

The Narrow Bridge

גשר צר מאוד

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES

Short Quotes from Various Tzaddikim - Week 142

To join our Whatsapp group for daily messages, contact us at 845-641-2648

רפואה שלמה פעסל בת גאלדא / לזכות חילינו

The verse states, "Seven days you shall bring offerings by fire to Hashem. On the eighth day you shall observe a sacred occasion and bring an offering by fire to Hashem."

Many mistake Shemini Atzeres as the "last days" of Sukkos, but in truth, they are an independent holiday – a regel bifnei atzmo. The rest of Sukkos, sacrifices are brought in the merit of the nations of the world, but on Shemini Atzeres, the sacrifices are exclusively on behalf of the Jewish people, Hashem's children.

Rashi quotes the midrash that compares it to a king who hosts all his children for a party for several days and when the last day comes, he pleads, "קשה עלי פרידתכם. Please stay with me one more day because Classically this is understood to mean, it is difficult for me to separate from you."

However, the Imrei Emes (1865-1948) explains that what bothers Hashem is not our parting from Him; He will come with us. What bothers Him is our separation – the idea that for the last month and a half we have been united, spent quality time together, worked together, celebrated together, focused on our sense of community with a shared destiny, together... and now, the holidays will be behind us and we will go back to the usual divides, focusing on our differences instead of our commonalities... we will go back to judging others based on what is on or not on their heads instead of what is in their hearts...

Hashem asks, "Please spend one more day unified and together, transcending your differences."

After two turbulent and pain-filled years, our brothers and sisters are finally coming home. During this time, we have experienced tragedy, hatred and condemnation together, we have cried, prayed and hoped together, and now, with the return of the hostages, we can celebrate, dance and rejoice together.

Our enemies have shown us very clearly that to them it matters not the type of a Jew.

To them, it is of no relevance what type of kippah one wears or if one wears a kippah at all. To them, it is of no relevance the level of one's spiritual observance. To them, it is of no relevance which side of the political aisle we find ourselves on. To them, it is of no relevance our appearances or externalities. They see beyond our varying customs, beyond our differences – they see our shared essence and core – to them, we are one.

This was true of our enemies throughout history – during the Holocaust, the crusades, and the pogroms – and it is true now...

How will we spend this one last day, this regel bifnei atzmo? We will grab hands and dance in a circle – a circle that has no beginning and no end, no hierarchy or tier system, no head of the table or dais – just everyone dancing equally in a circle, united, together. There will not be one circle for shtreimels, one for black hats and one for kippot serugot. There will not be one circle for the old and one for the young, or one circle for the republicans and one for the democrats. There will be only one circle, one people, one community, one history and one destiny. That is the enduring image of this holiday; that is the message we take with us into the dead of winter and beyond.

Please G-d, let us not stop dancing when Simchas Torah ends. Let us not go back to the usual separation. Let us not stop holding the hands of the person on our left and our right – literally, and metaphorically.

The future may remain uncertain, but for now, let us be there for one another, let us hold each other close and never let go.

BASED ON THE TEACHINGS OF RABBI EFREM GOLDBERG

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Hoshana Rabbah teaches us that sometimes the simplest prayer can be the most powerful prayer:

"Hoshana – Save us!"

TYH NATION

The greatest kindness you can do for someone is to believe in them even after they have stopped believing in themselves.

REB ELAZAR OF LIZHENS (1742-1806)

Two trees growing side by side, one stretches tall and flourishes early in the season, while the other seems slower, its buds still tight and small. Yet beneath the surface, the second tree's roots are spreading deep, drawing strength for a bloom that will come in its perfect time.

Growth is never identical – and it was never meant to be.

Each soul, like each tree, is given its own soil, its own weather, and ripens at its own pace.

No two journeys are the same; your story will unfold at the speed your soul needs. The fruit will come – and when it does, it will yield sweetness that was made possible through faithful and purposeful patience.

INSPIRED BY THE TEACHINGS OF REBBE NACHMAN (1772-1810)