

❖ PARSHAT NITZAVIM-VAYELECH

This week we read two Torah portions, Nitzavim and VaYeilech. The Torah portion of Nitzavim is always read on the Shabbat before Rosh Hashana. Indeed, its very first verse reveals its appropriateness: "You are standing this day, all of you, before the L-rd your G-d." "This day" refers to the Day of Judgment, Rosh Hashana. On Rosh Hashana every soul, great and small alike, stands before G-d, as it states, "Your heads, your tribes, your elders and your officers...your little ones, your wives...from the hewer of wood to the drawer of water."

Why do we stand before G-d? "So that you may enter the covenant of the L-rd your G-d." When all Jews stand before Him as a complete and unified entity, we become worthy of entering into His covenant on Rosh Hashana. A covenant is designed to preserve the feeling of love that exists between two people. They establish a covenant at a time when their love is strongest, so that it will never weaken. This bond connects them to each other and ensures that their love will last forever. So too is it with G-d's love for the Jewish people. His love for us is strongest on Rosh Hashana, as the previous month was devoted to removing our sins.

But how do we arouse G-d's desire to establish a covenant with us? By being united with one another. How are we to accomplish this, given the differences between individuals? This can be understood by the following analogy: The human body is composed of many different limbs and organs. Some are more important, like the head; others are simpler, like the foot. But the head, no matter how important, needs the feet in order to move. The body achieves perfection only when all its limbs act in harmony. In the same way, even the most important Jews ("your heads") require the simplest ones ("the drawer of water") in order to comprise a complete entity. And it is this unity that arouses G-d's desire to make a covenant with His people.

Our job is to achieve this unity between "head" and "foot." Every Jew must work on himself until he can recognize his fellow's unique qualities. It is beyond our capacity to judge a person's true worth. Even if one considers himself a "head" and the other fellow a "foot" (as it is human nature to inflate our own self-worth), the "head" still needs the "foot" in order to comprise a complete being. Let us concern ourselves with correcting our own flaws and not heed the perceived flaws of others. Doing so will ensure that there is no time to look at others' imperfections! In this manner we will achieve both self-perfection and perfection as a nation, and G-d will grant the entire Jewish people a good and sweet year. (From: L'Chaim issue 434, Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, vol. 2)

"And you shall return unto G-d your G-d." (30:2) QUESTION: What is the essence of teshuvah? **ANSWER:** Rabbi Shalom DovBer Schneerson, the fifth Rebbe of Lubavitch, explained that the word teshuvah comprises five Hebrew letters, each letter a path and a method in the avodah -- service -- of teshuvah.

Tav is for "Be sincere with the Eternal your G-d" (Devarim 18:13). This represents the service of teshuvah that comes through sincerity and wholeness of heart -- "earnestness."

Shin is for "I have set G-d before me always" (Psalms 16:8). This form of teshuvah results from one's constant awareness that the world and all that is in it, is constantly brought into being by Hashem.

Vav is for "Love your fellow as yourself" (Vayikra 19:18). Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Chassidut, taught that this love is a means to "Love G-d your G-d" (Devarim 6:5). This service of teshuvah stems from goodness of heart.

Beis is for "In all your ways, know Him" (Proverbs 3:6). This form of the service of teshuvah comes from one's perceiving that all that happens to him and around him is hashgacha peratit -- individual Divine Providence.

Heh is for "Walk discreetly with your G-d" (Micah 6:8). One must take care not to be conspicuous or ostentatious in the slightest. It is said, "Man

Chabad of Northern Beverly Hills

should always be artful in piety" (Berachot 17a). The artfulness lies in seeing that his piety not be noticed at all. (From: VeDibarta Bam)

❖ A Parable

The Hole in the Boat: *A man was called to the beach to paint a boat. He brought his paint and brush and began to paint the boat a bright, new red, as he was hired to do. As he painted the boat, he noticed that the paint was seeping through the bottom of the boat. He realized that there was a leak, and he decided to mend it. When the painting was done, he collected his money for the job and went away. The following day, the owner of the boat came to the painter and presented him with a big check. The painter was surprised. "You have already paid me for painting the boat," he said.*

"But this is not for the paint job. It is for mending the leak in the boat."

"That was so small a thing that I even did not want to charge you for it. Surely you are not paying me this huge amount for so small a thing?"

"My dear friend, you do not understand. Let me tell you what happened. When I asked you to paint the boat, I had forgotten to mention to you about the leak. When the boat was nice and dry, my children took the boat and went fishing. When I found that they had gone out in the boat, I was frantic for I remembered that the boat had a leak! Imagine my relief and happiness when I saw them coming back safe and sound! I examined the boat and saw that you had repaired the leak! Now you see what you have done? You have saved the lives of my children! I haven't enough money to repay you for your good 'little' deed...!"

A Piece of String: *A wealthy merchant bought a wonderful candelabra for his home. It was a masterpiece of art, made of pure crystal and studded with precious stones. It cost a real fortune. In order to hang up this beautiful candelabrum, the merchant had a hole made in his ceiling. Through the hole he let one end of the rope drop into the living room, which he attached to the candelabra. The other end of the rope he had fastened to a nail in the attic. Then, he pulled the rope up until the candelabrum was snugly hanging from the ceiling of his living room. The rest of the rope he wound around the nail in the attic. Everybody who came to the house admired the wonderful candelabra, and the merchant and his household were very proud of it.*

One day a poor boy came begging for old clothes. He was told to go up to the attic, where their old clothes were stored, and to help himself to some. He went up to the attic, and collected a neat bundle of clothes. After packing them into his bag, he searched for a piece of string with which to tie it. He saw rope wound around a nail and decided to help himself to a piece. So he took out his pocketknife and cut the rope.

Crash! There was a terrific smash. And the next moment the whole family rushed to the attic crying: "Look what you have done! You have cut the rope and have ruined us!"

The poor boy could not understand what all the excitement was about. He said: "What do you mean, ruined you? All I did was to take a small piece of rope. Surely this did not ruin you?"

"You poor fish," replied the merchant. "Yes all you did was to take a piece of rope. But it so happened that my precious candelabra hung by it. Now you have broken it beyond repair."

These two stories have one moral: Very often, by doing what seems to us a "small" mitzvah we never know what wonderful thing we have done, and conversely, in committing what seems to us a "small" transgression, we are causing a terrible catastrophe. Both good deeds and bad deeds cause a "chain reaction." Each of them no matter how seemingly small, may create or destroy worlds. Don't you think these two stories are worth remembering. (www.chabadonline.com)

Rabbi Yosef Shusterman

WHEN R. MOSHE, SON OF THE ALTER REBBE, WAS BETWEEN EIGHT AND ELEVEN YEARS OLD, HE WAS STUDYING THE PASSAGE IN GITTIN 67A LAUDING THE VIRTUES OF THE SAGES. THERE R. SHIMON BAR YOCHAI SAID, "LEARN MY MIDOT." R. MOSHE WAS IN DOUBT ABOUT THE MEANING OF THAT LAST WORD, SINCE THERE IS RASHI'S INTERPRETATION, "MY TEACHINGS," AND THE SIMPLE MEANING, "TRAITS OF CHARACTER." AT THAT MOMENT THE ALTER REBBE CAME IN AND SAID, IN THE CHANT HE HABITUALLY USED: "THE TORAH GIVEN US IS ALL FINE CHARACTER-TRAITS. EVEN THE PUNISHMENTS THERE, ARE IN TRUTH ACTS OF KINDNESS AND GOODNESS. THE TWO INTERPRETATIONS ARE ONE, AND INTERDEPENDENT. THERE CAN BE NO FINE CHARACTER-TRAITS WITHOUT TORAH; THERE CAN BE NO TORAH WITHOUT FINE CHARACTER." EXACTLY THE SAME INCIDENT HAPPENED TO THE TZEMACH TZEDEK, WHEN HE WAS BETWEEN EIGHT AND ELEVEN. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM ELUL 23)

*One who returns from the darkness must bring of it with him and convert it to light. He must exploit his experience to surge higher and higher with greater strength.
Therefore, the one who returns from a distance is greater than the one who was always close. What matters is not so much where you stand, but with what force you are moving in which direction.*

From: "Bringing Heaven Down to Earth"

K There will be no classes next week.

DAILY MINYONIM

Shacharit: Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM
Sunday: 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv: 6:45 PM

SELICHOS

Saturday night: 1:00 AM
Monday - Friday: 5:30 AM & 7:00 AM

***DON'T FORGET TO RESERVE YOUR SEATS
FOR ROSH HASHANA AND YOM KIPPUR***



*Shabbos Kallah for Devorah Nassirzadeh will
be held at the home of Rabbi & Mrs.*

*Shusterman,
303 N. Wetherly Dr.
at 5:30 PM
All women are invited.*



**SHABBAT PARSHAT NITZAVIM -
VAYELECH**

*Shabbos Mevorchim
September 22, 2000*

Candlelighting: 6:32 PM
Friday Mincha: 6:45 PM

- Tehillim 8:00 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush, Cholent & Farbrengen
- Pirkei Avos 5:35 PM
- Mincha 6:20 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 7:32 PM

Kiddush this week is being sponsored by Aron Rubin in honor of his Aufruf.

Seuda Shlishit is being sponsord by Sholom Ben Levy.

Yartzeits: Friedrich Blumenstein - Elul 25, Pesa Turner - Elul 25

Happy Birthday to Jonathan Spira, Ethel Perles, Gabriela Beroukhim

Happy Anniversary to Rabbi and Mrs. Yossi Mayberg, Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Meisel, Mr. and Mrs. Chaim Katzir.

Mazel Tov to Aron Rubin and Devorah Nassirzadeh on their upcoming marriage.

GOOD SHABBOS!

