

really need is a loving heart. And a nice big smile.

May you all be inscribed in the Book of Life for a year of goodness, health and prosperity.

Live & Laugh

Jim was in a bad mood, and anyone who got in his way was going to regret it. Jim walked into his favorite restaurant and plopped himself down on a chair.

“Get me a steak well done with mashed potatoes.” Three minutes later when his order came, Jim screamed “DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME SAY WELL DONE?!”

“Why thank you sir” the waitress smiled, “that was the first compliment I got all day!”

URGENT!

RABBI'S YOM TOV APPEAL

Thank you to all who have responded. If you have not yet, PLEASE make your contribution ASAP as many families are still waiting for help!
Rabbi Goldman Discretionary Fund
 Cheques or Cash to Shul office or EFT to FNB Norwood:
 Branch Code 258624
 Account No: 503 600 89202
 Thank You and G-d bless you.

High Holidays Ladies Shiur
 with Rebbetzin Estee Stern
Curved & Courageous
The Kabbalah of the Shofar
Sun 10 Sep 9am @ Seeff Hall
 Coffee, tea & refreshments

FIRST NIGHT SELICHOS

Next Saturday Night
 Interesting Programme
 Followed by Selichos Service.
 Watch this space!

SYDTeens Shabbaton
Shabbos 15-16 September
 R160 or R200 (incl bowling)
Bookings: www.sydshul.co.za
 Info: Ari - 076 752 7702

What's Nu?!

The Barmy Boy
Gabriel Kahlberg

Mazal Tov to Selwyn & Robyn and grandparents Dave & Rita Sieff and Dennis & Mary Kahlberg.

Calendar

- ◆ Shacharis 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Shul Brocha in the Seeff Hall sponsored by the **Kahlberg Family** in honour of Gabriel's Bar Mitzvah.
- ◆ **Smorgasbord of Shiurim.**
- ◆ Mincha: 5:20 pm
- ◆ Pirkei Avos: Chapter 3 & 4
- ◆ Shabbos ends: 6:30 pm
- ◆ Mincha next week 5:45 pm
- ◆ Shofar and Psalm 27 daily

Shul Seating

This Shul office will be open
THIS Sunday 10 Sept
from 9:30am-12pm
 Otherwise you will be able to take care of seating through the office during the week.

YoungJewishJoburg SPIRITSHUL 'N SOCIAL

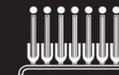
'Mind' with Leonard Carr
Tues Night 12 Sept 7:45pm
 Factory on Grant Norwood
 Ages 19-39 | Free entrance

- ◆ 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.



Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!

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9 Sep 2017

Parshas Ki Savo

18 Elul 5777

Jewish Joy

by: *Rabbi Yossy Goldman*

“Gratitude is an attitude.” Whether we appreciate the blessings in our lives or we take them for granted will always depend on whether we pause long enough to consider life and its blessings or we just go along our merry way oblivious to anything but the superficial.

This week we read about Bikkurim, the first fruit offerings Jewish farmers in the holy land were commanded to bring in thanksgiving to G-d for the land and its produce. On a basic level, Bikkurim remind us never to become ungrateful for the things we are blessed with in life.

Interestingly, the law only took effect 14 years after the Jewish People entered the Promised Land. It took seven years to conquer and another seven to distribute the land to the 12 tribes of Israel. Only when that process was completed did the law of the first fruits become applicable.

But why? Surely there were quite a few tribes who were settled earlier. No doubt, some of the farmers who had received their allotted land had planted and seen the first fruits of their labours. Why then were they not required to show their appreciation immediately by bringing the Bikkurim offering?

The Rebbe explains that in commanding this Mitzvah the Torah uses the phrase “And you shall rejoice with all the good that Hashem your G-d has given you.” In order to be able to fully experience the joy of his own blessings in life, a Jew needs to know that his

brothers have been blessed as well. As long as one Jew knew that there were others who had not yet been settled in their land he could not be fully content. Since *simcha*, genuine joy, was a necessary component in the mitzvah of Bikkurim, it could only be fulfilled when everyone had been settled and satisfied. Only then can a Jew experience true *simcha*, a sincere and genuine joy.

Knowing that one's friends and cousins are still fighting - or even not yet enjoying their own stretch of land - somehow takes away the appetite for a party, even if we personally may have reason to rejoice. One Jew's satisfaction is not complete when he knows his brother has not yet been looked after.

I remember reading a story from the annals of the Previous Rebbe's arrest by the Communists back in Russia in 1927. Rabbi JI Schneersohn was the heroic spiritual leader of Russian Jewry then and the Soviets sentenced him to death for his religious activities on behalf of his people. The Previous Rebbe had a marvelous pen and he described his incarceration and the tortures he suffered at the hands of the most uncouth and sadistic warders in that notorious Russian prison.

One of the prison guards was unbelievably cruel. He himself told that when he would beat and torture a prisoner, he would derive so much pleasure watching the man suffer that when he drank his tea he didn't need his usual dose of sugar. Just watching the torture sweetened his tea!

Such was a vicious anti-Semite. But a Jew experiences the reverse sensation. He cannot enjoy his tea or his first fruits knowing that his brother is

still unsettled. The sweetest fruits go bitter in our mouths feeling the emptiness of our brethren.

So, if you have a job, think of someone who doesn't. If you are happily married, think of those still searching for their *bashert* and try making a suitable introduction. And, as it's almost Yom Tov, if you will be privileged enough to buy new outfits for the family, spare a thought for those who cannot contemplate such a luxury. And when you plan your festive Yom Tov meals with your family and friends, remember to invite the lonely, the widow, and the single parent too.

In this merit, please G-d, we will all be blessed with a joyous and sweet new year.

Parsha Pointers

Ki Savo: Artscroll Chumash pg 1068; Living Torah pg 989

Moses instructs the people of Israel: When you enter the land that G-d is giving to you as your eternal heritage, and you settle it and cultivate it, bring the first-ripened fruits (*bikkurim*) of your orchard to the Holy Temple, and declare your gratitude for all that G-d has done for you.

Our Parshah also includes the laws of the tithes given to the Levites and to the poor, and detailed instructions on how to proclaim the blessings and the curses on Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal - as discussed in the beginning of the Parshah of Re'eh. Moses reminds the people that they are G-d's chosen people, and that they, in turn, have chosen G-d.

The latter part of Ki Tavo consists of the Tochachah ("Rebuke"). After listing the blessings with which G-d will reward the people when they follow the laws of the Torah, Moses gives a long, harsh account of the bad things - illness, famine, poverty and exile - that shall befall them if they abandon G-d's commandments.

Moses concludes by telling the people that only today, forty years after their birth as a people, have they attained "a heart to know, eyes to see, and ears to hear."

A Wise Heart

By Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz

In the portion of Ki Tavo, Moses says to the Jewish people: "G-d didn't give you a heart to understand ... until this day."

Usually, we connect the mind with understanding and the heart with emotions. However, here it says "a heart to understand." What is the connection between the heart and understanding?

The answer could be found by looking at the Hebrew word used here, *daat*, which we translate as "understanding."

Just because someone is smart, doesn't stop him from doing immature or stupid things: Watch a smart child play in the mud wearing his nicest clothes or a genius implode over a trivial matter.

This is because they lack *daat*.

What is *daat*? It is the ability to take your smarts and apply it to your emotional makeup. It is the bridge between the mind and heart. This takes time and effort.

For the Jewish people in the desert, it took 40 years to develop this level of understanding, where their hearts and minds beat to the same Jewish drum.

This process can be accomplished by every one of us. Every day we become more in sync. Every Torah lesson we apply to ourselves, we become more in tune with G-d.

The same is true for our relationships. First, you get to know each other. But with time and effort, the relationship gets deeper, and you begin to sense your other's way of seeing things. Until there comes a time that you are so in sync, that you don't have to think about it—you just know.

This signifies a "heart to understand." It happens when your emotions—and subsequently your actions—are in sync with your mind, specifically with your Torah knowledge.

Does G-d Really Need to Punish the Wicked? Isn't There a Better Way?

By Rabbi Tzvi Freeman

Question:

I don't understand. If we are all G-d's children, and G-d's mercy extends to all His creations, why did G-d need to bring on such great harm as famine, plague, and those other terrible things threatened in the Bible and by the prophets? I understand the problem was that there are wicked people who need to be punished. But couldn't G-d have found a better way?

Answer:

The entirety of history is a process in which the world is slowly purified and becomes a receptive channel for G-d's light. When it is still coarse, G-dliness comes crashing in, because it is Infinite Light and the world cannot contain such a light. But as we approach the messianic times and the purification becomes more complete, miracles can land gently. The fall of the communist party was somewhat a gentler miracle -- a great miracle, but much gentler.

Today, amazing miracles are happening, far beyond the Exodus. But we all want to remain sceptics and prefer not to notice. If we open our minds and eyes, we will see extraordinary changes entering our world -- in peace and tranquility.

Bless You!

By Rabbi Yanki Tauber

Bless You!

It's the time of year that Jews bless each other with life and health, sustenance and happiness. How does the blessing thing work?

You are ushered into a small room where time has stood still for centuries. An oil lamp flickers on the table; holy tomes cover every inch of the walls. A *tzaddik* with piercing eyes and a gentle voice pronounces the magic formula.

That's the picture that comes to mind when we think about receiving a blessing. Blessings are other-worldly things, resorted to when some drastic intervention is needed in our lives.

The truth is much simpler and much more profound. Everyone needs blessing, each and every

moment of his or her life. And everyone can bestow a blessing.

The mystics teach that the word *berachah* (blessing) literally means "drawing down." Everything in life - health, prosperity, joy, wisdom, peace of mind -- needs to be drawn down from its potential, spiritual state into the actuality of our physical existence. It's all there -- spiritually we are all healthy, wealthy and wise. The "problems" we experience in life are basically a matter of something gone wrong in the wiring. We're not connecting; our spiritual and physical selves are having trouble communicating.

The solution? Bestow a blessing.

Here's how it works. Let's say that your friend Chaim is experiencing financial difficulties. So you put your arm around his shoulder and say: "Chaim! May G-d grant you the money that you need!" By saying these words sincerely, with warmth and love and joy, you've blessed him. You've roto-rooted that clogged supply line, opening up the flow. Just like that? Just like that.

We've all had the experience of hearing someone else give voice to an idea or describe a course of action, and suddenly realizing that we've been carrying this idea or action around in our own minds for the longest time. But until that person verbalized it, it was trapped inside our heads. Although we "had" it, we couldn't do it or even consciously think it. We didn't have the words for it, so it wasn't real to us yet.

A similar thing happens when you bless someone. The potential has been there all along, but saying it makes it real.

Your friend needs the blessing because he has reached a limit of what he can make real of his spiritual resources on his own. With your caring and compassion, with your love and joy, you bond with him to make an expanded self, thereby broadening the channels and un-snarl the lines of communication between his soul and his body, between his heaven and his earth.

Of course, being a holy person increases your blessing-giving powers. But the only thing you

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