conclusion, let us add one further principle — one that presents the Arizal's presaging one of the quintessential Chabad principles. What is striking in the story is that many of the great revelations he merited were of a different character than one might expect from knowledge that is gathered from a supernal source. We might expect that the supernal secrets

would be transmitted and revealed directly, without guiding the receiver to fast, or to investigate more deeply, and without cryptic statements such as your understanding was correct, or not quite precise. That the revelation did not come easily illustrated the Chabad principle known as "serving by one's own power" (עֲבוֹדָה בְּכֹחַ עַצְמוֹ) — which is immeasurably higher than spiritual levels attained by gratis.

In some accounts of these matters, it is told that Elijah the Prophet refused to reveal the plain meaning of the text to the Ari, so that the teaching would be ascribed to the Ari's credit. From this, the Chasidic masters, the *tzaddikim*, understood that the revelation of the *yechidah* (the soul's level that is singularly unified in God) is greater than a revelation of Elijah — for Elijah withheld from the Ari what could only be disclosed through the total devotion of his soul to the Torah. One may go further still and speculate that the Torah ultimately revealed to the Ari through his efforts was of such a stature that even Elijah the Prophet could not have disclosed it. The true willingness to toil in Torah reveals a person's own Torah — a Torah of the *yechidah*, singular to him alone.

The Maharal, a contemporary of the Ari, reflected on the spiritual level of Elijah as it is described in a Talmudic passage recording Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi's encounter with the Mashiach. In that account, Elijah serves as an intermediary between the Mashiach and Rabbi Yehoshua — explaining to the latter how to find the Mashiach, and then explaining the Mashiach's reply that he will come "today."

When Rabbi Yehoshua was disappointed that the Mashiach had not come, Elijah interprets: *"'Today' — if you will but hearken to His voice."* According to the Maharal, the account is not merely a riddle and its solution, but three distinct spiritual levels: the Mashiach himself dwells in a world of redemption, in which he can indeed come today; Rabbi Yehoshua is bound to the present conditions of the Jewish people, who are still in exile; and Elijah mediates between these two planes, pointing toward the capacity to move between worlds and to advance toward redemption.

In the context of our discussion, the revelation of the *yechidah* of the soul is the disclosure of the personal spark of Mashiach within it. It is for this reason that the revelation of the *yechidah* surpasses the revelation of Elijah — for Elijah brings the redemption down into reality through conditions and contractions. When the *yechidah* of the soul is revealed, the redemption is immediate, palpable, and unconditional.

PARASHAT DEVARIM-CHAZON

FROM DESTRUCTION TO REDEMPTION

This Shabbat has a special name, *Shabbat Chazon*, the "Shabbat of Vision," named after the *Haftarah*, the reading from the books of the Prophets, which comes from the opening chapter of the book of Isaiah. This week, we also begin the Book of Deuteronomy (*Devarim*), the last book of the *Chumash*, the Five Books of Moses. *Parashat Devarim* and this *Haftarah* are always read the Shabbat before *Tishah B'Av*, the ninth day of the month of *Av*.

Tishah B'Av is the concluding fast day of the Three Weeks, when we remember and commemorate not only the destruction of the two Temples in Jerusalem but many other tragic occurrences in Jewish history. In this article we will try to show how these three events are connected.

WORDS FROM THE HEART

The book of Deuteronomy, in Hebrew, is called *Devarim*, which literally means "words" or "sayings." These are the words that Moses spoke to the new generation that would be entering the Land of Israel after 40 years of wandering in the desert. The entire book of *Devarim* spans a mere 37 days and was Moses' last will and testament to his beloved people.[1]

There is an expression from the Sages that "words that come from the heart, enter the heart."[2] During these 37 days Moses was speaking from his heart to the people. 37 is also the numerical value of "the heart" (**הַלֵּב**). Thus, we see an intrinsic connection between the saying of the Sages that "words that come from the heart enter the heart" and the book of *Devarim*. This connection is strengthened by the tradition that this book differs from the previous four books of the *Chumash* in that those books are written in the 3rd person, whereas Deuteronomy was spoken directly by Moses in a first-person narrative. According to tradition, the *Shechinah*, God's Divine Presence, spoke through the throat of Moses,[3] yet at the same time his words emanated from his inner most heart.

PERMUTATIONS OF THE HEART

The letters of the word, "the heart," when permuted, create a very meaningful phrase of three words: "the vapor]of the mouth] enflames the heart"[4] (הֶבֶל לַהַב הַלֵּב). The *hevel*, the vapor that come out of the mouth, enflames and inspires, *lahav,* the heart, *halev*, of the one speaking

1. Deuteronomy 1:3 states that Moses began to speak on the first day of the 11th month (*Shevat*) and the Torah ends with Moses' passing, which according to tradition was on the 7th day of *Adar*, a total of 37 days.

2. Based on *Berachot* 6b.

3. *Zohar* 3:232a.

4. *Mivchar Sheurei Hitbonenut*, vol. 3, *Adameh L'Elyon*, p. 98.

as well as those listening. This phrase is another way to express that "words that come from the heart enter the heart."

SHABBAT CHAZON

Inasmuch as we are speaking about the power of words to inspire, the special *Haftarah* after which this Shabbat is named, *Shabbat Chazon*, comes from the great prophet Isaiah, whom many consider the greatest prophet other than Moses. In this *Haftarah*, which is always read before *Tishah B'Av*, he is warning the people that their deeds are leading to catastrophe—that their lack of justice one to the other and their lack of deep connection to the Torah and God is propelling them toward disaster.[5] His ultimate purpose was to inspire Israel to repent, thus avoiding catastrophe.

It is important to note that in the vision of Isaiah, he uses the word the poetic form of "how" (אֵיכָה): "How could it be that [Israel and] Jerusalem has [metaphorically] become a harlot, disloyal to God."[6] In the portion of *Devarim*, Moses also employs this same word when he says, "How can I carry the burden of all of your complaining?"[7] Finally, the name of the book that the prophet Jeremiah composed to document and mourn the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple is this same word, *Eichah*,[8] the poetic for of "How": "How could it be that the majestic city of Jerusalem is sitting in solitude?[9]" This is the book we read in our mourning on *Tishah B'Av*. Thus, we see how *parashat Devarim*, *Shabbat Chazon*, and *Tishah B'Av* are all connected by the word *Eichah*, the poetic "How." Even more so, Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, each in their own ways were sharing words of their inner heart to inspire the people to walk a straight path of Torah and closeness to God. Although the people at that time did not heed their words, their eternal relevance has subsequently moved hearts for millennium.

It is important to note that the word *eichah* (אֵיכָה) has an even earlier Biblical source. After Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, they hid in the Garden of Eden hoping to avoid the inevitable confrontation with God. God called out to Adam, Ayeka? "Where are you?"[10] (אַיֶּכָּה), which is spelled identically to *Eichah*, but is pronounced slightly differently. God, of course, is not literally asking Adam (and Eve) where they are for He is Omniscient; rather, he is challenging them to answer a series of existential questions: How could you have done such a thing? Where are you now that you have done this? What motivated you to distance yourselves from Me to such a degree that now you feel you must hide from Me? What will you do to rectify the situation?

THE VISION OF THE THIRD TEMPLE

The famous Rebbe Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, a contemporary and close friend of the Alter Rebbe, stated that on this Shabbat, every Jew, in potential, can have a vision of the Third Temple. This very important teaching has been repeated for generations.

5. Isaiah 1:1-27.
6. Ibid 1:21.
7. Deuteronomy 1:12.
8. In English it is titled Lamentations.
9. Lamentations 1:1
10. Genesis 3:9.

Chasidut explains that Rebbe Levi Yitzchak's meaning was that we seek not just a vision of the physical Third Temple, but a much more inner vision. For in fact, the first two Temples were destroyed. Therefore, we do not want only what was once, rather we are seeking a vision of something deeper, more profound, an *ohr chadash*, a "new light." This sort of vision is available on *Shabbat Chazon*.[11]

When God first commanded the Jewish people to build a Tabernacle, the Torah states: "Make for me a holy place and I will dwell within them."[12] What followed were the instructions to build the Tabernacle, the *Mishkan*. Yet the precise the language is not "I will dwell in it," but "I will dwell *in them*"—in the heart and soul of each and every person.

That is the ultimate revelation of Godliness in the world. Visualizing the physical Third Temple provides us with only a superficial vision. What is called for, and is possible on the Shabbat of Vision, is to see God's Presence emanating from the Temple and infusing all of creation, making it possible for every individual to become a dwelling place for the Divine Presence.[13]

SALVATION FROM TROUBLE

"A time of trouble has come upon Jacob and from it salvation will come."[14] Chasidut explains that in a very literal translation, it reads "and from it"—to mean salvation will come from the time of trouble itself. This is an important theme that runs through these Three Weeks when we adopt various mourning customs to emphasize the tribulations and trauma of Jewish history. Yet this must not be the end point. The idea is to see that from the destruction, from the time of sorrow itself, will come the redemption. Redemption is thus born from faith in a rectified future which is then drawn into the present itself.[15]

An example of this idea is found in a story about Rabbi Akiva and his companions, who were walking in Jerusalem past the site of the destruction of the second Temple.[16] Rabbi Akiva's companions, all sages, ripped their clothing and cried, but Rabbi Akiva laughed. They said to him, "How could you be laughing?" He said to them, "Why are you crying?" They said, "Is it not obvious? We are witnessing all the prophetic warnings of the destruction come true before our very eyes." Rabbi Akiva explained to them that now that we have seen that the prophecies of destruction have occurred, we can be assured that the prophecies of consolation and redemption will also occur. They said to him, "Rabbi Akiva, you have comforted us."

Rabbi Akiva was able to see beyond the destruction, even when all that could be seen were the ruins of the Temple. For he understood that Moses, Isaiah, and Jeremiah (along with many other prophets) not only warned the people of catastrophe if they did not change their ways they

11. *Yaiyn Yitzchak*, *Devarim*/Shabbat *Chazon*, pp. 205-208.
12. Exodus 25:8.
13. *Yaiyn Yitzchak*, *loc. cit*. *Hazman HaPenimi*, pp. 329-331.
14. Jeremiah 30:7.
15. *Ma'ayan Ganim*, *Devarim*. *Awakening the Spark Within*, pp. 5-6.
16. *Makot* 24a-b.

also prophesied consolation, redemption, and promises of God's eternal love as well. Rabbi Akiva could see that within exile was the seed of a future redemption. His attitude of faith was actually helping manifest that future redemption.

CONSOLATION AND JOY

Another way that we can see this same idea of redemption coming from destruction is that the *Haftarah* from Isaiah that we read before Tishah B'Av is followed in the subsequent weeks from after Tishah B'Av until Rosh Hashanah with seven *Haftarot* of consolation, all from the book of Isaiah.[17] The same prophet who rebukes the people and warns them from his heart that they must do *teshuvah*, becomes the messenger of consolation in the seven weeks after Tishah B'Av. Once again, we see the theme that from destruction will come redemption.

Another of the great Chasidic Rebbes was the *Choizeh*, or Seer of Lublin. The word, *Choizeh*, comes from the same root as the word *chazon*, "vision." He interpreted in a unique manner a statement by the sages: "When the month of Av begins, joy is lessened."[18] He rendered it as, "When the month of Av begins, we lessen *with joy*." Certainly, the *Choizeh* of Lublin fulfilled all of the mourning traditions of these days, but he was emphasizing that commemorating and remembering the various destructions should not bring us to sadness or depression. Rather it should lead us to adopt a determined inner, hopeful and joyful attitude to rectify past mistakes, inspiring us to act in a manner that would bring redemption ever closer. Thus, as the Sages taught: Those who truly mourn over the destruction of the Temple will merit to see it rebuilt.[19] Mourning and joy are not mutually exclusive; they can actually strengthen each other.

THE SPROUT OF REDEMPTION

What then is this inner joy the *Choizeh* of Lublin was advocating? This joy is expressed in the tradition that Mashiach is born on *Tishah B'Av*.[20] On the very day which is metaphorically the lowest day of the year, when we literally sit on the floor and mourn for the various destructions throughout Jewish history, on this very day we are assured that out of all of our exiles will come the ultimate redemption of the Messianic era.

The Sages teach: "Who is the wise? One who sees that which is born."[21] That which is born refers one who sees all the potential in the present moment and how it will actualize in the future. During the Three Weeks this means envisioning redemption that will come from destruction, light from darkness and sweet from bitter. Although the vision of Isaiah we read on *Shabbat Chazon* begins with harsh rebuke, it ends with the promise of reconciliation between God and the Jewish people and the promise that the days of the future will be days of hope, healing, and redemption.[22]

17. For an explanation of how the three *Haftarot* before Tisha B'Av and the seven afterwards correspond to the ten sefirot, see *Yaiyn Yitzchak, loc. cit.*
18. Mishnah *Ta'anit* 4:6.
19. *Ta'anit* 30b and *Bava Batra* 60b.
20. Jerusalem Talmud *Berachot* 2:4.
21. *Tamid* 32a.
22. 1:18-19 and 1:26-27.

When the *Choizeh* of Lublin said that we should lessen with joy, he was encouraging us to not only hold on to the hope of the future but to joyously experience it in the present moment. The letters of Mashiach, (מָשִׁיחַ) when permuted, spell "he will be joyful" (יִשְׂמַח). And so, in these days, which are days of seriousness, deep contemplation, and the realization of the tragedies of Jewish history, there is a spark, a sprout of redemption that is waiting to open up and flower.

One of the names that we refer to the Mashiach is *Tzemach*, which means "sprout."[23] All vegetation begins from a sprouting seed. May it be that on this coming Shabbat, we open ourselves to a vision of the future, of a truly "new light." From the darkness will come light, from the bitter will come sweet, and from exile will come redemption.

23. Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15. Zechariah 3:8 and 6:12.

CURRENT EVENTS AND ISSUES

THE NEW STATE OF ISRAEL

This is an AI-based translation of the editorial introduction to the Mattot-Massei 5786 issue of Niflaot. It is based on the issue's main class titled, "The State of Israel, the State of Jacob, and the State of Esau." Lightly edited for clarity.

Some intellectuals have defined the cultural war being fought among the Jews in the Land of Israel as a war between the "Jews" and the "Israelis." This division echoes the lines of the division between the two ancient kingdoms — the religious Kingdom of Judah in the south and the secular Kingdom of Israel in the north. The "Jews" are traditional, loyal to the Judaism that shaped us and sustained us throughout all the generations, with all the travails of the exile, while the "Israelis" attempt to create a new type of Jew who is liberated from exilic-ness and from the traditions of our grandparents, God save us.

But, in truth, there is no longer any place for this division, as the prophet states, "and they shall never again be divided into two kingdoms" (וְלֹא יֵחָצוּ עוֹד לִשְׁתֵּי מַמְלָכוֹת). The leadership indeed must belong to the House of David, of Judah, but in the Land of Israel there must be one state only, "the tribes of Israel together" (יַחַד שִׁבְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל).

The appellation "State of Israel" was "hijacked" by the state that was established out of a pretension to fashion a secular nationalism, and therefore the Lubavitcher Rebbe preferred the use of the term "Land of Israel." Nevertheless, since "Israel" is the superior name of our people, we should

contemplate what the true essence of a state that genuinely merits the title "State of Israel" is, so as to actualize it in reality:

Jacob our father merited the name Israel (יִשְׂרָאֵל) on account of the mastery (שָׂרָה) he attained through victory in the struggle with the archangel of Esau, as the Torah testifies, "for you have striven (שָׂרִיתָ) with God and with men, and you have prevailed." Before that victory, from the day of his birth, he was called Jacob (יַעֲקֹב), because he was born "with his hand grasping Esau's heel (עָקֵב)." Jacob is Esau's twin; they jostle together in the same womb and are locked in constant struggle from birth — just as Jacob's hand grasps Esau's heel, so Esau is a serpent coiled around Jacob's heel, and they have no separate existence. Between these three names (Jacob, Esau, and Israel), the name Israel expresses the Divine thought with which God planned the world — "In thought, Israel preceded all " (יִשְׂרָאֵל עָלוּ בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה); the name Jacob, which remained his name even after God gave him the name Israel, expresses the appearance of the Jewish people within a limited world, straining to survive within it and to reveal-and-speak Godliness into it, like a soul within a body; Esau belongs to the practical domain of the world. He is the body-reality within which we must act, while he attempts to strangle the spirit within the corporeal world of matter.

There are those who attempt to blur the Jewish uniqueness, and to say that in order to establish and govern a "normal" state, which would be part of the family of nations, one must focus on the practical domain ("the deed is the essential thing," הַמַּעֲשֶׂה הוּא הָעִקָּר) — in academia, in the military, in the economy, etc. To this end, they argue, we must establish an egalitarian state, "a state of all its citizens." This state is, in fact, not the Jewish State, but the State of Esau — a state in which the Jews find themselves devoted to the Esau coiled around their heel, their lower reality, without providing a space for their Jewish identity, which is not a personal, individual preference, but a national essence. By contrast, those who understand that Israel must be the state of the Jews, focused on our national identity and destiny, yet continue to demand that it remain bound to the constricted parameters of the world, the twists of diplomacy and the constraints of reality, can establish at most the State of Jacob — a state with positive aspirations, but with a spiritual horizon that will always remain limited.

Our aspiration is to establish a new state, the State of Israel, whose entire purpose is to express God's will and His primordial thought in creating the world, without any limits. The true State of Israel, the "New Israel," aspires to deliver a decisive victory over its enemies both in the physical dimension and in the ideological dimension — "for you have striven with God [an ideological-spiritual enemy] and with men [a tangible-physical enemy], and you have prevailed"!

Translations from Niflaot

Select Hebrew Articles from HaRav Ginsburgh Translated by AI

We are certainly in a new era of Torah learning. With translation becoming easier, even for complex Torah texts like the those capturing HaRav Ginsburgh's teachings, we are pleased to present new weekly translations of the articles appearing in the Hebrew weekly, Niflaot.

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THE LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE OF HOMEOPATHY

Question: The seminars that the Rav gave in the past on homeopathy were, for me, a revolution and a call of direction for clarifying homeopathy from its root. But since the Rav raises reservations regarding the state of homeopathy today, I wish to clarify and understand:

- The Rav writes that homeopathy is based on analyses of words in a foreign language and hence is not attuned to the Holy Tongue and to the true names of the substances.
- A further reservation of the Rav is that the definition of the four elements in homeopathy differs from the definitions of the Torah of Israel. But this matter is not a fundamental principle upon which homeopathic treatment is founded….
- The Rav writes that the homeopathic dilution contains no tangible trace [of the substance] and does not accord with the concepts of nullification (*bitul*) in the teachings of our Sages….
- Is the limitation of a particular method a reason not to use it altogether, until it is clarified in the most precise manner? After all, allopathy too has many deficiencies, which the Rav enumerates, and nevertheless there is no directive not to use that method until it is corrected….

Scan the QR code to read HaRav Ginsburgh's response.