

געבענטשט יארר.

No matter what we say, the main thing is to wish each other a good, sweet year with all our heart – because that is what G-d values the most.

Things I've Learned

By Andy Rooney

I've learned.... That love, not time, heals all wounds.

I've learned.... That the easiest way for me to grow as a person is to surround myself with people smarter than I am..

I've learned.... That everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile.

I've learned.... That no one is perfect until you fall in love with them.

I've learned.... That life is tough, but I'm tougher.

I've learned.... That opportunities are never lost; someone will take the ones you miss.

I've learned.... That when you harbor bitterness, happiness will dock elsewhere.

I've learned.... That I wish I could have told my Mom that I love her one more time before she passed away.

I've learned.... That one should keep his words both soft and tender, because tomorrow he may have to eat them.

I've learned.... That a smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks.

I've learned... That when your newly born grandchild holds your little finger in his little fist, you're hooked for life.

I've learned.... That everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.

I've learned.... That the less time I have to work with, the more things I get done.

Live & Laugh

Ron Chestna, 89 years of age, was stopped by the police around 2 am and was asked where he was going at that time of night. Ron replied, "I'm on my way to a lecture about alcohol abuse and the effects it has on the human body, as well as

smoking and staying out late."

The officer asked, "Really? Who's giving that lecture at this time of night?"

Ron replied, "That would be my wife."

Calendar

- ◆ Shacharis 8:30 am (one minyan)
- ◆ **Rabbi Yossy Goldman's Special Shabbos Shuva Shiur "Teshuvah & Transformation"**
- ◆ Brocha in the Seeff Hall.
- ◆ Mincha: 5:25 pm
- ◆ Shabbos ends: 6:35 pm

EREV YOM KIPPUR - Fri 29 Sep

- ◆ Kapparos
- ◆ Mikveh
- ◆ Mincha 2:30 pm
- ◆ Candles & Start of Fast: 5:48 pm (Blessings for Yom Hakippurim & Shehecheyanu)
- ◆ Kol Nidrei: 6:00 pm

Thank You

to all who contributed generously to the Rabbi's Yom Tov Appeal.
Thanks to your help we were able to give dozens of families a more enjoyable Yom Tov season.

If you have not yet done so, it would be good to do so before Yom Kippur.

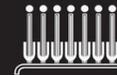
Rabbi Goldman Discretionary Fund
Cheques to Shul office or EFT to
FNB Norwood: Branch Code 258624
Account No: 503 600 89202
Thank You and G-d bless you.

- ◆ **The Scottish Leader Signature** whiskey at Shul is sponsored by **Distell** & available for purchase at **Norman Goodfellows**.
- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of I.deal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011-887-5456/082-854-5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
- ◆ **Vehicles wanted. Any make, any condition. Best prices. Phone ARNOLD ORKIN 082 823 7826**
- ◆ Acknowledgements: Chabad.org
- ◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.



Published by the
Sydenham Highlands North
Hebrew Congregation
Johannesburg, South Africa

Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!



23 Sep 2017 Parshas Ha'azinu—Shuvah 3 Tishrei 5778

Made in Heaven

by: *Rabbi Yossy Goldman*

We knew it was coming, still, when it arrived, the invitation hit us between the eyes. Chaim was getting married! Chaim, my brother's son, who was afflicted by a strange virus as a baby and was never the same thereafter? Chaim, who struggles with his words, his balance, and with his grasp of situations? Chaim, whose Bar Mitzvah I chronicled 16 years ago, was actually getting married?!

And the answer was a resounding Yes!

Chaim is a person with special needs. He is tall and gangling, shaky and awkward. He spent his childhood in special schools and for some years now has been living in a supervised residence with people who have their own or similar issues. I've long maintained that the professional staff and guidance counsellors there are angels in human form who so lovingly and patiently help these young people every day with all their ordinary routines. Every time I see them in action I am overawed.

And then Chaim met Tamar. It was at a day program under the auspices of an outstanding organization called Yachad. It was quite spontaneous and, to the pleasant surprise of the staff members, they went on spending hours talking to each other. It was wonderful and most intriguing to see how they connected. The social workers and counsellors encouraged the relationship which, eventually, with the blessings of their parents and the experienced professionals, became a shidduch.

Chaim has a neurological condition and is developmentally delayed. Tamar has Down's Syndrome. But what a wonderful match! Chaim is over 6 feet tall and Tamar barely reaches his shoulders. But if ever there was a match made in heaven this is the one. In fact, I'm just beginning to get an inkling of what our Sages may have meant when they said that since He created the world G-d has been busy making shidduchim.

Diminutive as she may be, Tamar is respected by those who know her as a feisty young lady with a mind of her own. Chaim loves people, he loves dressing up for Shul, and going out. To see this couple under the Chupah, he in a *kapota* and black hat, just like his brothers before him, and she in her beautiful wedding gown looking as radiant as any bride, brought beaming smiles and torrents of tears to the large crowd of guests.

For the Sheva Brochos at my sister's home, I composed some Grammen, a Jewish traditional, limerick-like song put to rhyme. I said that *at the Chupah, 600 hearts were swelling, while their grandparents in beaven were kvelling*. Even the photographer, a seasoned professional, confessed that while he's done many hundreds of weddings this was the first time he ever cried at a Chupah.

We all pray that their relationship will blossom and that with the love and support from their family, friends and counsellors this special couple will build a beautiful life for themselves filled with personal happiness to the nachas of all their loved ones.

And what incredibly loving, supportive, and wise parents Chaim is blessed to have. Of course, they

too, have their moments. Don't we all? But to have nurtured this special son of theirs to this point in his life speaks volumes of their deep love, unswerving commitment, and resolute tenacity.

In fact, it was their own personal experience that inspired them to establish a fund to assist parents with the burden of Jewish special education tuition fees that go with their circumstances. Their main fundraiser is an annual concert in Brooklyn which is the musical and social highlight of the year for their Crown Heights community.

And although I only got to meet them at the wedding, I know that Tamar's parents are made of similar stuff.

I also had the opportunity and privilege of meeting some of Chaim's friends. They're quite a motley crew. But they're basically a happy bunch of guys who seem genuinely content with their lot in life. Each is unique in his own way, but there is a beautiful camaraderie between them.

At the *Oifruf*, they all came to my brother's house for a Kiddush-Lunch and it was particularly poignant (and also quite funny) to hear each of them impatiently waiting their turn to give Chaim their sincerest blessings for his future.

With all his challenges, Chaim is special in more ways than one. He can sometimes be difficult and inappropriate, but he is often wise and witty. He can be cheeky, but also sweet and caring. In fact, at the Sheva Brochos after Tamar got upset about something, I overheard Chaim saying "I'm going into the kitchen to talk to her. She's very sensitive. I need to calm her down."

Actually, come to think of it, I guess Chaim is just like all of us. Aren't we all a complex, complicated mix of so many different emotions and characteristics? Don't we all have our good times and bad? Aren't we all gracious and courteous one day and quick-tempered and abrupt the next? Haven't we all experienced those moments when we weren't on our best behaviour and regretted things we said or did?

I learned that people with special needs are just the same as the rest of us. We're all an interesting configuration of so many diverse facets. We all have our gifts and talents; our faults and foibles. We all have our skills and expertise; our eccentricities and idiosyncrasies.

I concluded my little Grammen song with these words.

We should all say Boruch Hashem, and regret whenever we complained or we grumbled. Because when we look at our Chosson and Kallah, we can only be humbled.

Parsha Pointers

*Ha'azinu: Artscroll Chumash pg 1100;
Living Torah pg 1025*

The greater part of the Torah reading of *Haaazinu* ("Listen In") consists of a 70-line "song" delivered by Moses to the people of Israel on the last day of his earthly life.

Calling heaven and earth as witnesses, Moses exhorts the people to "*Remember the days of old / Consider the years of many generations / Ask your father, and he will recount it to you / Your elders, and they will tell you*" how G-d "found them in a desert land," made them a people, chose them as His own, and bequeathed them a bountiful land. The Song also warns against the pitfalls of plenty -- "*Yeshurun grew fat and kicked / You have grown fat, thick and rotund / He forsook G-d who made him / And spurned the Rock of his salvation*" -- and the terrible calamities that would result, which Moses describes as G-d "hiding His face." Yet in the end, he promises, G-d will avenge the blood of His servants and be reconciled with His people and land.

The Parshah concludes with G-d's instruction to Moses to ascend the summit of Mount Nebo, from which he will behold the Promised Land before dying on the mountain. "For you shall see the land opposite you; but you shall not go there, into the land which I give to the children of Israel."

Sydenham Shul 24 Main Street, Rouxville, 2192.

Telephone: 640-5021, Fax: 485-2810

E-mail: sydsbul@sydsbul.co.za

Website: www.sydsbul.co.za

www.facebook.com/sydenhamshul

Am I Just Too Good For You?

By Rabbi Aron Moss

Question:

Is it possible to be too good? I sometimes think that if I keep on working on myself, I will always stay single because I will be too far ahead of the guys out there. Do I need to limit my self-improvement?

Answer:

I wouldn't worry about that. You can never be too good. I'd be worried about something else.

It is sometimes easy to confuse being righteous with being self-righteous. But in fact the two are worlds apart. A righteous person always sees the good in others. A self-righteous person can't get over their own goodness. I'm sure you can imagine which of the two is better company.

That's why the great Chassidic master, the Chozeh of Lublin, said, "I prefer a wicked person who knows they are wicked, to a righteous person who knows they are righteous." The first has a certain openness, because they know they have a lot to learn. The second is so self-satisfied they leave no room for others in their life.

Even self-improvement can sometimes be just another form of self-absorption. Like the self-help addict that is so busy becoming a better person they don't have time for anyone else. "I'd love to help you but I am working on my compassion right now."

Don't take yourself too seriously. Take others seriously. Notice their needs, and try to be there for them. Notice their goodness, and try to learn from them. Then you will not only be a good person, you will also be good company.

What To Do Before Yom Kippur

For the week before Yom Kippur (known as the 10 Days of Repentance), special additions are made to prayers, and people are particularly careful with their mitzvah observance.

We are all human, and we occasionally slip. Is there anyone you may have offended or otherwise hurt? Go ahead and ask for their forgiveness. Are you

carrying any grudges? Now is the time to sincerely and wholeheartedly let them go.

Just as Yom Kippur is a day of fasting, the day before Yom Kippur is set aside for eating and preparing for this holy day. Here are some of the activities that we do on the day before Yom Kippur:

Kaparot is often performed in the wee hours of this morning

- There is a beautiful custom to request and receive a piece of honey cake, so that if, G-d forbid, it was decreed that we need be recipients, it be fulfilled by requesting honey cake and being blessed with a sweet year
- We eat two festive meals, one in early afternoon and another right before the commencement of the fast.
- Many have the custom to immerse in a *mikvah* on this day.
- Extra charity is given. In fact, special charity trays are set up at the synagogue before the afternoon service, which contains the Yom Kippur Al Cheit prayer.
- Just before the fast begins (after the second meal has been concluded), it is customary to bless the children with the Priestly Blessing.

What Is the Traditional Yom Kippur Greeting?

Yom Kippur is a fast day when we ask G-d to forgive us and seal our fate for the coming year in the "Book of Life." As such, Jewish greetings for this time day reflect our prayers for a good, sweet year up ahead.

The catch-all greeting you can use for the entire season is "*Shanah Tovah*" (שנה טובה) which means "Good year." The word "*u'metuka*" (ומתוקה) and sweet, is sometimes appended to the end.

Before (and on) Yom Kippur, when our fates for the coming year are to be sealed, we wish each other "*Gemar Chatimah Tovah*" גמר חתימה טובה "A good final sealing." Before the Yom Kippur, it is also common to wish each other an easy fast.

In Yiddish, the standard wish is for "*Ab gut gebentsht yobr*," "A good and blessed year" א גוט