

CHAPTER EIGHTY-NINE

by Rabbi Yitzchok Rubin

We live in times that are so noisy, yet so many are deafened by the silence. In the midst of all the distractions that make up today's lifestyle, we seem to become unable to hear the voice that speaks to our soul.

Helen Keller, the famous personage who was both blind and deaf, once remarked, "Being blind cuts you off from the world; being deaf cuts you off from humanity." When we become so flooded with loud noises we become inhuman, insensitive of what should be real in our lives.

During the American civil war, commentators pointed out a strange phenomenon. It seems that while major battles were being fought, there were pockets of space where witnesses could not hear a thing. Imagine, they watched as man slaughtered man, huge cannons were set off and hand-to-hand battles were waged; yet they could not hear a thing. These pockets of silence were called acoustic shadows, and they have never really been explained.

It seems that we too live in such shadows. We see the despair and witness the misery, yet for some reason we don't really hear the message.

Truth be said, we know the voice is there, but we become so engulfed by social distractions that our hearts don't pick up what our ears discern.

As Jews, we have a tried and tested way to unclog our hearing. We can go to *gutte Yidden*, Torah sages, and hear their words. Each generation brings forth its specific leadership, holy Yidden who know what society's noises are all about and how we can overcome their soul pollution. These tzaddikim have the words that can cut through the chaff that clogs our environment. They understand our desperation, and each speaks in a unique manner. We pedestrians need guidance, and Hashem has given us a Torah leadership for each generation. The major difficulty we face is in not allowing ourselves to accept their healing direction.

In these times, when the secular world speaks of democracy and majority rule, it is hard for some to accept that Yiddishkeit is not a democracy nor something cooked up in a committee. Being connected with Hashem flies against everything the secular mind wants, or thinks it wants.

No one is immune from such talk, and it is this that makes us deaf to our real role in life. Yes, we may do mitzvos with regularity; however, all too often we feel them to be a burden, not a joy. This is not always our fault. It's because we stand in an acoustical shadow, witnessing the havoc around us but

unable to hear our eternal truths.

There are many worthy and saintly Torah sages in each generation. Hashem has graced us with spiritual giants who live their entire lives for the good of others.

Perhaps one of the greatest tasks of a person who seeks to be an *oved Hashem* is to find his Torah leader, the one who speaks to his needs, in a language he feels attracted to. It takes humility, truthfulness, and not a small bit of courage, but without it, we will go through life deafened to who we really are.

Hashem has promised us that such leadership will always be there. It is our responsibility to seek it, listen to it, and then activate its guidance into our reality. If we remain standing in the acoustic shadows of this world, then we will have seen all the bitterness and pain without any true hope of real joy.

This *kapitel* tells of the promise of leadership and its eternal comfort.

Chasdei Hashem olam ashira., "Of the kindness of Hashem, forever I will sing, throughout all generations I will make known Your faithfulness with my mouth." Despite the clouds and mist, we must be aware and speak of the faithfulness that Hashem shows to His children.

Karati bris livechiri., "I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to David, My servant. 'Forever will I establish your seed, and build up your throne throughout all generations, *sela*.' "

The greatest son of the House of David is the Torah scholar, for it is in his hands to build up the possibility of our ultimate redemption. Hashem has created a covenant with David that despite the *galus*, we will not only survive, but bit by bit build up, till David's throne will be reunited with our nation.

Veyodu shamayim pilacha Hashem., "And the heavens will praise Your wonders, Hashem, and Your faithfulness will be praised in the assembly of holy ones."

There will come a time when heaven and earth will once again meet in song. Those who seek to escape the loud silence of the material world will merit the reward of praising Hashem in the *kehilla* led by His holy ones.

Ata moshel begei'us hayam., "You rule over the majesty of the sea; when it raises its waves, You still them."

When life seems to be a sea of raging hurt, it is Hashem in His love that can still its waves. You feel you will become engulfed by it all, yet if you listen to your connection with Him, you will find safety.

The *kapitel* goes on to describe the power that is Hashem. We need never lose heart, for He is the Creator that rules over the entire globe. But how do we get through the distractions of this material place we find ourselves in? How does one keep focused on the eternal truths?

Matzasi Dovid avdi., "I have found David, My servant; with My holy oil I have anointed him."

Hashem has chosen David to be that link, that connection. In David we must see all the "Kings of Israel" that have followed. Who are these kings? The Torah scholars who represent the sweet truths that David extolled.

Asher yadi tikon imo., "With whom My Hand will be established, also My Arm will strengthen him."

Hashem is known in this material world through those who hold onto the Torah. With every word of Torah they utter, Hashem's works become more apparent. Our sole source of strength as a people is through His Torah and mitzvos. There is no other nation that has survived so long with so many disabilities. How have we done so? The secret lies in "His arm" - Hashem's mitzvos. Through them we have been strengthened.

The psalm goes through a depiction of our nation's ups and downs - times when we feel close to Hashem and times when we are more distant. All the while David speaks of the centrality of Torah kingship, its role in leading our people forward. He cries out that even when the people are living with daily humiliation, he, and those who follow him as leaders, "bear in my bosom the burdens of all the many peoples."

With this *kapitel* we end the third book of *Tehillim*, and we do so on a moving note. "Blessed is Hashem, forever, amen and amen!"

This will always be our heartfelt reality. Blessings come from and are given to the One Force that is eternal. Hashem.

Text Copyright © 2009 by **Torah.org**. You can contact the author at Rabbi@theinformalproject.com.