

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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The Book of Deuteronomy presents a fundamental question. It begins: "These are the words which Moses spoke," i.e., it collects Moses' farewell addresses to the Jewish people, statements which he made on his own initiative. On the other hand, one of the fundamental principles of Jewish faith is that every word in the Torah, including the Book of Deuteronomy is "the word of G-d," endowed to us by Divine revelation.

One of the resolutions offered to this difficulty points to the utter identification of Moses with G-d. For this reason, in these addresses Moses occasionally uses the pronoun "I" when speaking of G-d. For example, in the second portion of the Shema, it says: "I will grant your rains in their season." "I" refers to G-d, but was spoken by Moses. As our Sages commented: "The Divine presence spoke from Moses' throat."

This motif is not only limited to Moses. Our Sages comment: "Every new Torah insight developed by an experienced scholar was given to Moses on Mount Sinai." Although the person labored to bring out these new ideas, they are not his own, but G-d's. Every person has the ability to transcend the human realm and reveal Divine truth.

What is the key to discovering such insights? Identifying one's "I" with G-d and not with one's own self. When a person is preoccupied with self-concern - what I want, and what I think is right - that is what he will think and speak about. When, by contrast, he is able to step beyond his individual concerns, he is able to appreciate - and share with others - G-d's wisdom. (From: Keeping in Touch) sichosinenglish.org

This letter was received a few years ago by the editor's of The Jewish Press (New York)

Dear Editor:

I read with pleasure your article on Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn. I had the great fortune to personally experience this remarkable rabbi's dedication to helping Jews return to the observance of mitzvot. Even today, many years later and despite the amnesia of old age, I blush when I recall the chutzpa displayed by six of my friends and me towards Rabbi Schneersohn, and how we were gently turned around.

It was the best of times (1929) – we had no idea of what was to come. Several articles appeared in various Jewish newspapers available in Philadelphia in those days about one Rabbi Schneersohn, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who had been given the use of a house on 33rd Street by Mrs. Faggen-Miller, a woman well-known for her charitable nature.

These newspapers articles quoted the Rebbe at great length and in much detail. My friends and I read these articles and wondered amongst ourselves whether the Rebbe was actually planning to replace the Al-mighty. We discussed this with an official of our synagogue, and he suggested that we visit the Rebbe and ask him what he had in mind.

Accordingly, late one Saturday evening we all piled into the car and went to the 33rd Street address. Our intention was to confront the Rebbe and show him that we thought he was trying to displace G-d.

As we climbed the steps to the front porch, we saw through the window that the living room was crowded with men. We rang the doorbell and a dignified, bearded man came to the door and inquired what we wanted.

One of us responded: "We'd like to speak to the Rebbe. We have an important question to ask."

All this time the man was taking notes. He said, "The Rebbe must know the question before he can see you."

"We'd like to know how he expects us to keep an old-fashioned religion in a modern country."

"You'll have to wait," he said. "You see there is quite a crowd before you. But come in."

We told him we'd wait on the porch as there wouldn't be room for all of us in the packed living room. In a few minutes he returned and said that the Rebbe would see us at once. He ushered us into the house, through the crowded living room, and up the stairs. We wondered why we had been admitted before all those people downstairs who had been there before us.

At the top of the stairs stood the saintly Rabbi. He was tall, handsome, with gleaming, bright eyes. He wore a large fur hat. His hand was outstretched in greeting. I was surprised since I never knew that Chasidic Jews extended their hands in greeting.

"This is the happiest moment I've had in Philadelphia," he said as he started to arrange chairs around his desk. We tried to help him but he insisted that he wanted to do this task himself. Once we were seated he took a long look at each one of us and then began, "You look like very intelligent young men, and therefore I must speak on your level. You are wondering about those people downstairs who were here before you. Well, here are some of the problems for which they are asking help."

"One man's daughter is seriously ill. What can I do? Nothing more than he can do, provided he approaches G-d. He should be able to ask for a complete recovery. Another has a lawsuit and wants me to pray that he will win. I do not know who's right, but he can pray that the L-rd will give justice. There's a man who wants to buy a business and wants me to intercede to make sure it succeeds. If I could do that, I'd be a rich business man. But if I could not answer your question, I'd have no right to be a rabbi."

"First, I must admit a great secret which you will most likely keep. There are 613 mitzvot; while the Lubavitcher Rebbe tries to keep them all, he finds it impossible to keep them all. So what does he do? Discard 613 mitzvot? No, he keeps as many of them as humanly possible."

With these few words he removed the venom we had brought with us. Then he asked us to try and keep as many mitzvot as we could. If we kept as many as we could, then we'd be doing the same thing as the Lubavitcher Rebbe!

Then we were asked for our Jewish names and the names of our mothers. We also offered our legal names and addresses but he said he had no use for them. Several of the boys put their hands in their pockets, but he stopped them with a gesture, thanked us, and said he had no use for money. He wanted mitzvot. He asked us whether we put on tefilin every day. Several admitted they had given it up. He even offered them tefilin so they could fulfill the mitzva. All of us promised to try to live up to his suggestions. He then blessed us individually, shook hands again, and we left.

We stood on the porch for nearly two hours digesting the visit.

Everyone agreed to pray at least once a day. One said he would give up his Saturday work as a dental technician and some months later he even prevailed upon his employer to do the same.

One of us, Gabriel Lowenthal, of blessed memory, attached himself to a synagogue and taught what he had learned from the Rebbe's philosophy to many others. I have lost track of some of the boys, but I'm sure the ten minutes we spent with the Rebbe strengthened the spirit of Judaism in all of us.

The Depression and later World War II gave me little hope of ever gaining more light from Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak. However, I found the continued inspiration from his son-in-law, the present Rebbe, to keep as many of the 613 mitzvot as I can.

Lewis Bokser, Philadelphia

The Mysterious Sin

When the prophet Jeremiah prophesied that the sins of Israel would bring about the destruction of the Holy Temple and their exile to Babylonia, he also predicted the duration of their punishment: "So said G-d: After seventy years in Babylonia, I shall remember you. I shall fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place." But when the Second Temple was destroyed 420 years after their return from Babylonia, and the Jewish people were again driven from their land, no pre-set limit was given for their exile.

The Talmud offers the following explanation: "The first exiles, whose sins were known (for we read how the prophets rebuked them for idolatry, promiscuity and bloodshed), the limit of their exile was also known; the latter exiles, whose sin is not known, the limit of their exile is also unknown."

But on that very same page, the Talmud tells us that the Second Temple was destroyed because of "baseless hatred" between Jews. Why, then, are we told that their sin is unknown? (cont. on back)

No matter how much effort is exerted, no-one can earn one cent more than G-d has ordained that he - this particular person - shall earn. One must do what is necessary, but one must remember that all his work is but an adjunct. The main thing is G-d's blessing, and that blessing is earned by being observant of G-d's commands: Davening with a minyan, observing Shabbat b'hidur (beyond the minimum, with "beauty"), meticulous observance of kashrut, having children instructed by sincerely religious teachers. (From Rebbe's Hayom yom 4 menachem av).

Rabban Gamliel the son of Rabbi Judah HaNassi would say: Beautiful is the study of Torah with the way of the world, for the toil of them both causes sin to be forgotten. Ultimately, all Torah study that is not accompanied with work is destined to cease and to cause sin. — Ethics of the Fathers 2:2

PARTICIPATE IN DAILY CLASSES

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Rosh Hashana (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:30 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Makos (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	Chassidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

**There will be no classes on Wed. & Thurs.
August 6-7.**

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM
Sunday 9:00 AM
Mincha/Maariv: 7:50 PM

TISHA B'AV SCHEDULE

Wednesday Night, Aug. 6:

Fast Begins 7:49 PM
 Maariv 8:20 PM *followed by Eicha*

Thursday, Aug. 7:

First Shacharis 6:00 AM *followed by Kinot*
 Second Shacharis 7:30 AM *followed by Kinot*

WE DO NOT PUT ON TALLIS AND TEFILLIN

Completion of
 Shacharis and Mincha 7:00 PM
with Tallis and Tefillin

FAST ENDS 8:24 PM

SHABBOS PARSHAS DEVORIM
Shabbos Chazon
August 3, 2003

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 7:37 PM
Friday Mincha: 7:50 PM
Early Minyan: 6:20 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:31 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tanya 8:45 AM**
- **Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by
Kiddush & Cholent**
- **Pirkei Avos 6:40 PM**
- **Mincha 7:25 PM followed by
Seuda Shlishit**
- **Shabbat ends 8:37 PM**

Kiddush this week is being sponsored by Marty Biegel in memory of his mother's yartzheit.

Yartzeits: Tova Biegel – Av 4, Joe Mayerhoff – Av 4, Roberta Skopp-Sischo – Av 5.

Happy Birthday to Ephraim Levy, Samuel Shofet, Jonathan Katzir, Kenneth Staub and Eliana Hill.

Messibos Shabbos will take place this Shabbos at the Davidpour home at 6:30 PM.

(cont. from front) Said the Chassidic master, Rabbi Velvel of Zbaricz: Such is the nature of "baseless hatred." Each side sees itself wholly in the right. It is the other who is the sinner, the other whose inflexibility is the cause of the dispute. So the strife and animosity go on without end, for one cannot rectify a situation for which there is no guilty party, and one cannot repent of a sin whose origin remains an utter mystery... (From: Week in Review, Vol X No 14 Vayigash 5759) – meaningfullife.org

GOOD SHABBOS!