Assembly Notes

PARSHAS NETZAVIM 5785

Assembly Theme: The Priceless Gift of Freedom of Choice

Rosh Hashana commemorates the **sixth** day of creation when Adam, the first human was created. It is called "the beginning of Your Creation". There is no festival to commemorate the actual **first** day! The sixth day is special because the creation of Adam (and Chava) is what matters .

What does a human possess that no animal has, indeed not even an Angel in Heaven possesses? It's his or her freedom of choice. The animal and the Angel alike are all pre programmed. They cannot be credited and they can't be blamed. They act on instinct alone.

At the end of the sixth day "Hashem saw all that He created and behold it was very good." The Rabbis say: the word "good" refers to the Yetzer Tov (the good impulse in a person. "**Very** good" refers to the Yetzer Hara (the evil inclination)! Why? Because if there were no possibility to do bad, then the good is not "good". Only something that you choose to do can be called "good". If it isn't chosen, then the good deed is automatic, a reflex, an instinct. It may be "innocent", but it is not "good".

The Parsha Nitzavim is read every single year on the Shabbos before Rosh Hashanah. In Nitzavim the Torah proclaims: "I have placed before you today Life and Good and Death and Evil….. Choose Life!"

What sort of choice is this? Any sane person would choose Life over Death! The Rebbe explains: in every area of life there is the temporary, mortal aspect; and there is the permanent, eternal aspect. When exercising your freedom of choice, go for the spiritual, everlasting aspect of everything; how it can be used for a Mitzvah.

Rosh Hashana reminds us and calls out to us to choose to renew our acceptance of the Kingship of Hashem and to apply this relationship to all areas of life. And to do so with inner joy.

Good Shabbos!
Kesivah vaChassimah Tovah!

גוט שבת!

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Story of the Rebbe

It is customary to send a Pah"n (a letter requesting the Rebbe to intervene in Shomayim) before Rosh Hashana, to pray for a good year. The Pah"nim of LSGS will be brought IYH to the Ohel by myself. So, I will share an Ohel story.
The Rebbe has Shluchim throughout the world. Perele Uzan is a young girl whose family is on Shlichus in Nigeria. Most couples who go on Shlichus start with very modest homes, which also serve as their Chabad House.

The Uzan family were lucky, because an elderly Jewish man had a big villa in Lagos, and he offered it to them to use for their initial time in Nigeria. They lived there and also arranged many activities for the community. But that was only for a short time. Then they had to move to a different location, in a different city.

The new home for the Uzan family was very small, and not adequate to be able to serve the community. They needed a much larger house, but it is not a simple task. Nigeria is a poor African nation, and many of its houses do not have running water or electricity. There are a few very large, suitable homes; but these are very expensive and the owners demand two years' rent in advance. Perele's parents began to wonder whether they should remain in Nigeria. Maybe the problem in finding a suitable place was a sign that they should move elsewhere?

They went to the Kinus Hashluchos in New York and in their letter to the Rebbe they described their dilemma. Meanwhile, they heard of a frum man in Toronto Canada who had a lot of business dealings in Nigeria! Rabbi Uzan phoned and made an appointment for that evening and flew to Toronto.
He described all the good work that he and his wife were doing; yet they couldn't continue unless they found a place. The businessman was amazed at their accomplishments and said that he would help. But for the next weeks or months he was extremely tied up with business. Ask the Rebbe for a Brocho for these business deals and I promise to help you he said.

Rabbi Uzan flew back to New York and went straight to the Ohel to report to the Rebbe. On the way out of the Ohel Mrs Uzan looked at the video in the building. (This video plays 24/6). The video was of a Lubavitcher Chossid from Toronto(!), Rabbi Parshan, approaching the Rebbe at a farbrengen together with another businessman from Toronto(!!) and told the Rebbe that this man has pledged to donate a half million dollars to the Yeshiva in Toronto. The man corrected him saying: I only pledged a quarter of a million. The Rebbe said to him: Why are you afraid? It's a Brocho for you. Hashem will bless you and you will be able to afford a donation of a half million dollars!
She told Rabbi Uzan about it, and he forwarded that clip to the businessman in Toronto and said if you commit now, this will bring you the Brochos for your deals. He responded: OK I agree. You find the big building and I promise to pay all the money that it costs to rent.

The Brochos were more than he anticipated. First of all, all his investments in Nigeria were highly profitable and secondly, he was offered a new unrelated business opportunity as well.
They found the house and now it's a Chabad House with a Shul, a kindergarten, a kosher food shop and many other activities.

The Uzan family got their message from the Rebbe that they are in the right place.

GOOD SHABBOS!
KESIVAH VACHASSIMAH TOVAH!

גוט שבת!