

The Shul
at the Lubavitch Center
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December 15, 2018

VaYigash

7 Tevet, 5779

Thanks

As I write this, I'm at a hotel attending a seminar as part of my job as an electrical engineer. Of all places, this hotel is right in the middle of Disney World, in a town called Magic Kingdom, Florida.

It certainly is an immersive atmosphere. And it is indeed a magic kingdom for those who are culturally indoctrinated with the Disney themes. A large statue of a mouse character stands in the hotel lobby. Young children sitting in rows of tiny chairs watch excitedly as continuous videos of cartoon characters play on a large screen. A shop in the hotel is filled with shelves stocked with various souvenirs on the Disney theme. Music on this theme plays in the lobby area.

As I walk through the lobby, a thought enters my mind: This immersive atmosphere is so powerful and engulfing. Wouldn't it be nice if a tract of land could be acquired for building a different kind of theme park - a "Moshiach World"? In this park, we could enact whatever we know about the era of Moshiach, and hopefully, we could feel the presence of Moshiach while at this theme park.

As I envision it, in one area of the park would be a synagogue, i.e., a house of prayer and study, since when Moshiach is here, our main occupations will be to learn about G-d and pray to G-d. Furthermore, all the nations of the world will live together in peace, so we could have some sort of display about that. Even the animals will not attack each other, so we could have a wolf and a lamb playing together peacefully.

As I continued developing my plans for this theme park, a number of practical difficulties present themselves. Where would this park be? Who would pay for it? Perhaps there would be controversies about these issues, and strife is certainly not part of the Moshiach world. Also, how could we ensure that the wolf does not hurt the lamb? Regarding having a synagogue in the theme park, there already are a lot of synagogues in the world. What would this one add? The biggest difficulty is: How would we create the awareness of G-d's Presence that we will feel when Moshiach is here?

This last concern got me thinking. It's true that there are already many synagogues in the world. In fact, a synagogue is one place where one can feel a great awareness of G-d's Presence. But that is not the only such place. Actually, wherever a person fulfills any of G-d's commandments, G-d's Presence is felt.

This thought process leads to an amazing conclusion. We don't have to travel anywhere to get to Moshiach World. Moshiach World is right here with you and me. Whenever we help another person, study Torah, say a prayer, or do any mitzva (commandment), we make a mini Moshiach World here in our own immediate surroundings! And the more enthusiasm we put into our mitzva, the more immersive the mini Moshiach World will be.

May G-d complete our efforts, join all the sparks together, and make the whole world a Moshiach World, a G-dly Kingdom, very soon, and then the whole world will be filled with knowledge of G-d as the water fills the sea.

*(by Naomi Zirkind from <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/>
Dr. Zirkind is a lead general engineer for the Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center.)*

Feel My Pain

When Yosef revealed himself to his brothers, the verse records that the brothers were unable to answer him due to an overwhelming sense of embarrassment. The Midrash teaches that from the brothers' reaction, it is clear that Yosef was giving them tochacha, "reproof" for having sold him. This interpretation is further strengthened by the fact that on several occasions the brothers mentioned that Yaakov was alive; thus, Yosef's question must have had other implications.

Many of the commentaries discuss how the words "Does my father still live" imply rebuke. Some understand that Yosef was really saying to them, "How did you expect my father to survive after all the grief and suffering you forced him to endure?" The Bais Halevi takes this interpretation a step further. He understands that Yosef was

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chiding Yehuda, saying, "You asked me to have mercy on your father and release Binyamin; why is it that you yourselves did not show him mercy when you sold me?" The purpose of reproof is not to belittle or embarrass a person, rather to show him that he has erred and that he should correct his ways. If we directly attack the wrongdoer, there is a good chance that we will be met with a reaction which is the opposite of what we want. Very often, when a person is confronted concerning a transgression which he has committed, he raises his defenses and continues to display the malevolent behavior, in order to enforce the fact that he does not consider such behavior to be wrong. Therefore, effective rebuke cannot be achieved by directly challenging and attempting to belittle the perpetrator. Accordingly, how is it possible that Yosef would choose to reprimand them in such a manner? Another question that can be asked is: If the rebuke relates to their lack of sensitivity towards their own father, why did Yosef ask whether "my father" is still alive, rather than whether "our father" or "your father" is still alive?

Perhaps the following explanation can be offered: One form of effective reproof is focusing on the victim's pain rather than on the wrongdoing of the transgressor. By not directly challenging the perpetrator, he is not forced to raise his defenses. When he sees the suffering that has been caused by his actions, he comes to the understanding that he has behaved inappropriately.

The fact that "Does my father still live" was the first question that Yosef asked his brothers, indicates that what most concerned him for the previous twenty-two years was being distant from his father. His query should be interpreted as an outpouring of his own personal grief over being in a position where it is impossible to maintain a loving relationship with his father. The brothers were filled with shame, not because Yosef directly chastised them, rather as a result of understanding the grief that their actions had caused. This makes the reason why Yosef focused on my father rather than your father clear. He was expressing his grief over the loss of his personal relationship with his father.

(by Rabbi Yochanan Zweig from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Community Information of Interest

December 15: Lecture by Rabbi Dovid Katz. **Democracy, Peace, and its Discontents: The State of Israel and the Jewish World in the late 1970s.** *Israel and the Arabs in the late Seventies.* This lecture will begin at **8:00 p.m.** and be held at the Congregation Shomrei Emunah.

Seudah Shlishit סעודה שלישית

Mr. Allan berman is sponsoring
Seudah Shlishit this Shabbat
on the occasion of the Yahrzeit of his mother,
Mitzi Berman, Malka bas Avraham
whose yahrzeit is 9 Tevet;
and the past yahrzeit of his father,
Henry Berman, Hillel ben Shmuel.

Yahrzeits This Week:

Allan Berman	9 Tevet - Sunday night / Monday	for mother	Malka bas Avraham
Michael Frank	9 Tevet - Sunday night / Monday	for father	Ephraim Mordechai ben Shlomo
Howard Elbaum	11 Tevet - Tuesday night / Wednesday	for brother	Yaacov Kopel ben Avraham Menachem

Davening and Shiurim Schedule

Friday, 12/14 — 6 Tevet

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Candles — 4:26 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:25 p.m.
Father & Son Learning (& Chollent) — 7:45 p.m.

Shabbat, 12/15 — 7 Tevet

Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:38 a.m.
Berachot Gemora Shiur — 3:45 p.m.
Minchah & Seudah Shilishit — 4:15 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 5:28 p.m.

Sunday, 12/16 — 8 Tevet

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.

Monday, 12/17 — 9 Tevet

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Tuesday — עשרה בטבת, 12/18 — 10 Tevet

Fast Begins — 5:50 a.m.
Shacharit & S'lichot — 6:35 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:15 p.m.
Fast Ends — 5:16 p.m.

Wednesday, 12/19 — 11 Tevet

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Thursday, 12/20 — 12 Tevet

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Friday, 12/21 — 13 Tevet

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Candles — 4:28 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 4:30 p.m.
Father & Son Learning (& Chollent) — 7:45 p.m.