

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

Vol 5, # 42

In this week's Torah portion, Va'etchanan, Moses addresses G-d: "O L-rd G-d," Moses opens his prayer, "You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand..." With these words, Moses establishes that it wasn't until his generation that G-d began to reveal His greatness in the world.

The Zohar asks how this can be possible. Many years before, it points out, there was a great tzadik (righteous person) named Jacob, who was one of the three Jewish Patriarchs. In fact, Jacob is called "the chosen" of the Forefathers, and he merited to see many G-dly miracles. So how could G-d have first begun to show His greatness only in Moses' time?

The Zohar answers its own question: "That which Moses had, was had by no other human being: many thousands and tens of thousands of Jews, etc."

In Jacob's time the Jewish people was very small in number, far fewer than the several million who existed in Moses' generation. From the "seventy souls" that went down to Egypt at the beginning of the exile, by the time of the Exodus they had already multiplied to 600,000 men between the ages of 20 and 60, not counting women and children and men in other age groups.

It was not until Moses' generation, when the Jewish people had become "great" also in number, and stood together in unity and oneness, that the true "greatness" of G-d was manifested.

This contains a practical lesson for the Divine service of every Jew: Every individual, regardless of age, must do everything he can to strengthen Jewish unity and make the Jewish people more cohesive. Every person must strive to increase his love for his fellow Jew, and connect himself to as many Jews as possible.

This is one of the reasons we preface our daily prayers with the words "I hereby accept upon myself the positive commandment of 'You shall love your fellow as yourself.'" Before we ask G-d to fulfill a personal request, we identify and connect ourselves to the totality of the Jewish people.

Indeed, it is then that the "greatness" of the Jew is expressed. A single Jew is not alone, nor is a single Jewish family or Jewish community. Every Jew is connected to every other Jew, and to all Jews throughout the generations.

As the Zohar explains, the process of showing G-d's "greatness," initiated by G-d in the generation of Moses, will reach its culmination with the coming of Moshiach, who will redeem not only the Jewish people but also the entire world. At that time we will experience wonders and miracles far greater than those witnessed during the Exodus, and indeed, incomparable to anything experienced in history. (From: L'Chaim 5761, #580, Adapted from a talk on 7 Menachem Av 5740) - lchaimweekly.org

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And you shall bind them for a sign upon your arm, and they shall be as tefillin between your eyes (hh6:8) Torah law prescribes that we first tie the hand-tefillin on our arms, and then set the head-tefillin upon our heads -- as derived from the order in which they are commanded in the above verse.

Our sages tell us that G-d, too, wears tefillin, and that His tefillin are inscribed with the verse "Who is like Your people Israel, the one nation on earth" (as our tefillin are inscribed with verses proclaiming His oneness). There are "head-Jews" -- the scholars and thinkers, and "hand-Jews" -- the doers. Both are precious to G-d; both are integral to our role as His "one nation on earth." But when G-d ties His "tefillin" to affirm His bond with His people, He ties his hand-tefillin first, cherishing the simple deed above all else. (Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov) – chabad.org

TU B'AV

The Fifteenth of Av (Tu B'Av) is a special holiday, about which our Sages declared, "There were no days as festive in Israel as the Fifteenth of Av and Yom Kippur." The significance of Yom Kippur is obvious, but what was so exceptional about Tu B'Av?

In the times of the Holy Temple, an ample supply of wood was required for the altar. The season for felling trees began in Nisan and ended on Tu B'Av, the warmest time of year when the trees dried out and there was little chance of worm infestation. By Tu B'Av, the weather became cooler; worms might possibly thrive, thereby invalidating the wood for use in the Temple. Tu B'Av thus marked the day on which the great mitzva of preparing the wood for the Temple was completed.

But what was so joyous about the fact that the trees were no longer cut? And what is the significance of cutting trees, anyway? After all, the trees were only cut in preparation for the mitzva of bringing sacrifices; it was not a mitzva itself.

To explain: Both Tu B'Av and Tisha B'Av are associated with the Temple. However, on Tisha B'Av we mourn the destruction of the Temple; on Tu B'Av we rejoice in a mitzva that relates to the Temple's continued existence.

At present, the Temple does not exist in the physical sense and we cannot offer sacrifices. Nonetheless, in the past, it was the cutting of the trees that enabled our ancestors to fulfill this mitzva; indeed, it epitomized the Temple's very purpose: to serve as a "House" for G-d in which sacrifices could be brought. This activity reached its culmination on Tu B'Av, which was why the Jews' rejoicing was so profound.

As is known, the Second Holy Temple was destroyed on account of the sin of baseless hatred. Tu B'Av, however, was characterized by a sense of unity. The wood that was cut for the altar caused a great benefit for all Jews - the atonement of their sins, as effected by the sacrifices. Without wood, there could be no sacrifices; thus the cutting of the trees was considered to be a very great mitzva.

Tu B'Av was also known as "The Day of the Breaking of the Axes." On that day, all the axes used to fell the trees for the Temple were destroyed. Why were the axes not saved?

An axe is a tool made of iron. According to Jewish law, it is forbidden for iron to touch the stones of the Temple's altar, as in addition to its positive uses, iron can also be forged into weapons of destruction. Accordingly, once the axes had fulfilled their function, they were destroyed to preclude being used for unholy purposes.

Tu B'Av can thus counteract the negative elements of Tisha B'Av, especially the sin of baseless hatred. We must act toward our fellow Jew with "baseless love." The reason for the destruction of the Temple will thus be nullified, and we will merit the building of the Third Holy Temple, now! (From L'Chaim 5758, #530, Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Volume 24) – lchaimweekly.org

It states in the Talmud (Ta'anit) that, beginning from the Fifteenth of Av, a Jew should increase the time he devotes to nighttime Torah study. To reward us for our additional learning, G-d extends our lives and grants us additional years. Our Sages explained that Tu B'Av is the date on which we can see the nights begin to be longer and the days shorter. Generally speaking, the daylight hours are reserved for work, whereas at night, people have more free time to spend as they please. The shorter the day, the more hours are left over at night - and nighttime is especially conducive to learning Torah. (L'Chaim 5758, #530) – lchaimweekly.org

The Alter Rebbe went to Mezritch with his brother, R. Yehuda Leib, in 5524 (1764). R. Yehuda Leib went without permission from his wife and therefore turned back. The Rebbe came to Mezritch and stayed there, that first time, until after Pesach 5525 (1765). For two weeks he was uncertain whether to remain there. The first maamar he heard was Nachamu nachamu. It is not clear, though, whether this was the first maamar after his arrival, or the first after the two weeks when he had decided to remain and had become bound (to the Maggid). (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM, menachem av 11.)

It is the manner of a father to have compassion (rachamim), as it is written, "As a father has compassion on children [so does G-d have compassion for those who fear Him]" (Psalms 103:13). It is the manner of a mother to console, as it is written, "As a man whose mother does console him [so shall I console you]" (Isaiah 66:13). Says G-d: I shall do both as father and as mother

— Midrash P'sikta d'Rav Kahana

PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Rosh Hashana (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Sukka (men)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chasiddus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

DAILY MINYONIM

**Shacharis: Mon -Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM
Sunday: 9:00 AM**

Mincha/Maariv: 8:00 PM

SHABBOS PARSHAS VA'ESCHANAN

Shabbos Nachamu

July 19, 2002 – Menachem Av 10, 5762

Candlelighting (Los Angeles): 7:45 PM

Friday Mincha: 8:00 PM

Early Minyan: 6:25 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:27 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

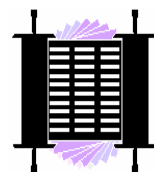
- Tanya 8:45 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by
Kiddush & Cholent
- Pirkei Avos 6:50 PM
- Mincha 7:35 PM followed by
Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 8:45 PM

Seuda Shlishit is sponsored by Albert Sarraf-Kashani in memory of his mother's yartzheit.

Yartzeits: Jack Mayerhoff – Av 16, Sarra bas Ester
Sarraf- Kashani – Av 16, Rouhama Pazuelo – Av 15

Happy Birthday to Menachem Mendel Shusterman, Celia Katzir,
Chana Davidpoor, Shraga Ephraim Trinca and Ari Monkarsch.

Happy Anniversary to Dr. and Mrs. Zeev Rav – Noy.



**A Sefer Torah is being written in memory
of the fathers of Rabbi & Mrs.
Shusterman.**

**Anyone who is interested in participating
should contact Mendel Shusterman at
(310) 497-2643**

GOOD SHABBOS!