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1. Deuteronomy - Chapter 11, verses 10-13

י .כִּי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה בָא שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ לֹא כְאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הִוא אֲשֶׁר יְצָאתֶם מִשָּׁם אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע אֶת זַרְעֲךָ וְהִשְׁקִיתָ בְרַגְלְךָ כְּגַן הַיָּרָק ׃יא .וְהָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ אֶרֶץ הָרִים וּבְקָעֹת לִמְטַר הַשָּׁמַיִם תִּשְׁתֶּה מָּיִם ׃

10. For the land to which you are coming to possess is not like the land of Egypt, out of which you came, where you sowed your seed and which you watered by foot, like a vegetable garden. 11. But the land, to which you pass to possess, is a land of mountains and valleys and absorbs water from the rains of heaven

2. Blessing of *Asher Yatzar*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר יָצַר אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחָכְמָה, וּבָרָא בוֹ נְקָבִים נְקָבִים, חֲלוּלִים חֲלוּלִים. גָּלוּי וְיָדוּעַ לִפְנֵי כִסֵּא כְבוֹדֶךָ, שֶׁאִם יִסָּתֵם אֶחָד מֵהֶם, אוֹ אִם יִפָּתֵחַ אֶחָד מֵהֶם, אִי אֶפְשַׁר לְהִתְקַיֵּם אֲפִילוּ שָׁעָה אֶחָת. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, רוֹפֵא כָל בָּשָׂר וּמַפְלִיא לַעֲשׂוֹת ׃

Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, Who fashioned man with wisdom and created within him many openings and many cavities. It is obvious and known before Your Throne of Glory that if but one of them were to be ruptured or but one of them were to be blocked it would be impossible to survive and to stand before You even momentarily. Blessed are You, Lord, who heals all flesh and acts wonderously.

3. Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur Machzor, Musaf (Additional) Service

ונתנה תוקף קדושת היום / כי הוא נור א ואיום
ובו תנשא מלכותיך / ויכון בחסד כסאך/ ותשב עליו באמת
אמת, כי אתה הוא דיין ומוכיח, ועד
וכותב וחותם וסופר ומונה
ותזכור כל הנשכחות / ותפתח את ספר הזכרונות
ומאליו יקרא / וחותם יד כל אדם בו.

ובשופר גדול יתקע / וקול דממה דקה ישמע
ומלאכים יחפזון / וחיל ורעדה יאחזון
ויאמרו, הנה יום הדין / לפקוד על צבא מרום בדין
כי לא יזכו בעיניך בדין
וכל באי עולם יעברון לפניך כבני מרון.

כבקרת רועה עדרו / מעביר צאנו תחת שבטו
כן תעביר ותספור ותמנה / ותפקוד נפש כל חי
ותחתוך קצבה לכל בריה / ותכתוב את גזר דינם.

בראש השנה יכתבון / וביום צום כיפור יחתמון
כמה יעברון / וכמה יבראון
מי יחיה ומי ימות / /מי בקצו ומי לא בקצו
מי במים ומי באש / מי בחרב ומי בחיה / מי ברעב ומי בצמא
מי ברעש ומי במגפה / מי בחניקה ומי בסקילה
מי ינוח ומי ינוע / מי ישקט ומי יטרף
מי ישלו ומי יתיסר / מי יעני ומי יעשר / מי ישפל ומי ירום

ותשובה ותפלה וצדקה / מעבירין את רוע הגזרה

Let us voice the power of the day's sanctity –
It is awesome, terrible;
On this day Your kingship is raised,
Your throne is founded upon love,

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and You, with Truth, sit upon it.
In truth, it is You: Judge and Accuser, Knowing One and Witness,
Writing and sealing, counting, numbering,
Remembering all forgotten things,
You open the book of memories –
It is read of itself, / and every man's name is signed there.

A great shofar sounds,
and a still small voice is heard,
angels rush forward / and are held by trembling, shaking;
they say, "Here is the Day of Judgment
visiting all the heavenly host for judgment – "
for they are not cleared in Your eyes for judgment.
And all who have come into this world pass before You like sheep.

As a shepherd's searching gaze meets his flock,
As he passes every sheep beneath his rod,
So You too pass Yours, count and number,
and regard the soul of every living thing;
and You rule off the limit of each creation's life,
and write down the verdict for each.

On Rosh HaShana it is written / and on Yom Kippur it is sealed:
How many will pass / and how many will be born;
who will live and who will die;
who in his due / time and who before;
who by water / and who by fire
who by sword / and who by beast;
who of hunger / and who of thirst
who by earthquake / and who by plague;
who by strangling / and who by stoning
who will rest and / who will wander;
who will be calm / and who will be harassed;
who will be at ease / and who will suffer;
who will become poor / and who will grow rich;
who will be cast down / and who will be raised high.

But REPENTANCE, PRAYER, AND CHARITY
Avert the evil of the decree.

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4. Deuteronomy - Chapter 29, verse 28

כח .הַנִּסְתָּרֹת לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַנִּגְלֹת לָנוּ וּלְבָנֵינוּ עַד עוֹלָם לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל דִּבְרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת׃

28. The hidden things belong to the Lord, our God, but the revealed things apply to us and to our children forever: that we must fulfill all the words of this Torah.

5. Exodus - Chapter 14, verse15

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה מַה תִּצְעַק אֵלָי דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיִסָּעוּ׃

The Lord said to Moses, Why do you cry out to Me? Speak to the children of Israel and let them travel.

Rashi (*ad loc*):

מה תצעק אלי, למדנו שהיה משה עומד ומתפלל, אמר לו הקב״ה׃ לא עת עתה להאריך בתפילה, שישראל נתונין בצרה.

Why do you cry out to me? *There is no mention that he prayed to God concerning this, but* this teaches us that Moses stood in prayer. Whereupon the Holy One, blessed be He, said to him, “It is no time now to pray at length, when Israel is placed in trouble.”

6. *Tachanun* prayer from daily prayer book

ואנחנו לא נדע מה נעשה, כי עליך עינינו...

We do not know what to do, but our eyes are turned to You.

7. Rabbi Isaac Herzog, “Man’s Smallness and Greatness” (Excerpts)
(This article was published in Judaism: Law & Ethics, essays by the late Chief Rabbi of Israel Isaac Herzog. It first appeared in the The London Jewish Chronicle in 1926.)

The sukkah, the principal feature of this festival, points out a moral of inestimable value. Unless this is taken to heart, the effects of both the New Year and the Day of Atonement will have proved of but a transient nature. "The sukkah visualizes our life." For what is the sukkah? A frail, temporary structure intended only for seven days. This is life. The normal span of life, the Psalmist declares, is seven decades, seven periods of 10 each - *yamei shnoteinu bahem shivim shana veim begvurot shemonim shana*. Under favorable circumstances, we may prolong our stay in this sukkah into the eighth day - Shemini Atzeret. Only in exceptional cases can we exceed these limits…….
How frail is our life! It is like the sukkah. In fine weather, in the sunshine of health and happiness, we imagine that we are under cover, that we are perfectly sheltered. How slender is the cover! How easily we are subject to all manners of mishaps, of accidents and misfortunes, which may upset our sukkah, or cause it to tumble down altogether! And in the best case our sukkah has its time-limit. What a simple thought! Nothing in the world is plainer. And yet how we are apt to lose sight of this and forget the inevitable end. Assuredly the man who lives, strives and acts under the delusion that this life is a *dirat keva* - a permanent home

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- and not a sukkah, will not easily submit to the notes of warning and alarm sounded by the Shofar, to the great lessons conveyed by Yom Kippur, and will often cast to the winds the most vital moral standards and values…….

Tell me not that there is the danger of the frequent thought about death tending to paralyze effort and activity. God has seen to that. Life in its fullness and richness cannot be scared away by the prospect of death. But the thought that our days are numbered, that we dwell in a sukkah, in a *direat arayi* – a temporary home – will exercise a chastening, a purifying influence, and will surely help us to lead a life worth living. This is the main idea that the sukkah suggests. Its very cover reminds us of the end, of earth, of the awful fact that sooner or later we shall return to the dust. For the s'*chach* – the cover of the sukkah – must be *gidulo min ha'aretz*, it must consist of materials sprung directly from the earth….

But during your stay in the sukkah, what shall be your outlook upon life? Shall it be so morose, so somber as to incline towards pessimism? No! "You shall rejoice." Succot is the "season of rejoicing" – *zman simchatenu*. There is one central, master-thought that will make you view life with all its trials and sufferings, life with its melancholy end, in a cheerful mood: the conviction that you are living and moving in the presence of God, who is the author and disposer of your life and your destiny, that it is He who has built your sukkah for you, and that He is the absolute good – *tov, ze hakadosh baruch hu*. Life cannot, therefore, be a tragedy as pessimism would have us think.

8. Excerpt from Rabbi Sacks on Sukkot (September 2013)

Sukkot, on this reading, becomes a metaphor for the Jewish condition not only during the forty years in the desert but also the almost 2,000 years spent in exile and dispersion. For centuries Jews lived, not knowing whether the place in which they lived would prove to be a mere temporary dwelling. To take just one period as an example: Jews were expelled from England in 1290, and during the next two centuries from almost every country in Europe, culminating in the Spanish Expulsion in 1492, and the Portuguese in 1497. They lived in a state of permanent insecurity. Sukkot is the festival of insecurity. What is truly remarkable is that it is called, by tradition, *zeman simchatenu*, "our time of joy." That to me is the wonder at the heart of the Jewish experience: that Jews throughout the ages were able to experience risk and uncertainty at every level of their existence and yet – while they sat *betzila de-mehemnuta*, "under the shadow of faith" (this is the Zohar's description of the sukkah: Zohar, Emor, 103a) – they were able to rejoice. That is spiritual courage of a high order. I have often argued that faith is not certainty: faith is the courage to live with uncertainty. That is what Sukkot represents if what we celebrate is sukkot *mammash*, not the clouds of glory but the vulnerability of actual huts, open to the wind, the rain and the cold.

I find that faith today in the people and the State of Israel. It is astonishing to me how Israelis have been able to live with an almost constant threat of war and terror since the State was born, and not give way to fear. I sense even in the most secular Israelis a profound faith, not perhaps "religious" in the conventional sense, but faith nonetheless: in life, and the future, and hope. Israelis seem to me perfectly to exemplify what tradition says was God's reply to Moses when he doubted the people's capacity to believe: "They are believers, the children of believers" (Shabbat 97a). Today's Israel is a living embodiment of what it is to exist in a state of insecurity and still rejoice.

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And that is Sukkot's message to the world. Sukkot is the only festival about which Tanakh says that it will one day be celebrated by the whole world (Zechariah 14: 16-19). The twenty-first century is teaching us what this might mean. For most of history, most people have experienced a universe that did not change fundamentally in their lifetimes. But there have been rare great ages of transition: the birth of agriculture, the first cities, the dawn of civilization, the invention of printing, and the industrial revolution. These were destabilizing times, and they brought disruption in their wake. The age of transition we have experienced in our lifetime, born primarily out of the invention of the computer and instantaneous global communication, will one day be seen as the greatest and most rapid era of change since Homo sapiens first set foot on earth.

Since 9/11 2001, we have experienced the convulsions. As I write these words, some nations are tearing themselves apart, and no nation is free of the threat of terror. There are parts of the Middle East and beyond that recall Hobbes' famous description of the "state of nature," a "war of every man against every man" in which there is "continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" (Hobbes, The Leviathan, chapter X111). Insecurity begets fear, fear begets hate, hate begets violence, and violence eventually turns against its perpetrators.

The twenty-first century will one day be seen by historians as the Age of Insecurity. We, as Jews, are the world's experts in insecurity, having lived with it for millennia. And the supreme response to insecurity is Sukkot, when we leave behind the safety of our houses and sit in sukkot *mammash*, in huts exposed to the elements. To be able to do so and still say, this is *zeman simchatenu*, our festival of joy, is the supreme achievement of faith, the ultimate antidote to fear.

Spotlight on Gratitude

--by Shari Swanson , Nov 24, 2016, from the "DailyGood" newsletter

On October 3, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln set aside the last Thursday of November as a day to give thanks, a new national holiday, Thanksgiving. He urged his fellow citizens then embroiled in civil war to not lose sight of the gifts surrounding them, among them "fruitful fields and healthy skies." Lincoln understood that, even in the worst of times, gratitude is essential.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving this year, 153 years after Lincoln's pronouncement, perhaps it is just as important to set aside time for deep reflection and gratitude as it was during the Civil War.

To help you find a deep sense of gratitude in this holiday season, we look back through prior articles on the issue and offer this *Daily Good Spotlight on Gratitude*.

Science shows us that cultivating a sense of gratitude is beneficial to our health in many interesting ways. People who practice gratitude have stronger immune systems and lower blood pressure. They tend to exercise more and take better care of their health. Their sleep is longer and more refreshing.

Psychologically, those who practice gratitude take more joy and pleasure in life and experience higher levels of positive emotions. They feel more alert, alive and awake in their lives.

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Socially, a gratitude practice leaves people more outgoing, forgiving, helpful, generous, and compassionate. Gratitude improves relationships. Focusing on their blessings leaves people less lonely and isolated and more ready to engage in their communities. Indeed, gratitude helps us to deeply care for one another and help our fellow human beings. A focus on the positive things to be grateful for corrects our innate tendency to focus on stress-inducing incidents, the ones triggering the fight or flight response. Being grateful can actually override our habitual and instinctive responses to flee or fight and cultivate a response to be heroic or to counteract racial biases.

Gratitude also encourages us to focus on the present, to appreciate the value of something as we have it. We appreciate things anew that we may have begun to take for granted. We recognize the unexpected blessing in the difficult circumstance. It, essentially, magnifies the pleasures we get in life by focusing our attention there.

Moreover, gratitude can block toxic or negative emotions. You simply can't be envious and grateful at the same time; they're incompatible feelings. Accordingly, your focus is on what you do have rather than what you don't, and your sense of appreciation for your own life deepens. Gratitude has even been shown to have a noticeable effect in helping people to recover more quickly from stress and trauma.

So how do we cultivate a gratitude practice? Many have found gratitude journals to be helpful. By writing down three positive things at the end of the day into your journal, you focus on the positive. You choose to see your daily experiences in a way that makes you grateful even for the challenges and disappointing aspects of the day. If you couple the gratitude journal with a list of things that went well and a guess as to why they went well, you can begin to see how your own actions result in positive consequences.

Imagining your life without something or someone, or mental subtraction, can be a useful tool in cultivating gratitude. Similarly, abstaining from something you enjoy may help you to savor it again when it is reintroduced.

Perhaps, rather than a gratitude journal, you may want to keep a gratitude jar, a place to drop a few coins every time you have a grateful thought. As the jar fills, you will have a tangible offering for someone in need.

Finally, we can be grateful for our opportunities to give as Mother Teresa was when she worked with the sick and dying in the slums of Calcutta. Her work allowed her the opportunity to grow and deepen her spirituality. Our opportunities to care for family members, to tend to the sick, to feed the poor are all things we can be grateful for: we have the ability to help the world with our words, gifts, and actions.

Indeed, as out gratitude practice deepens, it is only natural that we seek out ways to express that gratitude in the world around us. Many people love to write thank you notes to people who have enriched their lives. Some use their gifts to share music, dance, photographs, poetry, art, music, gardening, giving generously, feeding others. Anything you love, really, can be offered to others as an expression of gratitude. The common denominator among them is lifting your thoughts away from your own worries and troubles in order to realize and share the gifts you have received.

So, as we enter the holiday season, reach deep into your heart to count your blessings and let the abundance you feel spill over into your own unique expression of that gratitude.

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