

## YOU'RE NEW, TOO

By Ozer Bergman

"You will take for yourselves, on the first day, the fruit of a citron tree...and you will rejoice..." (Leviticus 23:40).

"It is not good to be old; even to be an old chassid or an old tzaddik is not good. You must renew yourself each day, always making a fresh start. Only one thing improves with age. The Talmud (*Shabbat* 77b) teaches that 'that other thing' [a pig] becomes stronger as it grows older" (*Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom* #51).

"When a person maintains a positive attitude throughout the day, it is easy for him to set aside some time during the day to feel and express his heartache before God" (ibid., #20).



When you think about how the Jewish year starts, the order of the holy days at the year's beginning and how front-loaded with *kedushah* (holiness) the opening month is, it is difficult to be unhappy. Consider: Before we are judged for our beliefs, behavior and attitudes, we are allowed—actually invited and encouraged—to re-commit our lives to the goal of Creation, living a life of God-consciousness. That's on Rosh HaShanah. Then we have ten days to show that we are reasonably competent to do that, that we are capable of making the changes necessary to succeed. That's the Ten Days of Repentance. Then, relative to how much we've moved "closer" to God, on Yom Kippur He moves "closer" to us and cleanses us.

Comes Sukkot and we move out of the house and into a hut. And we're so happy, for a number of reasons. We're glad to have the opportunity to renew our commitment, and we're happy because we've "gathered the produce of the earth" (Leviticus 23:39). Now, listen. Eating is a very big deal. Most of us, when we reach a certain point of hunger, become cranky. On the other hand, eating something you enjoy is a very good pick-me-up (*The*

*Aleph-Bet Book, Joy* A:3). (Just don't overdo it.) Gathering our produce—the grain, wine and oil—doesn't just mean the security of having a well-fed winter in front of us. Our harvest is the various types of spiritual intelligence that we have gathered in the course of life that have allowed us *teshuvah* (return to God).

Our supply of old "produce" nearly ran out, or was just barely nourishing our souls in a way that kept our God-consciousness fresh. But there was enough to let us collect some new thoughts and new insights, and realize that getting old, and stale, was not going to work. And that new produce works well enough to move us into the *sukkah*. Moving out of the comfort of home is a vindication that our new harvest can nourish us in the new situations that may come our way this year.

Fresh thinking is reason to celebrate. And when we're thinking in new ways, it's easier to find the time to talk to God because we *want* to talk to Him. We know that being happy, having a new crop, of produce or of ideas, doesn't mean that we'll live happily ever after. But it gives us hope that where there is still poverty or want—in the emptiness that yet remains in the heart—there will be fullness and satisfaction. The very "act" of fresh thinking, of coming to new realizations about how, and how much, you can be Jewish-conscious, tells you that God, so to speak, can also come up with fresh thinking to help you—and the rest of the world—live a richer life.

Rejoice in *your* harvest, in the Rosh HaShanah that *you* had, in the Yom Kippur that *you* had. Rejoice in the newness of your understanding and the realization that God is always making things new.

*a gutn Shabbos!*  
*Shabbat Shalom!*

*a gutn yom tov!*  
*chag samei'ach!*

Based on *Sichot HaRan*  
(*Rabbi Nachman's Wisdom*) #20, 51

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## SIDEPATH

Perfection and completeness can be learned from the holiday of Sukkot.

On Sukkot, we spend seven days in the sukkah, eating, drinking and sleeping. In doing this, we bring all our pleasures into holiness, reminding ourselves that food and all of our desires have their source in *Noam HaElyon*, Upper Delight. This is perfection and completion with regard to the physical necessities of this world—learning to appreciate the pleasure and delight they afford, but recognizing that their source, *Noam HaElyon*, stems from God Himself (*Likutey Halakhot, Minchah* 6:8, 9).

## PARASHAH PEARLS

By Chaim Kramer

**32:1 Let the heavens hear...Let my words flow like dew...I will call in the Name of God**

### *Turning Torah Into Prayers*

The "words" are words of Torah. When we turn our Torah studies into prayers, calling out to God and praying to Him to help us fulfill that Torah, our words will surely be heard (LH III, p. 206).

**32:6 O foolish nation**

***A "Foolish" Person Receives The Highest Wisdom***

The world was created with *LeV Netivot* (לב נתיבות, Thirty-Two Paths) of Wisdom [LeV has the numerical value of 32] (*Sefer Yetzirah* 1:1).

*NaVaL* (נבל, foolish) is an acronym for *LeV Netivot* (לב נתיבות), the Thirty-Two Paths of Wisdom. The latter is a reference to the Torah, which is the true wisdom. And the Torah is called *NoVLoT HaChokhmah HaElyonah* (נובלות החכמה העליונה, Simple Wisdom from on high) (*Bereishit Rabbah* 17:5).

A person who proceeds with "foolish" simplicity in learning and obeying the

Torah attains the Thirty-Two Paths of Wisdom (LM I, 123).

### **32:9 Jacob is the lot of His heritage**

#### ***Charity Connects Us To Our Heritage***

Jacob represents charity, as in the verse "You execute justice and charity in Jacob" (Psalms 99:4). When a Jew gives charity, he attains his heritage, the lot of the Patriarchs—which is the Holy Land, the Torah, and, above all, closeness to God (LM II, 71:10).

### **32:11 Like an eagle arousing its nest**

#### ***Compassion Activates Understanding***

The eagle represents spirit, and thus corresponds to the tzaddik, "a man in whom there is spirit" (Numbers 27:18). This refers in particular to a spirit of compassion.

*KiNo* (קנו, its nest) is similar to *KeNei* (נהי, acquire), as in "Acquire wisdom, acquire understanding" (Proverbs 4:5).

Thus, when a person has compassion, he can arouse and activate his wisdom and understanding (LM I, 29:2, 4).

### **32:39 See, now, that I, I am He**

#### ***God Is Always Here For Us***

"Now" is the time, no matter when it is or where a person finds himself. "Now"—because God is always present, and a person can always draw close to Him (LH VIII, p. 40b).

### **32:41 My hand will grasp judgment**

#### ***God Restrains Judgment Against Wicked And Righteous Alike***

God "grasps" and restrains His judgments even against a wicked person. Since this person may have done some good deed for which he deserves reward, God enables him to flourish until he has used up all his merit. Then judgment will be exacted from him in full and he will suffer his downfall.

The same idea applies to a righteous person. He may have sinned or committed an error for which he must be punished. But because God "grasps judgment in His hand," He also holds back punishment from a righteous person who has erred. Eventually, when the

misdeed is punished, the judgment is no longer severe, and then the righteous person can receive his reward (LM I, 55:3).

### **32:42 Because of the head of the enemy that rules over them**

#### ***Enemies And Foes Are Revealed From The Mind***

*Meirosh par'ot oyeiv* (because of the head of the enemy that rules over them) can also be translated as "the enemy is exposed from the head." In other words, enemies and foes are revealed from the mind, which is in the head. For the mind contains extraneous elements that nourish the hairs upon the head, and these superfluous elements provide sustenance for one's enemies.

When a person becomes a leader—a "head"—he begets enemies, whom he must overcome (LM I, 67:6). More generally, whenever a person attains a new understanding of Godliness, he must overcome new, hostile forces that attempt to divert and block him.

## **KITZUR L" M WEEKLY**

### **17 — "It happened as they emptied their sacks" (Genesis 42:35)**

1. It is impossible to receive fear and love of God except through the tzaddikim of the generation.

2. The tzaddik is constantly seeking and searching [for ways] to reveal God's will. More specifically, the tzaddik strives to reveal the will that God had in creating the entire world—that is, the [overall] will that motivated Him to create the world as a whole. Furthermore, the tzaddik also strives to reveal God's will in creating each [individual type of] being in creation, as well as each detail of each of these beings. For every created thing is unique in its appearance, its strength, its nature and its behavior. Similarly, with regard to its finer details, each creature is also unique and vastly different [from other creatures] with respect to its various limbs and the like. Among all [types of] created things—mineral, vegetable, animal and human—there exist an infinite number of differences

between each and every one of them. This also holds true within each [type of] creature in each of its particulars. All this results only from God's will, in that He willed one thing to be one way and another, another way.

The tzaddik constantly searches for this will, and comprehends it and finds it through the pride and delight that he finds in the Jewish people as a group, as individuals, and in every particular of each individual Jew. For the entire world was created only because God foresaw the pride and delight that He would receive from the Jewish people. The creation overall was [created for] the sake of the pride that God would take in the Jewish people collectively; and the particulars of the creation were [created for] the pride that God would take in each individual Jew. Similarly, the variations existing in the details of each creature were [created] in accordance with the pride that God would take in each particular of each individual Jew—[that is,] from each good movement of each Jew. So the tzaddik constantly searches and seeks, and he finds the pride which is in the Jewish people as a group, as individuals, and in the particular characteristics of every Jew. Then the tzaddik knows and comprehends the will that God had in the creation as a whole, as well as [His will in creating] its various creatures and in all the details of all these creatures. And when the tzaddik shows the pride that God takes in the Jewish people—as a result of which the entire will behind the whole creation is revealed—fear and love of God are thereby revealed.



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