

Devorim/Tisha B'av – Rabbi Yosef Y. Serebryanski

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Good Mourning

There was an ancient custom to mourn over the destruction of the Temple and to pray for the coming redemption each day after midnight. While this is far from common today, it was something zealously practiced by saintly people in generations past.

As a young man, the saintly Rabbi Shmuel Munkes commented as follows when he saw these people cry; “How cruel God is that he hears these people cry and does not answer.” As his life changed so did his perspective. His later viewpoint was “God has a lot of patience. He hears the persistent and endless crying of these people every day after midnight and doesn’t throw a rock at their heads.” He did not see the endless crying as requiring an answer from the Creator. Rather, he felt that the Creator displayed enormous patience by permitting the excessive mourning.

We have a mindset that accompanies our habits. Yet, we often have no understanding of the fact that other perspectives exist that make our practices or habits seem radical or unreasonable.

Let us be clear on this issue. Until actual changes take place, the only guidelines we may use are the current ones. However, we must take serious steps to accelerate our pace to get to the next phase. We have the answers; we are simply devoid of some of the practical applications.

Many customs and laws of religion or society are stuck in the past. The past is an important base for our present. Yet if we do not make serious effort to fix the present, the future will never change for the better. We are told that there have been openings in the past that could have manifested peace and tranquility. Unfortunately, people made choices that did not allow it to happen.

On another note, had peace come at those times we were just as likely to have been stuck where the people were at that time and not made certain progress. In all likelihood, if peace occurs now while people are obsessing with the need to control, as well as demonstrating attachment to material goods and negative emotions, peace will certainly not last very long. The peace that many groups and individuals speak of is only about the parroting of words that mean nothing.

The longer we wait for the coming of the messiah or tranquility, the more we open ourselves to an intense depth within the infinite of creation. The Messiahs promoted by many people are defined by their extreme limitations. Whether by control or perspective, or as a result of the limits of those who promote them, these “messengers” are not those who can “deliver” universally.

Words may be important, but if they are not based in the heart and soul, they can be worthless.

The Taz (Rabbi David HaLevi, 1586-1667) was a Torah genius who married the daughter of another great sage, the Bach (Rabbi Yisrael Sirkis, 1561-1640). When the Taz's wife died, he eulogized her with a masterful speech, delving into many of the Talmud's great insights, Jewish laws, and homiletics. His brilliance awed the assembly.

A few weeks later, the Taz asked the Bach for permission to marry another one of his daughters. The Bach declined saying; "You gave a beautiful presentation at the funeral. However, you forgot an essential part to a proper eulogy, as the verse states, 'Avraham came to eulogize his wife Sarah and to cry over her.' If you were truly crying you would never have been able to give such an intricate and eloquent speech."

All too often we may glorify with our words, while our actions are superficial in comparison. There is a famous saying; “Say little, but do much,” as well as; “There

is a time for everything.” If we followed that advice there would be more accomplishments than talk.

The day of mourning for the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem is also considered a festival. Although it is a day of sadness to recall the destruction of the past (as well as the present,) it is also a day of hope for the future. That is why there are many Jewish customs and laws that exist that teach about what to do when the new Temple will come to fruition. Thus, the purpose of mourning is not to become overly depressed. It is to recall both the bad and good (memories) and to move forward.

The sages teach that if the Temple is not rebuilt during your lifetime, it is as if it was actually destroyed during your lifetime. The act of carrying pain over a long time creates disease and blockages. The Jewish people have gone through and continue to go through deep pain. The pain has brought about issues that are distancing Jews from pursuing their purpose in creation. Indeed it causes many of them to totally oppose their purpose here.

We should demonstrate an interest in healing ourselves and others. We are permitted to participate in this Creator-given gift. However, we must always remember from whence all emanates. When we show compassion and understanding it opens spiritual channels for us to receive the same.

Deuteronomy 1:1 **“These are the words** (or matters, in Hebrew “Devorim”) **that Moses spoke.”** The book is referred to as **“Devorim.”** Yet the Torah, Deuteronomy 17:18 calls this book **“Mishneh Torah.”** It was called this name by the Jewish people of ancient times. The Greek translation called the book “Deuteronomy,” meaning “second law.”

The words of this book were spoken to the people by Moses during the month preceding his demise. He reviewed the difficulties he had with the people over the forty years as he spoke of the future. He described how he was personally affected by the people’s actions. He repeated laws, often with details not mentioned earlier.

This is reflected in the name of the book “Mishneh Torah” meaning a copy, repetition, review, interpretation or ordinances of Torah. Over time, the Jews came to refer to this book as “Devorim.” They moved from a heart connection (the

description used by the Torah) to a cerebral connection (a word in Torah that the book begins with.) There is nothing wrong with a cerebral connection when balanced with heart, love and compassion. When that balance is lacking distance develops.

This is what the word devorim and the fast day remembering the destruction of the Temple reflect. They are both a reminder to find equilibrium in life.

Tisha B'av is a day of personal introspection as well as one of mourning. We teach by example. We must demonstrate that we understand that protecting our proper relationship to mankind precedes our relationship with the Creator. When the Creator sees that we show others love and compassion then we will receive the same in return.

Rebuke

Moses rebuked the Israelites before he passed away. The book of Devorim (Deuteronomy) is where this is written. He mentions many of the details of the forty years in brief adding some further knowledge for us of what happened during that time. Some people never want to learn their lessons and do not listen but for the people who introspect and want to improve a brief reminder is sufficient.

Deuteronomy 1:1 states **“These are the matters that Moses spoke about all Israel.”** Most translations write that he spoke **“to the all Israel.”** The Hebrew word here is **“el.”** We find that the word **“el”** means **“about”** in Samuel 1, 4:19. Thus he spoke to them in a general way, allowing each person to apply it to his/her self.

In the book Mo'or Voshemesh, Deuteronomy 1:9, 10 is translated and interpreted in the following way. **“I (Moses) said to you at that time, I cannot lift you up to serve the Creator, (because) Hashem your God has added to you (you now feel more important than your judges, you do not come to me with humbleness and humility, you think you are greater than your teachers) and you (think that you) are today like the stars of the heaven.”**

One of the major stumbling blocks to connecting with the source of life is a person's self-centeredness. Many people study and because they know something, it goes to their head. At times it makes them feel or believe they are more

important than another human being even when they deny it. They think they can now tell others what to do or now they know how to explain matters, when in truth they are the blind following the blind. A person becomes mentally and spiritually blind for a variety of reasons.

Many people who say they only speak the truth and follow the truth, are in fact blinded by their own limitation. They believe they are all about truth but when another truth is on front of them they do not see it. If that other truth contradicts what they believe is truth, then they know better.

This is exactly how people interpret the Bible or Torah. They claim they do it truthfully, yet they do not see the limitations of their perspective and thus are not truly open to the truth of the Creator who they claim to be listening to. They are so stuck on what they call God's word that they will never allow themselves to be open to the truth behind the words.

STORY

A man once came to the city of Brisk to preach. Rabbi Chayim told those in charge not to allow him to speak. The preacher came to Rabbi Chayim with a complaint. How could you not allow me to preach? Everything I say is kosher ... I mention verses from Torah, sayings of the sages, I speak about Judaism ...

Rabbi Chayim responded: Meat that is slaughtered according to Jewish law, the lungs are smooth without any problem, deveined and salted; it is kosher, unless it is cooked in a non-kosher pot.

In other words he was saying that even though what he says sounds like all the right things but his personal issues makes those words coming from him unacceptable.

My definition of a preacher is a chemically imbalanced person. A person who thinks he/she is so perfect that they can tell off another person has a lot of personal issues that he/she is hiding. We are frustrated by many things in life, so people get caught up in whatever way they think will make a living for them.

The very same thing is with the Torah, it must be received with humbleness studying from a humble person. Not a superficially humble person who is full of his/her self, but from a person who is internally humble.

(Ethics of the fathers 3:17) **“Who is a wise person? A person who sees that which is born.”**In other words he/she sees what the future will bring from their (thoughts,) words and actions. Tanya chapter 43 explains that this to also mean, **“That he/she sees how everything originates and comes into being ex nihilo with the word of G-d and the breath of His mouth. All creation is truly nullified in the reality of the source.”**

(Daniel 12:9, 10) **“The matters are hidden and sealed until time ends. They will be chosen, clarified and refined by many, and the wicked will act wickedly and will not understand all the wickedness, but the intelligent ones will understand.”**

There are many beautiful people in today’s world who do understand. They are not people who get up and speak, but are living their individual lives with truth and honesty. Most of the people who are speakers and leaders just say that which the people want them to say or which they think the people will accept. They preach to the choir.

May the many beautiful people who I have met and the many who I have not yet met multiply and come together to take the world into a pure state of existence. It is with music and joy that we can receive beauty.

Truth and Peace

When there is no way to hide from, fight or circumvent the truth, peace exists.

When people unite against a common enemy, they enact an agreed peace with each other. That kind of peace is temporary. Once there is no longer a common enemy they will revert to their former hatred of each other.

Truth makes people uncomfortable. Yet, incredible as it is, people are able to exist in comfort with the lies and deceit to which they are constantly exposed.

All discussions of peace within religious and political worlds are only temporary. True peace is only achieved through inner peace that automatically affects one's personal surroundings.

When people make peace only to further their agenda it is akin to fueling a time bomb.

(Divrei Torah 3:95, Rabbi Chaim Elozor Shapiro of Munkatz) **“When people get rid of the truth they make peace.** They are then comfortable since there is no-one to disturb their way of life **“by speaking truths they do not wish to hear.”** Many purport to chase or speak in the name of peace. They do not keep the precepts of Torah and attempt to destroy the basis of religions. Today the only thing that divides them is the way each side corrupts the truth. May God save us from the false intentions and trickery that they use **“in the name of God who is also referred to as Shalom - peace.”**

(Leviticus 25:17) **“You shall not hurt another person through words.”** This verse addresses people of all nationalities. Ultimately we are all children of the Creator. The Tzaddik of Rimanov said (Divrei Torah 3:4) that the Hebrew word for **“another person”** here is **“amiso”** and can also mean **“your truth.”**

(This is done by exchanging letters that have the same source in the gutturals and so the letter ayin is exchanged with the letter alef. The Noam Elimelech does the same in Deuteronomy 1:37 exchanging the letter alef with ayin of the word “hisanaf.” Instead of meaning anger it means wing or branch and that Moshe now has to reincarnate because of the people.)

By stating you shall not hurt **“your truth”** the verse is telling you not hurt yourself. This is done by pursuing a path of truth when serving the Creator.

Many times a person talks him/herself into believing something that is not true. **“The (bare) truth”** of a person is their personal soul connection with the Creator. The Levush writes that the verse in Leviticus does not apply to a person who fools himself by thinking that falsehood is truth. Such a person often must be hurt in order to see things clearly.

While many of the world's nations are busy patting themselves on the back for their synonymy in compassion, they are overlooking TRUTH. That is because

dealing with truth and reality will force them to confront an enemy that has become SO large that it threatens the existence of freedom and choice in the entire world. It is easier to choose to vilify those people who are trying to defend themselves while minimizing personal damage to those who are unwillingly under the enemy's control.

How much easier is it to complain about collateral damage than to recognize that the forces initiating the charges are those who continue to fuel the fires by victimizing their own civilians, children included. They will even kill their own in order to make their enemies look bad.

It is certainly easier to live with the lies and to point a finger at one small force than it is to recognize that the true enemy of all people who seek peace is SO large that this is only one location in the world where they are out of control. What can be said of people who use their children as shields and then force people to defend against those targets. The weapons they shoot are fatal --- even when they are shot from behind babies or from within hospitals or kindergartens.

The tunnels that have been uncovered and destroyed were not constructed for peaceful purpose. They were built in order to infiltrate and murder civilians living on the other side. They were not built to enter into army camps. A plot revealed shows that the intent was to cause mass murder of Jews in Israel during the Jewish New Year which is coming up at the end of September. Stockpiling of weapons and use of never ending barrages of missiles cause this conflict to continue.

For each proposed cease fire, the Israelis have agreed and ceased fire. The radicals continue to fire and take advantage of the cease fires to better their attacks. Israelis have demonstrated good will in taking injured people from Gaza to their hospitals. Hamas has demonstrated their intent by booby-trapping hospitals and schools and stockpiling weapons and holding innocents' hostage in those locations.

The forces that seek to hold back Hamas fights for the integrity of freedom of religious pursuit everywhere. Remember that when the U.S. was attacked on 9-11, it was exactly these believers who are fighting Israel who rejoiced at America's tragedy. Sadly, it is the group who has moved on to murder worldwide of anyone

who does not follow their religion or way of life. Jews, Christians, Hindus and peace loving Muslims are the targets of these extremists.

One small country stands against world opinion to defend itself against people whose stated charter is their eradication. No matter how they choose to portray themselves --- there is only ONE truth. If the world chooses to ignore it – NO place will be safe for anyone who is not a Muslim radical extremist. The Christian son of a Hamas founder has stated as much. People who have escaped the clutches of terrorists have stated as much. The world can pretend that these people can live with the freedom of Western society. But the truth is that they want you to live within the DICTATES of theirs.

Pray for HUMANITY to prevail.

In the Torah we find names of wicked people. This is because the universe was formed with a balance of opposites. (Ecclesiastes 7:14) **“Elohim made one opposite the other.”** (Nechemiah 9:6) **“You made everything and give life to all.”** Everything that is written in Torah is from Kedusha – Holiness and being connected with the Creator – the original source of life. The expression is where separation occurs. That is why the name **“Elohim”** is used as it is a power of definition. The original essence is beyond definition.

When the negative forces are wielding power they block the connection and distort people’s minds and feelings through their words. (Talmud Megillah 6a) **“When one falls the other rises.”** This why the Torah says that when Moshe came to explain the Torah to the people it was after the negative had been vanquished. The negative had fallen and now the positive was rising.

Deuteronomy 1:4 mentions the names of two nations that were destroyed by Moses. It seems totally out of place in the sequence of the verses and having nothing to do with Moshe teaching the people. In truth it has everything to do with teaching the people. Many times people want to learn but do not understand that they have to remove the spiritual negative energy of the past and the way that it is ingrained in them to think and believe.

In society it is acceptable to think and act in a certain way but that way blocks a person from a clear connection directly with the Creator. It does not stop spiritual forces and experiences but it stops at the point where they are and does not go beyond them. If a person wants to study Torah it is not by thinking that he/she is right but by being open to all possibilities and expansion and constant desiring for connection with the origin of life.

It would seem that the only way for the Moshiach or openness of the future to come is when all the present structures fall apart. (Psalms 37:17) **“The arms of the wicked will be broken and support of the righteous is YHVH.”** Rashi (Deuteronomy 33:27) comments that **“arms”** refers to Sichon and Og (who are mentioned in Deuteronomy 1:4.)

In a similar vein we find that Jethro opened up after Amalek was weakened. (Exodus 18:1) **“And Jethro heard – understood”** only happened after the spiritual blockage was weakened.

The Israelites learned Torah in a way of a pit – bor that fills up with water from outside. (Proverbs 5:15) **“Drink water from your pit and flowing water from your well.”** The word for **“pit”** is written as **“bor”** and **“well”** is written as **“be’er.”**

This is the way to study Torah. First you fill yourself up with that which your teachers give you. Then you come to an understanding where you become a well of flowing water and life. The little that you learned continually expands until (Proverbs 6:16) **“your springs spread outward.”**

We drastically need Moshe, a man of truth who will not be pulled down by the current leaders of the world. It seems that such a person and soul can only come if he/she receives direct guidance from the Creator. This way the person will be protected and the peoples of the world will all move out of their current slavery into real freedom.

Dreams of the future

Life is full of pain for many people. Sometimes the pain of knowing truth (that cannot be expressed) is the greatest pain of all. For this reason many people, either consciously or subconsciously, have chosen to live with the truth (that they may

suspect or know) blocked from their vision. While this may help us to survive, it does not maneuver us towards the future that we truly desire.

We each have core belief systems that we were taught while growing up, and/or that we currently subscribe to. How many of us are aware of the limitations that are imposed on us by our personal and/or group beliefs? Logic is a stabilizing factor in our lives. Yet by being unable to recognize the limitations of our logic and perception, we create greater instability than that from which we seek to protect ourselves.

The business of conducting wars and causing death is continuous, no matter who wins or loses. It is precisely because this is such a profitable, job producing enterprise that the process of war is ongoing.

There are many true seekers of peace and of those many who believe in a messiah. Yet the inability of mankind to transcend greed and other worldly issues is a major impediment to true peace or the ultimate salvation of mankind. People who live for the opportunity to sell “anything or anyONE” for money, or live only to force others to live under their dictatorship and rules, place a heavy burden on those who have to counter-balance their existence in this realm. These are issues that destroy our progress on a daily basis.

People are obsessed with the idea that only their version of a messiah will bring about world salvation. There is no room in their belief system to accommodate the fact that each one of the Creator’s creations relates to the Creator in his/her/its unique way. By becoming obsessed with the need to bring others around to a particular belief system, one squanders the time that is needed to take personal responsibility to focus on his/her personal connection at all times.

The energy wasted and hurt caused by those with the need to convert others is counter-productive to human transcendence. It is not possible to achieve true tranquility when one power totally controls the actions of different types of people. Each individual must live according the vibrational frequency that resonates for him/her. The sooner we come to realize this, the better chance we have for success in all peaceful endeavors. All of which will lead to the future of our brightest dreams.

It is written (Isaiah 11:9) that in the future, “the world will be suffused with the knowledge of the Creator just as the waters cover the seas.” The only world a person can have any control over is one’s own, and that is limited. The limitation of people and how they have chosen to live is directly reflected in the leader they have. The future will be one where their knowledge of the Creator will become the only dominating force in their world.

When the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob left Egypt, they could have gone directly into the land that was promised to them. Had they done so, there would have been no need for war, as people would have fled before them, or else accepted them with open arms. They hesitated, and thus their lives took the longer journey as opposed to the shorter one.

The negative consequences of fighting wars are felt on both sides of the conflict. When any one person, or people, is killed (even for the right reason) there is an energy of death and killing that prevails. The effects of this energy are felt far and wide as negativity is spread across the globe. If we are to have a future of true peace and tranquility, we must eradicate the cause of the spreading of negative energies in every possible way.

In this regard the prophet (Zachariah 13:2) says regarding the future: “**And (every) spirit of impurity, I will remove from the oretz** (commonly translated as ‘earth’ but it also means ‘desire’).” Removing it from the earth simply removes it from one location. However, removing it from the oretz, the (Creator’s) desire in creation removes it from everywhere that it exists. Only when the source of the issues that cause war and death are removed can an everlasting tranquility exist.

The Divine Temple is within each person. Each person is connected to infinity. Many people look forward to the building of a Third temple in Jerusalem. They are certain that the Third Temple only refers to a physical Temple. They negate any other possibility. The destruction of the Temple of Solomon and the second Temple and the belief of a future third Temple encourages hope and belief in continuance and salvation. Yet, it is not up to us to decide exactly how the Creator will bring about what is to come.

The Temples that were created were not meant to be permanent. If we stay focused on what happened at that time, instead of focusing on our behavior in the present,

what will we have achieved? We can certainly mourn and learn from our past, yet we must face each day with the behavior that is necessary for the present.

It seems Temples are built as vessels, to convey people's belief in and dedication to the Creator or God. Yet, as we believe that the Creator life force is present in all things, then each person is his/her own vessel that declares the Creator's existence. Thus one may say that each one of us is a Temple of evidence of the Creator and as such dedicate our lives accordingly.

Any word that we use to describe the Creator is limited as well. One example is our use of the word God. In the Hebrew of the Bible there is no word that means "God." There are several words (which have all been translated into English to be "God.") each of which has a different meaning. Each word is representative of one of the expressions of the various types of power and expression of the Creator in creation.

The attachment that people have to various beliefs is because it speaks to their feelings and senses. However many of those belief systems are limited. How then can people expect to live in an infinite existence where all is balanced and everything and everyone knows intuitively what they have to do. Listening closely to people's expectations of future life, their limitations become apparent (as their desires and beliefs reflect their limitations.)

This is expressed in the words of Ezekiel 37:26, 28 **"And I will put my sanctification (Temple) in them** (in each person) **forever.**" (as a side note, while the Hebrew word "Le-olam" is translated as "forever" it actually means for (the duration of) the world. This is reflective of the rabbinical discussion of what le-olam refers to.)

If that is so then we must accept that the only true and everlasting Temple is each individual's uniqueness within the flow of the life force. If this is the case, an external Temple is not (necessarily) what will happen. This may be the understanding that we should render to the statement that the Third Temple will come from heaven. That may happen when a majority of people unlock (the heaven and) the divine that is presently locked within them. One step is people opening up to it. The other is dependent on the Creator's decision. Then the internal and external will combine as one.

(Deuteronomy 3:15) **“And to one who recognizes** (the indefinable source of all life) **I have given everlasting joy.”** (Deuteronomy 3:22) **“Do not fear them for YHVH** (the ever present and transcendent power) **that you discern, He, is the one who will fight for you.”** No fight is necessary as, “All will come into its place in peace and wholeness.”

Regarding Israel’s being the Holy Land, the sages teach that; ‘in the future the entire world will be the Holy Land, and Israel will be the “Jerusalem” of the world.’ The commentary of Rashi (Zachariah 14:10) states that, ‘Jerusalem will extend to the entire world.’ At that time all people will see the Creator life force in everything (Isaiah 52:8).

The fact that people fight over land rights (as well as the fact that they fight each other) is a clear sign that they do not connect with God, the Creator. Instead, they are busy formulating rules brought about by systems of their own making.

Let us take the time to contemplate these issues so that we will be open to seeing the Glory of existence filling the existence. We will then rise above that which drags down society and be able to live freely within ourselves --- and within a world free of the limitations that we have currently super- imposed upon it!

I told you so

The saying goes: “Hindsight is the best foresight.” How true that is. When we regard the years passed, we are able to clearly see the connections between episodic events in our lives. Looking back, it is easy to see how things have progressed and developed. While we are experiencing daily events, we rarely see everything that is happening around us. As life holds a myriad of possibilities in each moment, we are generally uncertain about which paths to pursue as opportunities open up along the way.

People learn many things from experience. We learn of the various effects that things and people have on each other, and of the consequences of certain actions, or lack of action, taken. We are also blessed with an innate knowledge that originates from the soul, our past life and our universal connection. How well we are able to listen and learn will affect the

complexity of our journey here, before we are able to progress to our next level.

People appear to be searching for clarity. Yet many have no idea about how and where to search. Instead of attempting to search and listen to the innate guidance system that they have been given, they seek to empower others with the responsibility for their direction. Naturally, there are, of course, many choices that one might make while attempting to figure out their true course. Yet too often people become caught up within a system, turning a blind eye to that system's limitations.

Each person experiences difficulties in his/her life. Clarity of vision enables one to establish an inner happiness that better equips that person to focus and deal with whatever comes his/her way. So many of the systems that have been developed by mankind make little sense, yet people still follow them blindly. The systems were purportedly created for the betterment of our lives. Yet when we take a closer look, we see how we have allowed institution and rationalization to dissolve the beautiful and simple way of life that existed before.

We should take a good look at our faults or limitations and consider that clarity and simplification of life results in a much less daunting lifestyle. In our present system we waste far too much energy on suspicion, hatred, jealousy and plotting. Living in synchronicity with our inner blessings and with nature will enable us to develop a system of sharing and partnership with those who similarly know how to listen.

We will build bridges of love rather than those based in fear, control and hatred. Opening will allow each person to share and learn from those whose blessings are different from their own. In this way recognizing our faults and limitations will be a positive as it allows us to see our limitations and know how to properly use the blessings we have.

For those who are concerned, it is not too late to root out those who seek to control in favor of those who seek to share peacefully.

In Proverbs (1:22) it says, "Fools hate knowledge." Often (Ecclesiastes 1:18) "adding knowledge adds pain." Yet it is also written (Ethics of the fathers 2:1) "Know that what is above is from you." To be responsible for

our actions we need knowledge as it says (Jerusalem Talmud Brochos 5) “Without knowledge there is no discernment.”

The knowledge that we seek exists, as it says in Isaiah (11:9) “The earth is full of knowledge of the transcendent and ever-present existence of the Creator like water covering the sea beds.” This sentence speaks about the future in present tense. “The earth is full” means that there is no place for anything else. All the thoughts and desires of a person are (to be) focused in only one direction. This is similar to when a person is full of love, which is a space that no word can adequately describe.

“Knowledge” means bonded not as a separate intellectual being rather a knowing of the heart where we are bonded as one. “Like water covering the seabeds” the sea represents power of movement, and the water is the conductor of that power. So too we are conductors of Creator life force covering perceptions of the limitations in creation. Physical and spiritual exist but because we are in total focus/bond with the Creator life force, we are oblivious to how it is conducted as we only see how each element performs its function in the creation.

(Deuteronomy 1:1) “These are the words that Moses spoke to all of Israel, on the other side of the Jordan, in the wilderness by the arovoh opposite suf, between Poron and between Tofel and Lovon and Chatzeros and Dee Zohov.” Moses spoke to the people about the lessons of their forty-year sojourn in the wilderness. The verse begins with the Hebrew word “D’vorim - words.” The letters Dvr are the base letters of the word. The word can mean speech, matters, things, bees, plague, pasture and leader or to subdue. Dvro is a raft of many pieces of wood tied together. Thus, his words covered the experiences of their years – which were varied and many.

“He spoke to them “b’ever hayarden” on the other side of the Jordan.” Hebrew words can be read with deeper interpretation. “B’ever “can also read over the past, the word “hayarden” also means to fall. Thus, this can be read as, he spoke to them “about the past that caused them to fall” during their stay in the wilderness.

The next words are explained as referring to locations, yet they can also refer to places within each person. Arov also means guarantee so “bo’arovo” means guarantor. “Suf” means end and “P’er” means to boast or

adorn – ego. “Tofel” means slander, “lovon” means white, “chatzerot” means open living property and “di zohov” means a plenty of gold. Thus, the verse reads, “With a guarantor (that kept them alive) even when they faced the end due to their egos and due to their slanderous nature, their whitewashing of their wrongdoing, living openly without limits and having much gold and using it inappropriately.”

(Deuteronomy 1:3) “After Moses smote Sichon King of the Amori who dwelt in Cheshbon.” This verse also has a deeper meaning. According to the Talmud (Rosh Hashana 3a) Sichon had two other names Arod and Canaan suggesting that this name may have been given because of his actions. Sichon (root sch) in Aramaic means to talk, wash, remove or sweep away, dirt and a young ass, Amori means talkers and Cheshbon means accounting or calculations. Thus, the smoothest talker was king over the talkers and dwelt with calculations since there was never balance with the accounting. It was Moses who was able to get rid of him.

Hebrew words have many meanings, and they show how easy it is to change the energy and meaning of the word. It shows how everything is multifaceted even if we were only taught one way to see things. This makes it much easier to understand transformation. How each thing does its job but also has an opening for positive forward movement.

Taking Account

There are times we stop in order to take an accounting of ourselves, our lives, and the world and universe around us. Many are questioning where their life is taking them and where the world is going. Some people are looking at history and are fearful about how it may repeat itself. Others are just blindly hoping that nothing bad will happen.

Spiritual and physical accounting will occur as the truth of many things comes to light. Physically, there are poisons that we have been fed for a long time via our food, water, air, medicines, and most of all into our minds.

When it comes to spirituality, one should keep in mind that it is a creation that also has limitations. In relationship to the source of all life that has no form or shape all existence is equal. Yet in an internal space, we also know

what that life source prefers for us to do. All the reasons that people give for creation are limited. Relating with a simple and pure heart is a step towards removing blockages and limitations so that we may develop our own independent connection with the Creator.

From a spiritual or kabbalistic perspective what is happening? Some see it as a fight between good and evil or positive and negative. That is one view. A broader view of creation will bring better perspective and understanding of the facts.

In the story of creation, in Genesis, formless void and blinding endlessness came forth before the creation of light and clarity. The void was created closer to the beginning of this creation, which gives it more standing and power than clarity. This is the reason that it is easier for darkness to triumph, and why at times it requires extreme exertion on the part of light to vanquish a negative force. It is also true that pure light is an extremely potent force with which to be reckoned. Thus at other times, a little light is capable of dispelling much darkness.

The name that everyone uses for God, YHVH, was created through Elokim. In the initial expression of the Creator, Elokim, is represented as a higher power although later on it expresses itself in a more limited capacity. This is because of what the word means and represents. The word Elokim means limitation, boundary, or judgment. Limitation had to be created first in order to create some type of boundary and to lay a foundation for establishing universal order.

YHVH means being totally in the present. Thirty-two (32) times the name Elokim was invoked as a power before the mention of YHVH. This means that there were 32 elements, levels or expressions of powers of boundaries that were formed before YHVH –the power of being present– was brought in. Each time Elokim is used it represents a different level of expression.

Today, people talk about a global economy, and uniting the people of the world in one unit. While the idea is great, some of the facilitators of this movement have agenda that will net them personal gain from the worldwide effort. It is also crucial to exercise all action with wisdom. While

well-intentioned people may truly wish to establish worldwide cooperatives, it is important to identify those who would use it for their personal goals.

Not all people in the world are brought up to support the inclination to respect and celebrate life and support free choices for their neighbors. Bringing many different viewpoints to a table is a noble idea, but only if the participants will perpetuate tolerance in our midst. This is but one step in the direction of oneness.

While logic would dictate that oneness should come about as a result of peaceful planning and wisdom, there is another possibility. If the world errs due to personal agendas it will invoke a reign of darkness.

The emerging oneness that would eventually result may be a stronger and more permanent solution to our woes, transforming everything to a pure state. While true, it is hardly a desirable means to achieve our ends since as humans many seem to have personal agendas that take advantage of any situation.

Sometimes it takes an extreme act in either a good or bad direction to bring about true oneness, and we can only conjecture as to how it will be brought forth. Those who dream that the world will change only when everyone is good or bad can continue dreaming. What we are witnessing in the world is the allowance of very subtle negative forces whose work is slowly bringing the world back to its original state of no direction - a formless void.

Light is not the highest connection; lack of it is even greater. So often negative things happen to bring a new level of consciousness and connection into the world. This gives us an opportunity to transform the negative into a positive connection with proper direction. It is a challenge we should not take lightly.

(Deuteronomy 1:4) "After he (Moses) smote Sichon king of the Emori who dwelt in Cheshbon." Cheshbon means accounting, calculating, reasoning, thinking, and girdle. Yoshev - Dwelt also means to sit or inhabit. Sichon was given this name because he lived like a young ass. The word also refers to his ability of speech. Emori also means speaking in a light manner.

One very interesting coincidence to remark with regards to Sichon is the following. The people were told to destroy Sichon and his people who lived in "Cheshbon" which is the Hebrew word for accounting. This took place in the month of Elul, which is the month when the people traditionally take a personal accounting of their lives.

The end result was that (Numbers 21,28) "a fire came out from the accounting" and destroyed Sichon and the people. This is an example of how, in ancient times, people utilized speech as a form of power. The end result was the destruction of all who followed in their path.

There is an old story about a man who owned a donkey, foal and a pig. The foal saw that the owner was feeding the pig food without limit. The young horse asked the donkey, "Is it fair we do all the work and only get a limited amount of food? How come the pig that does nothing gets fed more than we do?"

The donkey said, "Just wait and you will see that the pig is not being fed for its own pleasure and honor. Rather, the purpose of its abundant feeding is to lead it to its end." One day a butcher came and slaughtered the pig.

The same thing can be said of many people who fatten themselves while pretending to be helping others. After many years the end result may not be the gains for which they hoped and planned. Instead, their downfall will negatively impact those whom they are guiding as well. The greater (higher) the corruption is the harder (lower) it will fall.

An accounting of everything at one time can be overwhelming. For some, it can have a paralyzing effect that prevents them from taking positive action. For those persons the answer may lie in dealing with small components at a time. Others can only handle taking on the entire picture and resolving it instantaneously, seeing no purpose in having things drag out.

Some people need instant results. Some are patient and can wait for long-term results to provide the gratification that keeps them going. There are different types of accountings. Each person chooses what suits him/her best. The accounting need not result in a one hundred percent

picture-perfect resolution. For if everything is constantly changing, then each new moment is ripe with potential for change and transformation.

We live in times of international confusion, where many whose agenda is destruction and darkness is becoming obvious to those whose minds are not closed to seeing what is in front of them. It is also a time for each individual to rebalance his/herself. Lack of leadership means that each person has to become a leader for him/herself. We need to retake our personal connection with the source of all life.

Balancing life - story

(Deuteronomy Chapters 1-3) Last week we wrote about how life seems to be a continuous journey. Now the question is how best to ground our self and the journey.

Moses teaches that when a matter that is difficult for you to decide what to do comes up, it is because of a personal issue that you need to deal with. When you separate yourself from what you want, from focusing on your potential for personal gain in the issue or from what you believe, etc, then you will be able to make a clear decision. It is then that you can come closer to the Creator or focus on what the Creator wants. Sometimes by focusing on the Creator, you are lifted out of your situation.

After the destruction of the Temple in Israel the Talmud relates a story of three sages crying and one laughing. The one who is laughing explains that only with the destruction can a new future come about. There are many laws and customs taught today based upon lamenting the destruction of the past or negative thinking and not about learning how to let go and walk into the future. They are based on the sages who cried not on the sage that laughed.

The Talmud also relates a story about a Jewish leader named Rabbi Abohu that went into hiding to save his life and was proclaimed dead for his protection. During a meal Rabbi Nachman (who was interested about who would be the next leader) asked Rabbi Yitzchok to say something. After the

meal he responded that Jacob did not die. The words were said in a way to hide the fact that Rabbi Abohu is not dead and that in the future he may still be able to come back and be a leader.

People use this and other quotes to create fantasies and not live in physical reality. To say that dead people are really alive or that they will come back is a fantasy. They exist on a soul or spirit level but it is fantasy to suggest that they are alive in the physical. Yet there are people who seem to have a need to live with fantasy.

Before the Israelites went into the land of Israel, Moses spoke about their conduct and about their need to be grounded. In the desert they had bread from heaven. In contrast, if we waited for it we would die. Our soul comes from a spiritual place and we need to find some way for the body and soul to work together. We wait for peace, but if we do not create it within ourselves we will not have it in the world. We must have some concept of grounding or centering in order to be able to succeed.

Once a person realizes that there is nowhere to go, only within, the journey takes on a different energy and value. Peoples of the world place value in money, honor, and worship of external values or fantasies. In today's world, spirituality has become a business and has lost much value. It often appears as internal but after a time period it is easy to see that it is internal only to those who are vibrating at a lower frequency.

The world that we knew a few years ago (the values, etc) is all disappearing. We need to be aware (sober, sensitive) and this causes much pain. At the same time, we need to be happy that a new era is coming. People claim that they want change. Yet they have elected or are looking to elect new leaders who can bring about the destruction of society more quickly than their current leadership. Most people seem to be pawns that are used by those who control their emotions and thoughts. Society is extremely corrupt as are its governments that do nothing to bring about the changes that are needed.

When a person goes through a difficult time, it is pertinent that the person looks at the growth that will come about through the present situation. This

attitude and realization of a possible future helps to lift persons out of the mire in which they find themselves.

Just as a person has a reason for being depressed so too a person needs a reason for joy. Politicians and leaders of various groups utilize religion and cults as tools to have people believe in them, their leaders or god. This has given some structure to mankind but has also brought much destruction. When we see destruction we must become cognizant of the energy opening of the time that will allow a new dimension to open for all people.

The Jews have nine days where they mourn the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. The energy of these days are considered the saddest and most depressing days of the Jewish calendar. Yet within this nine-day period is the Sabbath, a day of joy when mourning or sadness is not permitted. Life often seems to have this contradiction, but we have no other choice. While depression can be destructive, joy often does not relate to the realities of life as people experience them. We need to experience life and also be of a consciousness that is above it.

Sometimes the memory of the past has to be wiped off the map for a new life to begin. Sometimes it is sufficient to learn the lessons of past life but sometimes the lesson is not sufficient and a person needs to become reborn.

We are all affected by what happens on earth and by what people do. We are also affected by our soul connections. It would seem that the only way to be rid of the negative energies that presently exist and live on earth would be to rise to a vibrational level that is beyond where society exists at present. This would mean that negative and positive would cease to exist or that they would work together and both would be energies of growth in a peaceful co-existence.

STORY:

The philosopher sat in the synagogue but could not bring himself to pray. For many months he had been thinking with doubts about the Creator and

the world. He could not resolve the matter because he was too enlightened and too intellectual to discuss his conflicts with anyone.

On this morning he sat with his head bowed between his hands. Suddenly he felt a hand on his shoulder. Looking up he saw the face of Reb Yisroel Baal Shem Tov who had just arrived from the city of Mezibuz.

Do you think that you can gain wisdom just with your thoughts? You must humble yourself to the Creator. Do what the Creator wants not just what you think. Put your intellect aside and do the actions that will connect you with the Creator.

The Baal Shem Tov then left, returning back to Mezibuz. The philosopher was shaken. He found that the thoughts did not disturb him anymore. Now he could pray and connect in a way that he had not done his entire life.

Relaxed and in a meditative space, he thought; How could this guy who lives miles away from here have known exactly what was going on in my mind? How did he know exactly at what moment to come and what to say? This proves his point that you cannot connect with intellect alone. The invisible Creator power is beyond logic.

After this, the philosopher packed his bags and moved to Mezibuz to become a disciple of the Baal Shem Tov.