



ONLY LOVING WORDS

Farbrenge – 20 Menachem-Av, 5746-1986

In certain circles, during the weeks before the High Holidays, leaders would criticize the "sinful ways" of other Jews.

The Rebbe takes issue with this approach and suggests alternative methods to inspire Jews to Teshuva.

It is now after the fifteenth day of Av, and on the fifteenth, the moon is at its fullest.

The question is asked: The Talmud tells us, "The Jewish people will be renewed like the moon," – since the moon is now at its peak, so too are the Jewish people.

This is especially the case on the fifteenth of Av, for, "The Jewish people have no holidays as great as the 15th of Av and Yom Kippur." So how is it, that from the fifteenth of Av on, the moon, and therefore the Jewish people, wane?

The answer, as explained many times: It is not a descent; rather, the beginning of an ascent.

As the verse says "You shall be remembered, for your seat is empty." By humbling oneself after reaching great heights, fullness, – for he has reached his limits within a certain context – he disconnects himself from the limitations of the 'fifteenth of Av,' his previous 'full' state, thereby enabling him to ascend further.

So upon reaching a 'full' state, he begins to 'empty his seat,' and the humility, the void he leaves, is filled from Above.

This applies especially to the month of Av, which is a preparation for the month of Elul about which it says: "I am for my Beloved, and my Beloved is for me." For this reason it is customary during the month of Elul, when writing a letter, regardless of its content – and some begin this already on the fifteenth of Av – to wish the recipient, although the letter may be on a different topic, to be "signed and sealed for a good and sweet year."

So surely, we must also heed the clear directive: "Those you bless I will bless..." and avoid the opposite of blessing, and particularly during the month of Elul. And most certainly when one has an opportunity – or one creates the opportunity – to address others, one must be sure to use only words of blessing.

"The Torah does not depart from its plain meaning." When we say a word and it has escaped our lips, it is out of our control so it must be understood as a blessing to the listener, as well. He will not try to ascertain or clarify its meaning, – and the speaker may even mean to say something negative...



פרשת עקב

We are warned by Torah, and also the ability, to change this practice although such words were uttered in Elul of years past.

This habit of criticizing Jews should stop. During Elul every Jew should bless each Jew and all Jews to have visible and revealed good. And the blessings should be expressed verbally: That there should be only blessing, success, and deliverance for each and every Jew.

And in order to inspire Jews to return to Torah, it should be done – and the vast majority have used this method and have succeeded – through emphasizing Torah's "pleasant ways and paths of peace" – by speaking about tangible goodness and blessing, and the benefit of doing good we accomplish much more.

And we certainly dare not alienate another Jew from connecting to Torah and Mitzvot; rather, by hearing about, "Her pleasant ways," and "Her paths of peace," good also as understood by the listener.

We should begin immediately, without waiting for Elul, right on the fifteenth of Av.

This concern for others is emphasized by the donation of the wood to the Holy Temple, which took place on the 20th of Av.

The purpose of this was: Jews would bring sacrifices to the Holy Temple, and although all sacrifices needed "wood and fire on the Altar," some people had no wood. Therefore, they made a room called the Chamber of Wood. In that chamber they would place the donated wood, and anyone in need could take wood for his sacrifice. And the sacrifice would achieve everything it should.

Regarding all this, we must remember: "Action is the main thing." in relation to non-Jews, and certainly in relation to our fellow Jews.

If, for whatever reason, they need to be taught about Judaism, it must be done in "pleasant and peaceful ways." Then the number of Jews necessary to be taken out of exile will truly be filled.

Then we will all dance together to greet Moshiach, joyfully and happily, in one instant. May it be speedily in our days. L'chaim!

