



SICHA 27 ELUL 5741 – TO JEWISH WOMEN AND DAUGHTERS

*Free Translation**

The Midrash relates: When Moshe foresaw that the Temple would be destroyed and we would be unable to bring sacrifices, which elicit forgiveness for the Jewish people, he asked G-d: What should be done?" ["How will we be pardoned then""]

G-d replied, that Jews should gather "in one group," many Jews together, and recite the "Order of Penitence." They should pray according to the order of the penitential Selichot and G-d will pardon them.

The Midrash then adds a wonderful detail:

We find with all the commandments and ideas relayed by G-d through Jewish leaders to the Jewish People concerning their mode of conduct; regarding the overwhelming majority of the commandments, virtually all of them, G-d simply said that the Jews should conduct themselves in a particular manner. As in this very instance: G-d said to offer a sacrifice in the Tabernacle — and later in the Temple — which will effect forgiveness.

When the Midrash relates how G-d said to recite the "Order of Penitence" and then He will pardon all misdeeds, which will consequently draw down His blessings,

[The Midrash adds a detail:] G-d was not satisfied with stating this command alone. Rather, as the Midrash relates, G-d donned a Tallit and Tefillin, so to speak, and recited the Selichot, the "Thirteen Attributes of Mercy." G-d Himself served as an example of how to recite the Selichot, so that Jews [through reciting the Selichot] can be certain of G-d's blessings even in times of exile...

Here is an explanation of why G-d wanted to actually demonstrate this to the Jewish people: For although they are in exile during the days before Rosh Hashanah, which reminds Jews that they must do Teshuvah—return— which is what Teshuvah means. Return to oneself, to one's true essence, to one's true being, which is Judaism and Torah.

[Being in need of Teshuvah,] one may think that his relationship with G-d has weakened, and G-d's blessings to him have been affected. Nevertheless, he is told to do Teshuvah. And since G-d himself dictated this course of action, he will certainly succeed in Teshuvah.

*) Taken from the Subtitles that appear on the screen



פרשת תבוא

His Teshuvah does not transform him into a new person —on the contrary! It reveals within every single Jew what his true life consists of, what his true interests are, and what is truly dear to him.

It is only because of outside influences from things that are “foreign” to the Jew, that it may appear for a short while that perhaps Torah is not his true desire, not his objective, not where his interests lie.

This, as mentioned, is why G-d saw that special emphasis was necessary:

Jews are in exile, and non-Jews or non-Judaism can discourage them, saying: “You see that you are in exile, and Torah states that leaving exile will be not by your own power; rather, G-d will send Moshiach. G-d Himself will go along with Moshiach and take every Jew out of exile.”

It is therefore a difficult matter, a difficult exile;

G-d therefore showed special emphasis, so that Jews can be certain that G-d pardons them for all their past misdeeds in the days already passed and gone by, and that from now on there will only be radiant days and holy days, for they will be Jewish days.

Therefore, G-d did not suffice with just saying that “the recital of the Selichot will elicit forgiveness,” but He also showed a living example, so to speak. He appeared in a Tallit and Tefillin and recited the Order of Penitence so that a Jew sees how “I am with him.” He is with every Jew and all Jews in whatever situation they may be.

Even when they are in a state which requires Teshuvah, it still says, “G-d dwells with them.” He resides togetherwith them and within them.

So when a Jew recites the Order of Selichot, G-d recites the Selichot yet again and fulfills His promise to pardon and forgive all undesirable deeds, even if they did in fact occur.

This is all the more so considering that “Your people are all righteous”: Torah rules that it can be presumed concerning every Jew and all Jews, that for their own part—if they would not be disturbed— they are not only upright but also righteous, just as G-d is called “the Righteous One of the world.”

Then G-d grants, in addition to the share of a righteous person, the share of a penitent as well. And a penitent’s share is even more than the share of the righteous.

And He grants every one of them, and all of them together, a good inscription and seal for a good and sweet year —good in an apparent and revealed sense.

They should have a good year and a sweet year, materially and spiritually —both in matters that relate to the body and in matters that relate to the soul.



פרשת תבוא

It should be such good that can be perceived by all as good. This is possible when not only the soul recognizes the good, but when the body as well feels the goodness in material matters.

