

for fulfillment of the prophetic promise that G-d "will make the peoples pure of speech that they will all call upon the Name of G-d and serve Him with one purpose" in the complete and final Redemption.

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 26, pp. 132-144)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Horav **Schneur Zalman Halevi** עי"ה
ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי"ד
Shagalov

Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766

Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** עי"ה
Ekman

Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765

Mrs. **Devora Rivka** bas Reb **Yosef Eliezer** עי"ה
Marenburg

Passed away on the second day
of Rosh Chodesh Adar, 5766

Reb **Yitzchok Moshe** (Ian)
ben Reb **Dovid Asniel** עי"ה
Ekman (Santiago, Chile)

Passed away on the 24th day of Shevat, 5769

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

AND IN HONOR OF

Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** שתחי'
Shagalov

DEDICATED BY

Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel**
Shagalov

Reflections of Redemption

Essays on the Weekly Torah Reading and Moshiach,
Based on the talks of the
Lubavitcher Rebbe,
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

Reprinted for Parshat Yitro, 5771

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Certainly the Jewish people benefit when non-Jews accept and observe the seven Noachide laws. Every Jew is still affected by the Holocaust. Although the events are fifty years past, to this day the terror and horror leaves its trace in Jewish life, its shadow over the Jewish people. Yet one could see clearly during those times that there were righteous gentiles, individuals and groups who refrained from murder and thievery, and through whose efforts thousands of Jews were saved.

From those times – G-d forbid they should ever be repeated, and we should all see only good – we have a living example of the benefit Jews receive when the nations observe the Seven Mitzvos. How much more so, then, will the Jewish people benefit when there is no danger to the non-Jew, when the interaction is “only” a business transaction. In such a situation, when a Jew conducts himself in a pleasant and amiable manner, certainly the Jews will benefit from the non-Jews’ observance of their mitzvos. In such circumstances as we find ourselves now, it is not only possible, it is imperative to try to “compel” the non-Jew to accept G-d’s Kingship and observe the Noachide commandments.

Simply put, if a gentile has the opportunity to harm or help a Jew, but feels that there is “an Eye that sees and an Ear that hears,” obviously he will choose to help the Jew. When he knows he must observe his Seven Mitzvos – as a Jew must observe his six hundred thirteen – automatically the relationship between the Jew and non-Jew will improve.

By making the effort to “compel” the non-Jews to observe the Seven Mitzvos, thousands and thousands of gentiles will come to observe G-d’s commandments. Then the world will see that G-d “has made Israel a light unto the nations.”

Indeed, fulfilling this Divine commandment to influence and “compel” the non-Jews sets the stage and prepares the way

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implications thereof, derives from the very fact the Jewish people were given the Torah. This obligation applies even today. Especially now, on the threshold of Redemption, must the Jewish people “compel” the non-Jews to accept and fulfill the seven mitzvos. (That now, for the first time in history, we are able to openly publicize and promote the Seven Mitzvos is itself a sign we are on the threshold of the coming of Moshiach.)

In this context, “compelling” means to persuade, to explain, to enlighten – to use the various media and means of communication to educate the non-Jewish world about the Noachide commandments. Everyone with a connection to a non-Jew, or who has an opportunity, should try to influence the b’nei Noach – the descendants of Noah – to accept his or her Divine obligation, the seven universal laws.

Previously, the Jewish people were unable to observe this law. Even in those countries which did not persecute the Jews, any attempt to influence the non-Jewish population was fraught with danger. When the government was neutral, so to speak, other so-called leaders, religious or otherwise, certainly were not interested in or tolerant of what Judaism taught regarding G-d’s commandments to the nations.

Now, however, the situation is different. In countries like the United States, when a Jew tries to enlighten his or her neighbor about the Seven Mitzvos, there is no danger of any kind. There is neither physical danger, nor the hazard of financial loss or penalty. Just the opposite: efforts to influence and educate non-Jews is beneficial, bringing both spiritual and material profit. In such a situation, the obligation “to compel [i.e., influence and inspire] all the inhabitants of the world to accept the laws given to Noah’s descendants” applies to every Jew in full force.

That Jews are not only able to educate, persuade and influence non-Jews, but also to benefit thereby is itself an indicator we are in the era of Moshiach.

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by
Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann

Yisro

TEN COMPELS SEVEN

The Ten Commandments establish an exclusive relationship between G-d and the Jewish people. Since the Torah portion is named after a non-Jew, this indicates that the non-Jewish world benefits when the Jewish people fulfill the six hundred thirteen mitzvos. It also indicates that the Jewish people have an obligation to “compel” the seventy nations to observe the seven Noachide commandments.

The central event of the Torah – the revelation at Sinai – occurs in this week’s portion. By giving the Ten Commandments to the Jewish people, G-d establishes an exclusive relationship with Israel. Indeed, G-d declares, “Now therefore, if you will indeed hearken to My voice and you will keep My covenant, then you shall be mine own treasure from among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.”

There arises, then, a simple question: why is “Yisro” the name of the Torah reading? Yisro, the father-in-law of Moses, was a Midianite chief, a former priest for every form of idolatry. Given that the Ten Commandments emphasize G-d’s relationship with the Jewish people, that the Torah and the six hundred thirteen mitzvos define Israel as G-d’s “own treasure,” it seems odd that this Torah reading in particular should be called by the name of a non-Jew.

The Rebbe emphasizes many times the significance of names, emphasizing that the name of a Torah reading indicates the essential nature of that portion. Therefore, that Yisro is a non-Jew

indicates that even though the covenant and the commandments belong exclusively to the Jewish people, still the Torah is relevant to the non-Jew in some significant and essential way.

Now it is well known that there are seven universal laws that apply to all mankind. These seven Noachide laws are so named since all humanity descends from Noah and his children. Although the Torah applies only to the Jewish people, everyone must observe the seven Noachide commandments. In fact, because the Torah was given to the Jewish people, the rest of the world must be “compelled” to accept the seven universal laws. As Maimonides writes: “Moses gave the Torah and mitzvos as an inheritance only to Israel . . . someone else who does not wish to accept Torah and mitzvos should not be forced to. By the same token, Moses was commanded by the Almighty to compel all the inhabitants of the world to accept the laws given to Noah’s descendants.”

At Sinai the Jewish people received – and accepted upon themselves – two categories of obligation. First was acceptance of G-d’s *Kingship* – and an automatic rejection of idolatry. Second was an acceptance of the mitzvos, G-d’s *commandments*. Moses – and therefore the Jewish people – are commanded to compel the nations to accept the first obligation, G-d’s *Kingship*.

The Torah was not given just so that Jews would accept the yoke of G-d’s *Kingship* and His commandments. The ultimate purpose of the giving of the Torah was to transform the world, so that ultimately – in the era of Moshiach – “G-d will be King over all the earth.” Since however, Torah – acceptance of G-d’s *Kingship* and His mitzvos – is a “Jewish thing,” the Jews alone have the ability and obligation to bring G-d’s *Kingship* to the whole world.

In short, the obligation to **compel** all the inhabitants of the world to accept the seven Noachide commandments, with all the