בסד

the lubavitch multi-academy trust
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Assembly Notes
PARSHAS TERUMAH, PARSHAS SHEKOLIM 5785
Assembly Theme: True unity brings true happiness

What is unity? Some will say that unity is best expressed when two individuals unite and they become one. But true unity is even deeper. It is when each partner is incomplete as an individual without the other. Each one is only a half.

This can answer a question about the Mitzvah to donate a half Shekel every year.

(This Shabbos three Torah scrolls will be read from, which is relatively rare (besides Simchas Torah). The first is for the Sedra Terumah, about building the Temple. The second is for Shabbos Rosh Chodesh, the start of the month of Adar, the month of Simcha (joy). In the third Sefer Torah we read Parshas Shekolim, about the half Shekel that everyone donated each year for the communal offerings, thus atoning for the sin of the Golden Calf.)

Worshipping the Golden Calf was idolatry, unfaithfulness to Hashem! Shouldn't the Tzedaka required for atonement be expressed as a whole number? (The same half Shekel coin was also known as 10 'Gera'). Why does the Torah repeatedly emphasise that it is only a half?

The atonement has to reach deep into the Neshama (Soul), expressed by the awareness that one is only a half. Becoming complete requires the other half. The other half is Hashem. With our greatest achievements we are incomplete without Him. And Hashem, in a manner of speaking (kevayochol) is incomplete without the Jew doing what Hashem created him/her for.

The other half is also one's fellow Jew; when we unite together in the spirit that each of us becomes complete only through the other.

This is also the way to Simcha. Being truly happy and at peace is a choice, an experience that begins from within, regardless of external circumstance. Knowing that there is a purpose and a Partner and that we are not alone brings a sense of peace and happiness and helps to build the Beis Hamikdosh.

RAMBAM SIYUM

Today we conclude the Rambam cycle of learning. I recommend that whoever is able to should undertake that in the coming cycle you will learn the Sefer Hamitzvos daily. It can be done in just a few minutes. I give you an assurance that if you do it every day without missing a day, you will feel empowered and uplifted, besides having done a great mitzvah and channel for Hiskashrus to the Rebbe.

STORY OF THE REBBE

Rabbi Levy Wineberg is a Shliach in South Africa. He is a renowned scholar. The Rebbe would send groups of Talmidim to different Chabad Yeshivos around the world. The group that was sent to the Yeshivah Gedolah in Melbourne Australia was usually sent for two years.

In 5735 (1975) Levy Wineberg was part of the group sent to Melbourne. Every Thursday night he would send a letter home which would include his learning, experiences and observations of that week. He asked his parents to save all these letters, because they would become his diary about these two years.

His father was Rabbi Yosef Wineberg, a prominent Chossid and a brilliant teacher of Chassidus. In fact he wrote the volumes of Lessons in Tanya, which were edited by the Rebbe, with many explanations. He also traveled a lot and would consult with the Rebbe about his activities. Unknown to Levy, his father would often send his letters in to the Rebbe, pointing out something that he thought would be of interest to the Rebbe.)? The man pointed out an unassuming man sitting near the back of the Shul. This man worked very hard as a barber to make a living.

גוט שבת!

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Levy felt that he learned a lesson in true Ahavas Yisroel and Achdus (Unity) of our People.

He wrote home all the details, how he had felt and then realised that he had misjudged what was happening. His father sent this letter and story into the Rebbe. On this the Rebbe commented not just with a Thank You but with a double "Thank You, for giving me Nachas".

Being sensitive to each other is a major source of Nachas to the Rebbe.

Good Shabbos! Good Chodesh!