



CONSTANT GROWTH

11 Nissan, 5742-1982 – Celebration 80

The 11th of Nissan is the Rebbe's birthday. The Rebbe uses his birthday as an impetus for growth.

Every person is expected to take advantage of the time and the years G-d gives to grow. Primarily to grow in matters of the soul – spiritual pursuits, and this will bring growth in material matters as well.

The Alter Rebbe says, the physical body should be of secondary importance, and the soul should be primary. True growth is that of the soul, and as a result, the body grows too.

Many ask about retirement – unfortunately there are those who don't even ask, but come to the following short sighted conclusion – although there is a correct answer to the question – since one has become a year older and is no longer as strong and energetic as he was the previous year, this gives him "the right" to succumb and decrease in his activities, in fulfilling his mission in life.

This is completely contrary to the character of this nation, which was founded on enthusiastic effort. It is even seen as an ideal to overwork. At times this goal is exaggerated and taken to an extreme, when the object of the pursuit is limited to financial and physical matters, and that becomes the primary purpose in life.

By contrast, this same country developed the custom, that when a person becomes forty-some years old, more so when he turns fifty, and certainly when he is over fifty, he earns a "well deserved retirement," decreasing his activities to benefit humanity, – the true purpose for which he was created.

But the Torah of Truth, which is the Torah of Life – the guide for our lives, says that 'today' – this world – is 'to labor.' As long G-d places a soul within him and gives him life, even if he is over fifty, – fifty considered in Torah 'an eternity' – or older than sixty, with the significance that the Talmud gives to that age, – he must continue to be active!

The fact that he has been granted life proves that he may do no less than until now. On the contrary, when the body grows another year in age the soul, as primary, should grow many times more, in comparison to the body. As G-d wants us to have everything we need to be able to live without concerns, we must be free of physical concerns.

But in spiritual growth, we must never be content, we must never be satisfied with the accomplishments attained prior to age 50, age 60, and so on. On the contrary: "He who has one hundred wants two hundred."



פרשת מצורע

If this is true of physical desires, it must surely be true, and even more so, in fulfilling the soul's needs. For the soul has no pleasure from gold and silver, from food and drink; these are merely means through which the soul connects to the body, to carry out its mission – spreading G-dliness, by spreading decency, for true morality and decency are based on G-dliness, and to do this in an ever-increasing measure.

A person may ask: How can he do this, when at age his energy and strength are not what they were at age 50, for example, certainly not what they were at age 30, especially if he is turning 61 or older?

The answer: We mentioned earlier the popular expression, "When one is bound above, one does not fall down below."

The explanation and inner meaning in this is, when a person commits himself to Above – to a level which transcends time and space, then even as he is confined in time and space existing in the physical world as a soul within a body which subjects him to the limitations of time and space; yet, in spite of this, G-d gives him the ability to connect to 'Above,' – to G-d, by adding in matters connected to G-d.

One should not think that because there is a 'below,' he may permit himself to fall to that lower place. On the contrary, one must be connected Above, and because the One Above wants him to be connected 'Above' G-d helps him to succeed in fulfilling this resolution to the fullest.

