

THINGS I HAVE LEARNED FROM THE INTERNET

INTRODUCTION

You all, probably, like me have millions of organisations that send you stuff via your e-mail each day. Most of these are uninvited as they are attached to sites I may have looked at at some stage or are just “there”. They work on the principle that they will tempt you with something you might like to buy, you get sucked in and go in to have a look and occasionally you do succumb to the temptation and buy. Well they have got you!!!!

There are dresses from China, mostly ugly Chinese but occasionally a real tempter but always too small. Not much money I know; that is the temptation, but money and resources wasted. Amazing weight loss programmes, amazing foods which will help you lose weight in three weeks, (that one runs for 25 minutes before you get to the vitamin pitch at the end), a local massage place, zillions of real estate agents, teeth whiteners that weaken the teeth. Thank heavens the porno ones have not found me yet.

Now, I know this is how the internet is available to me for no cost but some of these people, once they have you sucked in, are very hard to remove. With one, the unsubscribe button was not provided. I had to get an IT guru mate to get rid of it.

Don't you wish you could unsubscribe some people or some episodes from your life.

But then there are the ones I have subscribed to, who keep sending stuff religiously every day or week. I know I invited them at one stage and thought their stuff worthwhile or even important, which it is, but I can't be reading and signing petitions about the state of the green field mouse in Iceland every day. But I do feel bad about not signing one about plight of refugees in some country I have never heard of. And then, what good does it actually do, except appease my conscience?

But of course, there are the ones that I really devour. If I don't have time to read them today I save them till I do. I skim and then read the bits of interest and often just delete. But sometimes there are absolute gems that confront me or warm me or stimulate me to a new perception of an old issue.

Today, I want to share some of these gems.

PARSHA

There are two sites I use which follow the Jewish tradition of studying a set portion of the Torah each week.

The weekly Torah portion (Hebrew: *פרשת השבוע* *Parashat ha-Shavua*), popularly just **parashah** (or *parshah* /pɑːrʃə/ or *parsha*) and also known as a **Sidra** (or *Sedra* /sɛdrə/) is used in Jewish liturgy during a single week. It is chanted publicly by a designated reader (*ba'al koreh*) in Jewish prayer services, starting with a partial reading on the afternoon of Shabbat, again during the Monday and Thursday morning services, and ending with a full reading during the following Shabbat morning services.

Each portion takes its name from the first distinctive word in the Hebrew text of the portion in question, often from the first verse. Dating back to the time of the Babylonian captivity (6th century BCE), public Torah reading mostly followed an annual cycle beginning and ending on the Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah, (Last Great Day) with the divisions corresponding to the lunisolar Hebrew calendar, which contains up to 55 weeks, the exact number varying between leap years and regular years.

AISH

The first of these is AISH

BACKGROUND

AISH is a Jewish site which I have been following and subscribing to for about 5 years. I can't remember how I found it, possibly because it has a Wall-cam mounted to continually broadcast the Jews praying at the Western Wall of the Temple.

I quote from their website, with their permission.

They are headquartered in Jerusalem near the Western Wall, and are a division of Aish HaTorah, an apolitical network of Jewish educational centres in 35 branches on five continents. This partnership enables Aish.com users to experience the richness of community at an Aish branch.

In 1974, Rabbi Weinberg started Aish HaTorah in Jerusalem with the goal of helping Jews around the world connect to the beauty and wisdom of their heritage. The organization has since grown exponentially, due to Rabbi Weinberg's ability to empower young people to take responsibility for the Jewish future. His vision and support were responsible for many of the best ideas on Aish.com. Rabbi Weinberg passed away in February 2009 following a battle with cancer. He left behind over 100 descendants, and many thousands of bereaved students.

The name Aish HaTorah literally means "Fire of Torah." As Elie Wiesel said: "Aish HaTorah means to me the passion of teaching, the passion of learning. The study of Torah, the source of Jewish values, is the way to Jewish survival."

Aish's educational philosophy is that Judaism is not all or nothing; it is a journey where every step counts, to be pursued according to one's own pace and interest. Mitzvot (commandments) are not rituals, but opportunities for personal growth, to be studied and understood. We learn the Torah's wisdom to enrich our own lives, and to share these ideas with all humanity.

As a non-profit organization, Aish.com relies solely on private support to continue providing its wide range of quality content. Plans for the near future include an advanced learning site, and an online Hebrew School.

Since its launch in February 2000, Aish.com has become the leading Jewish content website, logging over a million monthly user sessions with 380,000 unique email subscribers.

We've published over 10,000 articles -- on career, dating, parenting, spirituality, Israel events -- offering "wisdom for living" for the modern world.

Aish.com's goal is to give every Jew the opportunity to discover his or her heritage in an atmosphere of open inquiry and mutual respect.

Aish.com, a 3-time winner of USA Today's Hot Site award, has been heralded for its technical sophistication and sleek graphic design. James Besser, the New York Jewish Week columnist, writes: "The supersite, Aish.com, reacting to the blinding speed of changes on the web, [produces] results that will turn most other Jewish content providers green with envy..."

Aish.com's impact has been far and wide. A recent survey found that 86% of readers said that Aish.com has inspired them to do more Torah learning, and

75% said that Aish.com has led them to increased affiliation with Jewish organizations or increased attendance at synagogue.

FEATURES

Aish.com features include:

Israel

Spirituality

Current Issues

Family

Dating

Ask the Rabbi

Live Webcam Western Wall

Jewlarious

This is a daily joke based on or against the Jews. Some are hilarious but most of them are in house and I don't get.

Jewish Parents

Sheld'n visited mama and papa. He said: "Finally, I've found my bashert (prospective wife). Just for fun, I'm going to bring over three women and you guess which is "the one." Mama and Papa agreed.

The next day he brought three beautiful women who sat on the sofa and chatted with Mama and Papa over a little cake. After they left, he challenged, "Okay, guess which one I'm going to marry?"

"The one in the middle with the red hair," his parents replied instantly.

"Right! But ... how did you know?" asked Sheld'n, amazed.

Mama said, "Simple. *Her*, we don't like."

Jews Please Leave

Avram went into Church, took out his tallis, yarmulke, and proceeded to pray. The priest entered to start services: "Will all non-Christians please leave." Avram continued davening."

Again, the clergyman said, "Will all non-Christians please leave."

And again, Avram prayed.

Finally, the distraught priest moved to Avram. "Will ALL JEWS please leave."

At this, Avram removed his yarmulke, packed up his tallis, then went to the altar, picked up a statue of Jesus and said, "Come bubbela they don't want us here anymore."

Videos

Judaism 101

Here are excerpts from some recent offerings.

YOM KIPPUR – Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8

Soon we are going to spend a lot of time in synagogue on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur praying. If God is all-knowing, all-powerful and good -- then He knows what we need and will provide it. He doesn't need me to remind him and certainly I am not going to change His mind by flattering Him or bribery. So, why pray?

What changes through prayer is not the "Mind" or "Desire" of the Almighty. What changes in prayer is us. By recognizing the Source of all of our blessings -- our sustenance, our health, our success, our very existence -- we bring ourselves to a higher spiritual level; we bring ourselves closer to Him. We create a relationship with Him.

Whether the Almighty fulfils one's requests in full or in part, is determined by Him as to what is good for us. We can relate to this as parents. A child may beg for something that the parent knows is not in the child's best interest and may even be a danger to a child. The smart and caring parent will do the right thing, do the difficult thing and say "no." That is why all prayers are answered -- sometimes with a "Yes," sometimes with a "No" and sometimes ... with a "Not yet."

When we recognize and appreciate our relationship with the Almighty -- then many of the things that we wanted actually become good for us to have. We can use them properly for positive ends and they will help us to perfect ourselves and the world around us.

That is why it is a mistake to think that we should only pray for the "Big Things" - like health and life. Asking for big things, or small things, is only from our perspective; to God all things are possible and important. However, each and every prayer builds that relationship and enhances our comfort and ability to pray.

When the time comes to pray for the big things, it will come easier. Imagine the difficulties of asking your father or mother for help after not speaking with them for years?

And if you haven't prayed in years, feel it's too late to start, or that you're a hypocrite for praying -- don't worry. God is the loving parent who wants only good for us and unlike a loving parent who has been ignored for decades and might not listen, God will listen to us when we call out to Him! Go for a walk in a park. Find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed. Just pour out your heart and talk to God.

Prayer has three components based on how one would place a request before an earthly king: 1) Praise (God doesn't need our praises; however, it focuses us to Whom we are talking.) 2) Requests. 3) Thanks. It is the height of good manners to show appreciation. A short prayer might go something like: "Almighty, Master of the Universe, Who has given me all good things, please (make your request here). Thank you for this and for all that You have given me."

I personally add a fourth dimension to prayer, repentance. This need not happen just on Yom Kippur but should be something, like prayer, that is ever present in our minds. As Christians, we have a dimension to prayer, and indeed life, that the Jews do not have and so have added things to be grateful for. These differences between the two faiths that I find in the dvars, are one of the things that I find stimulating. They make me think, they make me more aware of the giant leap the Jews of Jesus' time had to make to accept Him and they provide me with a new dimension we don't have.

Back to Aish.

There are 5 steps that will help get your prayers answered:

- **Feel God's presence.** *You are talking to a loving, all-powerful Being who wants to give you everything that's good. All over the world God is answering prayers because He loves His children.*
- **Expect results.** *God has a track record. If you don't really believe God can and will help you, you're not really praying.*
- **Pay attention** *to what God is teaching you. Everything that happens is for your good. If you are in need, realize God is teaching you something. If you trust Him, you will hear what He is telling you.*
- **Get in touch** *with what you're really after. Know your bottom line. You're talking to the awesome Creator, so don't ask for nonsense. He wants you to grow up.*

This is an important one which I didn't see until I was writing this sermon. How deep in God and His nature.

Prayer helps us to really understand why we are struggling with an issue. It strips away the dross and helps us get to the root cause of our troubled minds. In one conflict I suddenly came to see that the emotion at the bottom of my confusion was fear. Good old-fashioned fear. Wow! I not seen that, as I tussled with differing perspectives and expectation. The realization hit me like a blow. It was wonderful!!! Fear is easy. I know how to deal with that.

Another time it was a need to "do the right thing". That was easy. Separate myself from emotion and history of the issue, decide what was right and do it. Suddenly it is easy!!!

Another time it was that I actually still cared about someone who was really, really annoying and had deeply hurt me, someone whose eyes I wanted to pick out slowly and painfully. It was easy. If you care about someone then you act in love. (Mind you, we should do that all the time but there are different levels of love..... for another time). That was relatively easy with may slips and much prayer.

Yet another time, I came to see that I had absolutely no respect, affection, conversation, trust or anything in common with a certain person. It was then easy to shake the dust off my feet and cut him out of my life, with the proviso, of course, that should she be in trouble or come to me in "repentance" or even anger, I would interact appropriately, in love, either to support or reject.

- **Being serious** about what you're praying for means that you're doing everything you can to make it happen. God will lend a hand only when you put in the effort. He'll never take away your independence because that's His ultimate gift to you.

Wow, that one is deep. He will take away "your independence". How confronting is that? Yet, when I think back over my walk with Him, I can see that there is now less and less of me, my opinions, my plans, my pain, my anger in my life and more and more of trust, gratitude and love of Him. This is good. Saves time and effort in the end. Just do it His way, the first time. You will have to eventually.

SUKKOT - [Deuteronomy](#) 16:13-15

We all know that Sukkot is Tabernacles.

These verses tell us "The festival of Sukkot shall be to you for seven days when you gather from your threshing floors and your wine cellar. You shall rejoice in your festival ... for the Almighty will bless you in all of your produce and in all of the work of your hand and you shall be completely joyous."

It is fitting that Sukkot is a harvest festival. People who work the earth are among the most religious of people trusting in the Almighty. They take a perfectly good seed that could be eaten, and they stick it in the ground not knowing whether there will be rain or drought or floods or pestilence. They put forth hard work not knowing the outcome. They trust in the Almighty for their food and their very existence.

The mitzvah of dwelling in the Sukkah teaches us trust in God. We tend to think that our possessions, our money, our homes, our intelligence will protect us. During Sukkot, we are exposed to the elements in a temporary hut. Living in a Sukkah puts life into perspective. Our possessions are transient -- and our corporeal beings are even more transient than our possessions. Life is vulnerable. Our history (Jewish History) has borne out how transient are our homes and communities. No matter how well-established, wealthy and "secure" we have become in a host country, in the end it too has been a temporary dwelling. Our trust must be in God.

Here the focus is on the Jews and the persecution they have suffered since the beginning of time, but it is equally true for us as Pete and I have had to face

these past few weeks. If you haven't got a functioning heart, there is not a lot you can do with all the possessions we have.

As King David wrote in Psalms 20:8 "There are those who trust in chariots and those who trust in horses, but we trust in the name of the Almighty." Only the Almighty is the Creator of the world, the Master of history, our personal and caring God Who can be relied upon to help us.

Apart from the concept of the fragility of life, I like the concept of planting a seed that you could have eaten in the hope it will grow. Every person who has been in business knows how true this concept is.

MALE AND FEMALE - Genesis 1:1-6:8

Many people think that the stories in the Book of Genesis are children's stories or fables. However, as you will see from the following analysis of the story of Adam and Chava (Eve) by David Baum -- excerpted from his phenomenal book, [The Non-Orthodox Jew's Guide to Orthodox Jews](#) -- that there is deep wisdom in the Torah applicable to each of us. No wonder the Torah is the #1 Book ever sold!

"The Torah's account of creation sheds a great deal of light on the true nature of men and women and what they should mean to each other.

"When God originally created Adam, he was created as one being comprised of both a male and female aspect. Had nothing changed, he would have been able to reproduce by himself without a partner. Only Adam was created like that; the rest of the animal kingdom was created as males and females. Once Adam saw that all of creation had these counterparts, he desired to have one as well. And at that point, God removed half of Adam (a "side" in Hebrew, not a rib as people often mistranslate it) and using this as a base, built Chava.

"This account raises many obvious questions. Why did God not create human beings as male and female at the outset? Why did He wait until Adam desired a mate to create one for him? Why did Adam desire it? What was he missing? And once Adam desired a mate, why didn't God pair him up with one of the animals that were already created? Or create a whole new being for him? Why did He need to take part of Adam? And, why didn't He make the second being identical to the first?

*"The answer to all of these questions lies in the purpose of life itself: **We are here to create ourselves by emulating God in order to draw close to Him.** If men and*

women did not need one another, we could very easily begin to feel that we are completely independent, which would lead us away from God, not towards Him. Had God left us in that state, His purpose in creation would never have been realized.

"So why did Adam desire a mate once he saw that the rest of creation lived in pairs? It's hard to imagine Adam, who was created by the hand of God and lived in Gan Eden, being jealous of a giraffe or a squirrel. No, what he saw was that all of God's creations had interactive relationships, each giving to and caring for the other, and that he was alone. (I question this statement as it is really only the higher animals who nurture each other). To emulate God and to fulfil his purpose, he needed to be a giver, but he had no one to give to. Once he realized that, he longed for a mate.

"What was missing from the selection of animals before him that he could not find a mate? When God created man, he gave him dominion over the "fish of the sea, the birds of the sky and every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen. 1:28). A relationship with a subordinate being would not be a real one; to achieve its purpose the relationship between a man and a woman must be of mutual benefit. Each party must be able to develop an emotional intimacy with the other and be able to give to the other in a substantial way. This can only be done amongst peers.

"This fact also alludes to the position of women in Jewish thought. Chava is not subordinate-why would God create a subordinate being for Adam after he had rejected all the animals for that very reason? Also, Chava was not created from his back or his foot. She was created from his side; therefore, her place is at his side.

"Now that we understand why human beings need a mate, why did God not create man from the outset as two beings? Because, again, that relationship would not fulfil God's intention for us. Our free will requires that we choose our path, not have it thrust upon us. Adam had to consciously want a mate in order for him to be able to fulfil his purpose.

"So once Adam desired a mate, why did God not just create a female from the earth in the same way He had made Adam? Because the female side had already been created-it was part of Adam, who was not considered male until his female side was removed. (Before Chava's creation, the Torah actually refers to Adam in the plural.) Had another being been created anew, Adam would still

have viewed himself as an entirely autonomous being and could have fallen prey to the same problems he would have had, had he stayed alone. By splitting Adam in two, God demonstrated that both men and women are incomplete and that each needs the other half in order to be whole, i.e., we are mutually dependent. This is why there are only two genders, not three or four or even more: The purpose is achieved with two.

"This knowledge of our incompleteness is fundamental to understanding life. That is why the Torah goes to lengths to describe the creation of male and female but makes no mention of skin colour, hair colour or height and weight- because they are not important. For the same reason, it does not describe the creation of male and female in the animal kingdom.

"Lastly, God created the female wholly unlike the male in order to force each of us to become true givers through having to be sensitive to one another's needs. If man and woman were identical, the relationship would require almost no effort, and neither would be much of a giver.

"Judaism considers a single person to be incomplete: A man without a woman is only half a person and a woman without a man is only half a person. Alone, neither are able to reach the heights for which they were created. Without a good relationship with the other, neither are able to lead a full, happy life or have inner peace. **The underlying truth is that each of us is one being that has been torn in half, and I mean that literally; the Torah goes out of its way to mention that God had to close up Adam's wound after taking the side of him that would form the foundation of Chava. It seems there was a gaping hole that would have killed him if not for the surgery.**

"Further, the Talmud states that ever since God took the side from Adam, man has been pursuing it. Obviously, we need it, which explains why a man can be lonely in a crowd and yet at peace once he has a woman in his life. A man's loneliness is not satisfied by a group of friends because God didn't create a friend for Adam, He created a mate. Without a woman, a man is always alone and always missing something, regardless of the size of the party.

I think that most men and many women are not aware of this need within themselves.

"One of the most unique aspects of human relations is that we each **expect** to find a soul mate for life. Imagine being told by a couple that they are getting

married but for only three years, and then they'll be splitting up to go their separate ways, or asking a woman to marry you for a specific number of years. Imagine responding to your friend's excited announcement of her engagement with the question, "How long do you guys plan to stay married?"

"Since marriage is basically a reattaching of a part of ourselves, our natural attitude toward it is the same we have toward any part of ourselves: We intend to keep it forever. Given the choice, each of us would always prefer to keep all of our body parts, even our tonsils and appendix. (There is no prohibition of divorce in Judaism, but it is supposed to be an option of last resort. It is a tragedy when a family breaks up and so the option of divorce is usually exercised only in really unsustainable situations.)

"Animals, however, do not share this attitude because their males and females were created separately, as separate beings. They were not created originally as one and then divided. For them, mating is simply a way to perpetuate the species, nothing more. **They do not find lifelong relationships; they find breeding partners.**"

I can't help but think how this concepts the Gay Marriage debate

RAINBOW - Genesis 9:13).

After the Great Flood the Almighty said:

"My rainbow I placed in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth" (Genesis 9:13).

What lesson for life can we learn for life from the symbolism of the rainbow?

The rainbow symbolizes peace and unity. A rainbow is made up of various colours and shades of colours and although they are very different from each other, they come together to make one entire whole. Similarly, people are very different from each other. They come from different national backgrounds, and they have different personalities.

However, if they will look at themselves as one unit there can be peace and harmony despite the differences between them. This is basic for the existence of the world and for the welfare of individuals. For this reason, the rainbow is the symbol of the covenant between the Almighty and the earth.

This Dvar really challenged me as to the way the Gay and Lesbian movement have hijacked this precious symbol to represent a lifestyle repugnant to God. Whether we like it or not, whether we agree or not, God totally rejects this way of living. He does not reject the people, just the lifestyle.

Whenever you see a rainbow, or a picture of a rainbow, let it be a reminder to work towards harmony with other people even if there are major differences between you.

The Gay and Lesbian movement has been one of the most divisive movements in our society, second only to Islam.

While differences in interests and personality might make it difficult for you to become close friends with a specific person, you can still have a harmonious and peaceful relationship with that person.

*You can understand a person's nature
through three things*

-- his cup

(when he is under the influence of alcohol),

his wallet (his generosity),

his anger (easy or hard to anger;

easy or hard to appease)

-- Talmud Eruvin 65b.

(In Hebrew the phrase flows smoothly: B'koso, B'kiso, B'ka'aso.)

Unity begins with U.

DVARMAN

BACKGROUND

This site was a bit of a mystery as I couldn't access it as the computer said it was contaminated. The email address is blocked but I did find some background. I was led to this site by a very dear, non-practicing Jewish friend who had a major impact on my life in my middle years. Her intelligence and independence and unique perspective on life were so stimulating. Sadly, she died of cancer, at quite a young age many years ago.

I sometimes find this site to be a little too traditional for my taste and sometimes quite esoteric.

I did get some background.

The idea: The point of being a Jew isn't to be a specific "kind" of Jew, but to be a Jew and use the Torah as a practical guide to life. The Dvars seek to reflect this ideology. The Weekly Dvar email now reaches over 15,000 people weekly. This project has illustrated that lessons from the Torah can be adapted to everyday life, and would be read and appreciated by Jews, and even by some non-Jews. No Jew should be left off the learning curve, and every Jew should be united by the one thing that united us to begin with: the Torah.

Lelamed's mission is to incorporate Judaism into everyday life through education and entertainment. Learning Torah should not only teach us our history, but also how to conduct ourselves, what our priorities should be, and how to deal with everyday situations. In short, Lelamed's primary objective is to use the Torah as a practical and relevant guide to dealing with the complexities of contemporary life.

SUKKAH?

This dvar is based on

Jos 24:4 And I gave to Isaac Jacob and Esau. And I gave Esau Mount Seir for his own, but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt.

But the teaching is based on the Talmud, the additional observations recorded by the sages over the centuries since Babylon. As in Jesus' day, these reaching often override Scripture. But there are many, many gems of wisdom for us to draw on.

To fully understand it, let's see the first reference to a Sukkah in the Torah: After surviving a threatening confrontation with his arch enemy Eisav (Esau), the Torah records the following: "And on that day Eisav returned on his way to Seir and Yaakov traveled to Sukkos and built for himself a house and for his cattle he made Suktot therefore the name of the place is called Suktot." (Breishis 33:16-17) The verse is a little odd. Yaakov built himself a house (which sounds normal enough) but because he made Suktot for his cattle the place was to become known as "Suktot." Is that the reason to name a place? The Ohr HaChaim answers, "Perhaps because he did something new by showing his compassion

for the cattle...that he did something that no one had done previously... It was that novelty that caused that the place should be called so."

This may help us to gain an insight into the essence of our Sukkot. After a near head-on collision between two super-powers, the Torah depicts Eisav going back home and to his old predictable ways. Yaakov, however, did something beyond the norm, outside his home. He didn't walk away from his brush with death the same as he entered. Rather, he became better, and that's what the Sukkah represents for us today – a chance for a fresh start to the new year, a chance to grow and express growth in new and creative ways.

Quotation of the Week:

"We delight in the beauty of the butterfly,

but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty."

- Maya Angelou

FIRST THINGS FIRST - DEUTERONOMY 26:1-29:8

Interestingly, to me at least, this one came out the same week as the AISH study on Yom Kippur. Both are from the same Parsha but see totally different aspects of this section

The Torah states:

"And He brought us to this place and He gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey" (Deuteronomy 26:9).

***Rashi**, the great commentator, explains that "this place" refers to the Bait Hamikdosh, the Temple in Jerusalem. The question arises: Why isn't the order the other way around? Since the Israelites entered the Land of Israel much before they built the Temple, the land should be mentioned first!*

***Rabbi Naftoli Tzvi Berlin** of Volozhin explains that the Bait Hamikdosh was a spiritual benefit and the Land of Israel was a physical benefit. When we express our gratitude to the Almighty we should do so in the order of importance of the things for which we are grateful. Therefore, we thank Him for our spiritual blessings before our material ones.*

This, too, should be our order of priorities in our thinking and behaviour. Our spiritual needs should be uppermost in our minds. This will have practical ramifications should there be a conflict between our spiritual and material well-being.

WRITE YOUR OWN SONG - DEUTERONOMY 31:1-31:30

This dvar is based on

[Deu 31:19](#) Now, therefore, write this song for you, and teach it to the sons of Israel. Put it in their mouths, so that this song may be a witness for Me against the sons of Israel.

Parshat Vayelech includes the commandment for every Jew to write a song for themselves (31:19), which Rashi says is referring the following Parsha, Haazinu. The sages derive from this rule the final of the 613 commandments that each Jew has to take part in the writing of a Torah scroll. Why would we be required to write our own song, and then be given the song to sing? Also, how is the requirement to write our own song the same as the requirement to take part in scribing our own Torah?

If we apply the concept of this weekly Dvar Torah, we can easily understand the Torah's final commandment: If we take any commandment in the Torah and personalize it, although its source is the Torah, its ownership is very personal. Songs, too, sound different when sung by different people. In fact, music becomes even more personal because it's a more emotional medium. That's exactly why the Torah chose music as the metaphor to teach us about personalizing the Torah to make it special for ourselves. The Torah wants us to internalize it so much that we sing about it. If we accomplish this, we've fulfilled the final commandment of writing our own Torah - with all the harmonies that accompany it.

Quotation of the Week:

"People will forget what you said or did,

but they'll never forget how you made them feel."

BREAKING ISRAEL NEWS

This site sends a review of current events pertaining to Israel and Judaism both in Israel and in the world. It is a Messianic site and says of itself.

<https://www.breakingisraelnews.com>

DEFINITION

This site “offers a fresh and Biblical perspective on the latest news from Israel and the Middle East. Our bias is not liberal or conservative – just Biblical. Breaking Israel News was started in July 2013 by Rabbi Tuly Weisz, Director of [Israel365](#), after thousands of Jewish and Christian Zionists requested more news items and insight from Israel. Since its inception, the site has grown tremendously. Breaking Israel News is visited by over 100,000 people every day from over 100 countries around the world and averages 2.5 million page-views per month.

Israel365 promotes the Biblical significance and physical beauty of the Land of Israel each and every day of the year, according to –Deuteronomy (11:12) “A land which Hashem your God cares for; the eyes of Hashem your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even until the end of the year.”.

Our popular email newsletter that goes out to over 150,000 people all over the world features stunning photographs alongside inspiring Biblical verses, entertaining videos and latest news stories.

Israel is about the Bible and morality

ISRAEL – POLITICAL VIOLENCE OR MORALITY

This commentary points out the importance of the place of Israel in the history of the world today. The world interest is not based on the level of violence but something deeper of which most people are not aware.

Author and former Associated Press (AP) correspondent Matti Friedman agreed the situation in Israel is even more complex than in the rest of the world, but emphasized the moral aspect over the religious one.

“The Israel story is not a political story, not a violence story, not a Middle East story – it’s a story about morality,” said Friedman. “Stories about Jews are always stories about morality – Jews are the moral actors that fail.”

Friedman backed up his claim with numbers. While he was working for AP in 2006, the bureau had 40 full-time news staff covering Israel, which, Friedman pointed out, makes up one-one-hundredth of the surface, -.2% of the Arab world and has only around 8M citizens.

In contrast, there were far fewer reporters in China (1.4 billion people) or India (1.3 billion people), and more reporters in Israel than in all the sub-Sahara African states and in Africa combined. There was only one AP reporter in Syria in 2006.

Friedman emphasized that interest in Israel goes beyond the perceived high rate of violence and conflict in the region. The entire city of Jerusalem, with its 830,000 residents, had only 18 violent fatalities in the last year, including all people killed in stabbing attacks, assailants nabbed by security, Israelis and Palestinians. In contrast the city of Jacksonville, in Indiana had 119 homicides.

SCIENTIFIC PROOF OF GOD

Dr. Gerald Schroeder, a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in physics, is a brilliant Torah scholar. In simple language and in five minutes he proves incontrovertibly that God exists and that science now has proved that the Bible's description in Genesis is correct.

What a surprise!!!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQVm8RokoBA>

1.

TRENDS IN WESTERN CHRISTIANITY

There are countless interesting snippets or fully-fledged articles on this site, many showing the decline in Christianity in the Western World. Interestingly, to me at least, is the fact that in even the relatively short time I have been following this site, I have seen a trend from Christians willingly giving up God's Law to this now being imposed on them in an increasingly savage way.

The information and insights and links to prophesy on this site are a goldmine.

CAPITOL MINISTRIES

I became interested in these people when somehow, I came across a photo of President Trump praying at his reported regular Thursday prayer meeting with

his cabinet and this outreach. I got a good laugh when I saw the expression on the face of one of his people. It was totally “I don’t want to be here for all this “stuff....”.

I was intrigued, as the concept of any US President being a genuine Christian, was a concept quite alien to me and didn’t fit with my impression impressions of Trump gained from the media. So, I went to their website to see what their theology was. Apart from the Sabbath and Festivals, it was spot on with ours. I was very surprised to find such balanced solidarity in this present climate .

Their weekly offering is a study, usually quite long, so I usually skim it as it requires extra time. but it is usually worth it.

BACKGROUND

Capitol Ministries plants and develops Biblical ministries of evangelism and discipleship to Public Servants.

The BHAG (Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal) of Capitol Ministries is to deliver the Gospel to every public servant, in every capitol (in the US) every year! Since our founding in 1996 our vision has not changed: to evangelize elected officials and lead them toward maturity in Christ. We stay away from politics and concentrate on the hearts of leaders.

Capitol Ministries was founded in 1996 by Ralph and Danielle Drollinger with a mission of creating 50 biblically based ministries of evangelism and discipleship in the 50 state capitols of the United States of America. They discovered that only 3 of the 50 state capitols already possessed similar ministries: Kentucky, Louisiana and Florida. A huge opportunity awaited them!

“We have birthed ongoing outposts for Christ in more than 60 capitols throughout the world since our founding in 1996, including one in Australia but I was unable to find out where... I assume it is in Canberra.

Danielle Drollinger..... noted that shortly after many of the newly-elected Christian Public Servants landed in Sacramento, it became clear that they lacked the spiritual maturity to stand up for the principles they claimed to possess.

Ralph, was experienced in the American sports ministry movement that planted ministries to athletes in high schools, colleges, and professional sports teams

and, so they decided to do a similar on government campuses to evangelize, disciple, and minister to Public Servants.

Over the years, Capitol Ministries has planted Bible study ministries in more than 40 U.S. state capitols, many of which are now independent, in Washington D.C. for Senators and Congressmen, and nearly a dozen ministries in the capitols of foreign nations. While those efforts continue, Capitol Ministries is in the process of creating a ministry to reach local Public Servants in city halls and county government offices in the 33,000 incorporated cities and counties in the United States.

I do not have space to summarize some of their teaching, but the one of Church history was one of the best treatise I have read.

A few quotes from the study on evolution

Darwin admitted at the end of his life that any theory, no matter how far-fetched, was better than the alternative: bowing in submission and obedience to a Holy Creator

The absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence

LAST ONE - ZECHARIAH 13:7-9

I can't remember where I found this one so my apologies to the source.

Now we all know about the Holocaust which took place in Europe during WW2. German SS and police murdered nearly 6,000,000 Jews in the killing centres, either by asphyxiation with poison gas or by shooting. In its entirety, the "Final Solution" called for the murder of all European Jews by gassing, shooting, and other means.

I visited the replication of the Dachau camp in the early 70's and was totally moved by the toned-down reality of the place. To see where humans could do these things to other humans was just so confronting to a naïve Aussie girl. I was appalled at how close the old village was to the camp. How could these people say they didn't know what was going on?

But the biggest impact was the "feel" or "spirit" of the place. There are no words I know to crystalize that emotion. I ended up with a migraine after the experience due to the stress I experienced trying to come to terms with it all. Obviously, one can never come to terms with it.

Six million Jewish men, women, and children were killed during the Holocaust. I knew that but could not comprehend it. I guess I knew that this was two-thirds of the Jews living in Europe before World War II. Sitting in the morning sun in my rainforest office, I really came to process this figure and fraction of the Jewish population, I was stunned. 2/3's of them!!!. I was really challenged as I processed this info formally for the first time.

But imagine my absolute shock, and the gestalt moment when I scanned down the email and read the link to

[Zec 13:7](#) Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man who is My companion, says Jehovah of Hosts; strike the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. And I will turn My hand on the little ones.

[Zec 13:8](#) And it shall be in all the land, says Jehovah, two parts in it shall be cut off *and* die; but the third shall be left in it.

[Zec 13:9](#) And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, *It is* My people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God.

The link between these two ideas is just amazing. I had believed for 40 years and more and no seen it. I showed me yet another aspect of our amazing God, how He is in control as terrible as that seems at times and how He continually reveals new stuff about Himself all the time, so keeping us refreshed in awe of Him.... If we seek Him.

How can people deny our God!!!!

CONCLUSION

These websites and the regular feed of information keep the present world situation before my face. It is so confronting to see the prophecies of Revelation taking on flesh before my eyes. I tremble for my kids and the "Millennial" generation who have no concept of all this unfolding around them. They race to embrace the technology and the "freedom" they are supposed to get from it. "I can't be bothered signing my credit card docket, takes too much time." "I can't wait to have my details implanted. Won't lose my card then" "Of course, Gay marriage is the moral thing to do", "God!!? What old fashioned, outdated bull...."

The growing threats to Israel and of nuclear war, the expansion of Russia and China (King of the North and East?). the suppression of Christianity and values and all scary. Will I have the courage to stand for Christ? I very much doubt it. My kids wouldn't even see it as an option.

And are we to blame for this rapid shift? Probably to a large extent, but I know we all tried desperately to teach them and have largely failed. The old hoary debate of free will and predestination raises its head here.

But then, I read the amazing pieces written by the Jews who don't acknowledge Christ but teach His principles all the way through. The same God, yesterday, today and tomorrow.

I can trust that He will protect His people.