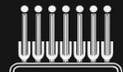




Published by the
Sydenham Highlands North
Hebrew Congregation
Johannesburg, South Africa

Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!



28 Jul 2018 Parshas Va'eschanan 16 Menachem Av 5778

The Never-Ending Voice by: Rabbi Yossy Goldman

The Ten Commandments are repeated in this week's Parsha as part of Moses' review of the last 40 years. He describes how G-d spoke those words in a *mighty voice that did not end*. One of the explanations offered by Rashi is that Moses is contrasting G-d's voice with human voices. The finite voice of any human being, even a Yudi Cohen, will fade and falter. It cannot go on forever. But the voice of the Almighty did not end, did not weaken. It remained strong throughout.

Is this all the great prophet had to teach us about the voice of G-d? That it was a powerful baritone? That it resonated? Is the greatness of the Infinite One that he didn't suffer from shortness of breath, that He didn't need a few puffs of Ventolin? Is this a meaningful motivation for the Jews to accept the Torah?

Moses was the greatest of all prophets. He foresaw what no other prophet could see. Perhaps he saw his people becoming caught up in the civilization of ancient Greece, in the beauty, culture, philosophy and art of the day. And they might question, is Torah still relevant?

Perhaps he foresaw Jews empowered by the Industrial Revolution where they might have thought Torah to be somewhat backward. Or, maybe it was during the Russian Revolution where faith and religion were positively primitive.

Maybe Moses saw our own generation with

space shuttles and satellites, television and technology. And he saw young people questioning whether Torah still speaks to them.

And so, Moses tells us that the voice that thundered from Sinai was no ordinary voice. The voice that proclaimed the Ten Commandments was a voice that was not only powerful at the time, but it did not end! And it still rings out, it still resonates, and it still speaks to each of us in every generation and in every part of the world.

Revolutions may come and go but revelation is eternal. The voice of Sinai continues to proclaim eternal truths that never become passé or irrelevant. *Honour Your Parents*, revere them; look after them in their old age. Never abandon them to some decrepit old age home. *Live moral lives*; do not tamper with the sacred fibre of family life, be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others. Dedicate one day every week and *keep that day holy*. Stop the madness. Turn your back on the rat race and rediscover your humanity and your children. *Don't be guilty of greed, envy, dishonesty or corruption*.

Are these ideas and values dated? Are these commandments tired, stale or irrelevant? On the contrary. They speak to us now as never before. Does anyone know this today better than us South Africans?

The G-dly voice has lost none of its strength, none of its majesty. The mortal voice of man declines and fades into oblivion. Politicians and spin-doctors come and go but the heavenly sound reverberates down the ages.

impossible just takes a bit longer. After 2000 years, the time is ripe. We are living in an age of surprises. So don't be surprised if Moshiach comes and renovates the landscape. Those who were previously classified as enemies will become allies. They will willingly and joyously watch the rebuilding of the Temple on its ancient site.

Live & Laugh

"Oh, I'm sure glad to see you", said 4 year old Danny to his Grandma. "Now that your here I hope Daddy will do the trick he was talking about." "What trick?" asked Grandma.

"I heard Daddy tell Mommy that he'd climb the walls if you showed up"

What's Nu?!

**The Barmy Boy
Noah Sarakinsky**

Mazal Tov to Laurence & Ronit and to grandparents Issy & Hilda Sarakinsky and Neville & Joyce Levin and great-grandmother Dora Seeff.

Calendar

Welcome to our Guest Chazan *Shmully Brill*.

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:30 am: Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Brocha in the Seeff Hall sponsored by the **Sarakinsky Family** in honour of Noah's Bar Mitzvah.
- ◆ **Social Shabbos**
- ◆ Mincha: 5:00 pm
- ◆ **Pirkei Avos**: Chapter 3
- ◆ Shabbos Ends: 6:12 pm
- ◆ Mincha next week: 5:30 pm

◆ **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.**

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◆ **Lisa Milner**, Rental Consultant 082 362 4870 e-mail: lisam@jawitz.co.za

◆ Acknowledgements: Chabad.org,

◆ Please take Good Shabbos Sydenham home if you will only carry it within the Eiruv.

more war, no famine, and no slow internet. While religious and national identities will remain, the hatred between them will be gone.

No blood need be shed to achieve this. The force of ideas, not the force of weapons, will bring about the redemption. This means some ideologies will need to be adjusted and certain beliefs rejected. But this can be done through introspection from within rather than attacks from without. When truth shines, falsehood falls away.

Sounds impossible? Look at history. Cultures do change. Even religions can reform. Within living memory Germany was a murderous terrorist state, and Japan was a mortal enemy of the west. Those two nations are nothing like that today. Okay, it took losing a World War to get there. But go back a bit further in history. Christianity once condoned the slaughter of non-believers, and that changed without a war. Had you lived in pre-war Germany or medieval Christendom you would have never believed that such change is possible. But it happened.

The Jewish people have always known that the

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Moses knew what he was saying and whom he was talking to. Torah is truth and truth is forever. The voice of G-d shall never be stilled.

Parsha Pointers

*Vaeschanan: Artscroll pg 958;
Living Torah pg 884*

Moses tells the people of Israel how he implored G-d to allow him to enter the Land of Israel, but G-d refused, instructing him instead to ascend a mountain and see the Promised Land.

Continuing his “review of the Torah,” Moses describes the Exodus from Egypt and the Giving of the Torah, declaring them unprecedented events in human history. “Has there ever occurred this great thing, or has the likes of it ever been heard? Did ever a people hear the voice of G-d speaking out of the midst of the fire . . . and live? . . . You were shown, to know, that the L-rd is G-d . . . there is none else beside Him.”

Moses predicts that, in future generations, the people will turn away from G-d, worship idols, and be exiled from their land and scattered amongst the nations; but from there they will seek G-d, and return to obey His commandments.

Our Parshah also includes a repetition of the Ten Commandments, and the verses of the Shema, which declare the fundamentals of the Jewish faith: the unity of G-d (“Hear O Israel: the L-rd our G-d, the L-rd is one”); the mitzvah to love G-d, to study His Torah, and to bind “these words” as *tefillin* on our arms and heads, and inscribe them in the *mezuzot* affixed on the doorposts of our homes.

To Study Our Children

By Rabbi Dovid Hazdan

One of the sacred tasks of parents and teachers is to educate the next generation and to impart to our children the knowledge and values of our Torah. We cannot be content with our own study—we have to teach the young.

This mitzvah is featured in this week’s Torah

portion in the words of the Shema which we recite thrice daily: “. . . teach them to your children, to discuss them, while you sit in your home, while you walk on the way, when you retire and when you arise . . .”

What is intriguing is that the great codifier Maimonides, as well as R. Schneur Zalman of Liadi in his code of Jewish law, present the laws relating to teaching Torah to our children before presenting the laws of studying Torah. It seems quite obvious that one cannot teach before studying. Why would the laws pertaining to teaching a child precede the adult’s requirement to learn?

The power and advantage of a developed, adult, mature mind is magnified by life’s experiences. The theoretical insights that are gleaned are enhanced and embellished by the wealth amassed through the challenges and circumstances of one’s past.

But there is a deficiency and handicap in an adult’s approach to absorbing the words of Torah. So often, objectivity, humility and serenity of spirit are casualties of preconceived ideas. Our entrenched frames of reference capture data into existing files predetermined and predefined. Our life’s experiences have formed calluses on our attitudes and philosophies. We cling to familiar paths formed by habitual past journeys. We evaluate with prejudices and perspectives already firmly formed. We begin to judge by our decisions, rather than decide by our judgments.

How often are we left unmoved by a truth because we are self-consciously aware of the ramifications of accepting such truths? We fit teachings into lifestyles rather than confront the challenge of change. We quote and emphasize to subjectively endorse and support, rather than to aspire and strive for uncharted new heights.

The laws of studying Torah are preceded by the laws of teaching a child, to remind us how to absorb the words of G-d. The learning of a young child—so eager, so fresh, so open, so inspired and so unencumbered by baggage—is like “ink writ-

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ten on fresh paper,” teaching us the art of true Torah study.

May our spiritual and intellectual journeys always retain the effervescence, passion and innocence of a child. May we, this Shabbat, find comfort, optimism and belief in a world about to be redeemed, by allowing ourselves to peer through the eyes and hope of a child.

Why a Mezuzah Is Not a Mezuzah

By Rabbi Baruch Epstein

There is a mezuzah on the entry to the White House. There's a mezuzah leading into every room in the Kremlin. Your avowed atheist neighbour has one that all the neighbourhood can see!

I'll explain. The word "mezuzah" means doorpost. In the Book of Deuteronomy we read: "And you shall write them on the doorposts (*mezuzot*) of your homes and your gates."¹ So, if we're to be linguistic nit-pickers, the scroll is affixed to the mezuzah; it is not the mezuzah itself.

Okay, so beyond my trite witticism (my mother thinks I'm clever), what do we learn from the vernacular use of an architectural term to refer to a ritual object?

Chassidism emphasizes that G-d has a plan—a passionate, inexplicable, irreplaceable desire that this world, warts and all, be transformed into a welcoming home for Him. That's why He created it. All of creation exists only to exhibit G-d. Humans tend to see it in reverse; we think of ourselves and our world as primary and then look to see where and if G-d fits into the picture. The reverse is true; G-d is, and we are here to prove it.

Like hidden treasure, divinity is just below the surface, waiting for us to expose it through a mitzvah. Every time we use a physical resource for something G-dly, we illustrate its true character: a tool for us to discover the holy spark buried within.

It's a pretty clever idea (I hope G-d doesn't mind my compliment). Divinity, while exciting, often seems too spiritual for nine-to-five people like us to grasp. When presented with

it, we just gawk in awe. Materiality, on the other hand, we get. So G-d embeds Himself in physical objects, and when we use them according to His instructions, we find Him. Like a metaphor, it makes the abstract tangible.

So maybe we have it right. Maybe the genuine meaning of mezuzah is the mitzvah scroll, and the doorpost is only called a mezuzah to emphasize that its existence is realized, not by holding the door in place, but by enabling a mitzvah. If not for the scrolls, there would be no reason for plain old doorposts.

And so it goes with all things; there are two perspectives: 1) I am, so when I earn money, I buy what I need, and then, if there is any left over, I'll give to charity. Or, 2) G-d is, and He has embedded Himself in cash as a way for me to discover Him. When I earn money, I first give one-tenth to charity and then use the remaining, now uplifted money for my own needs.

Don't view the mezuzah as an appendage to your house, see your house as a mezuzah holder. Don't just read this article, get yourself, or someone you know, a mezuzah for their mezuzah.

Can We Have the Temple Mount Please?

By Rabbi Aron Moss

Question:

I know that we pray for Moshiach to come and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. But isn't there a slight technical problem with that? Currently there is a building which stands on the Temple Mount that belongs to another religion. I somehow can't imagine that they would be willing to give up the real estate and knock down their house of worship to make way for ours... So what's the plan with this?

Answer:

The rebuilding of the Temple is not just about renovating and landscaping. It's a complete renovation of the world's spiritual landscape.

The Messianic era, which we have been waiting for ever since the Temple was destroyed 2000 years ago, will usher in an unprecedented reign of peace. All nations will unite under one G-d with a singular moral purpose. There will be no