

LUBAVITCH OF N. C.

Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

In the course of this month we read in the weekly Torah readings about Yacov's (Jacob, the third of the patriarchs) encounter with his brother Esov.

Esov was on a march of revenge after Yacov had "stolen" his blessing. Yacov was returning home after a long stay (over 14 years) with his wicked uncle Lavan.

When Yacov was informed of Esov marching with 400 men towards his camp, he quickly went into action by dividing the camp into three divisions, but before then he sent messengers to his brother Esov with a gift and a message of peace.

The opening verse of the message was: "My Lord Esov, with Lavan I have dwelled (garti) and I delayed until now."

Naturally there are numerous interpretations, but the simple meaning is found in Rashi's commentary:

The word garti (I dwelled) equals taryag which is the number 613 corresponding to the 613 commandments in the Torah. Yacov's message was: I dwelled with the wicked Lavan yet I observed the 613 commandments and did not adopt his evil ways.

This interpretation is quite puzzling. The purpose of sending the messengers was to appease and to find favor with Esov. How does Yacov intend to find favor with Esov by proclaiming, "I lived with Lavan but I kept the Mitzvot."

Yacov understood Esov perfectly well. He knew what impresses and influences

Jewish Pride

Esov. Yacov was confident that by proclaiming his pure faith and commitment to G-d, he will thereby gain respect and admiration from Esov and in fact this approach eventually softened Esov.

When a Jew talks from the depth of his heart, for deep in his heart he wants to be a good Jew and wants to observe all the commandments, he will reach into the depth of the other's heart as Yacov did for when he eventually met Esov they embraced and wept.

The same approach is necessary when dealing with people from other nations. In fact, it is a Mitzvah for the Jew to influence the non-Jew to observe the seven Noahdite commandments in order to ensure a safe and stable world.

Our generation does not need proof that we cannot rely on logical conclusions of man, for man is "bribed" with interests other than Reason and Justice, as we saw an entire nation, including their scholars and philosophers, develop a whole philosophy of laws that brought the greatest destruction and chaos that ever existed.

Worse, today there are disciples and yet another generation who cling to their precepts and endeavor to disseminate them, completely ignoring the outcomes we have seen.

There is certainly no need to specify whom we are discussing. This was a nation numbered among the developed and cultural nations, civilized and educated. They brought to the world destruction, devastation and unprecedented chaos.

Celebrating Simchat Torah

Simchat Torah is a time when we rejoice with the Torah, and so it was this year as a large crowd gathered at Lubavitch residence to rejoice and dance.

After Rabbi Groner recited Kiddish and toasted L'chaim, there followed a full festival meal served buffet style. Many delicious cakes and pastries "imported" from Brooklyn decorated the tables. During the meal people were encouraged to drink L'chaim and toast each other in good health.

Dancing and singing with the Torah, various verses were chanted in a sing-song manner to the tunes of Chassidic melodies and popular Jewish

songs. Children were hoisted onto shoulders of adults while dancing and singing in the largest Succah in Charlotte. Some of the dancers would raise a cup of liquor and toast L'chaim.

"The purpose of this joy", Rabbi Yossi Groner explained, "is to celebrate Judaism. We conclude the cycle of the Torah reading on Simchat Torah, and that is a cause for joy. Since every Jew is connected to the Torah and the Torah is the basis of our Judaism, its completion brings us to a state of unlimited happiness, and this joy is expressed when we dance and sing with the Torah."



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CELEBRATION**

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ANNIVERSARY
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6:00 Cocktails
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SUKKOT: Observing the mitzvah of Lulav and Esrog at Lubavitch Succah.